

# New clergy coming to our churches



Judith Ryder

Two new appointments of clergy in Caversham churches have been made recently. Judith Ryder has been appointed as assistant curate in the parish of Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham, and will be joining in July.

The Rev Penny Cuthbert has been appointed as transition minister for St John's church, Caversham, in the same parish. She is a replacement on the parish's ministry team for the Rev Jeremy Tear, who was the community priest for the parish until last summer when he moved to Warrington.

Penny, whose appointment is for a fixed period of four years, will be licensed on Monday 6th June at 7.30pm at St John's.

She was ordained by the Bishop of Reading in June, 2013, and has been an assistant curate in the Parish of Reading St Agnes with St Paul and St Barnabas in Whitley since then. She will be moving with her family to Caversham in the near future.

Introducing herself to her new parishioners, Judith writes in the parish newsheet, CTM News:

*I will be moving to Caversham with my family at the end of May, so we can be properly settled by the time I am ordained deacon on 2nd July at Christchurch in Oxford – God willing.*

*I studied theology originally in the mid-1990s, at St John's in Oxford. I also met my husband, Simon, then – he was studying engineering, two years ahead of me. At the time, I ran away from theology and from Simon – but just about kept in touch with both.*

*I taught English in Athens for a year, then spent a year temping in Edinburgh, before going back to Oxford in 2000 to do a masters and then a doctorate in history, specialising in the medieval Eastern Mediterranean.*

*Simon and I got properly reacquainted in 2001 over a visit to Istanbul then a conference in Paris, and we married in December 2002. He came back to the UK, having worked as a transformer engineer for Alstom in Paris for five years. He continues to work in the same field, and travels a lot for his work. Our first child, John, was born in 2006, and since then three more children have joined us: Elizabeth (Lizzie), born 2008; Peter, born 2010; and Stephen, born January 2013.*

*When we moved to our current home in Kidlington (north of Oxford), in 2009, we thought we were nicely settled for the duration. I was a Roman Catholic, and we lived a combined Roman Catholic and Anglican life. Ordination was not something I was considering. I had plenty to do with family responsibilities and part-time academic work, as well as getting thoroughly involved in life in Kidlington.*

*Unexpectedly, however, it became very clear that this was not how things were going to continue. The upshot has been that I joined the Church of England in November 2009 and started ordination training on the Oxford Ministry Course in September 2013.*

*Leaving Kidlington for Caversham is going to be a big move for us, but while we will be sad to leave, it really does seem that we are being sent to the right place – for the family, for me to continue my ministerial training, and hopefully for the parish of Caversham as well! Certainly, when visiting Caversham we have felt very welcome and at home and that we could thrive in the parish.*

Judith will be living in a parish-owned house in Caversham Park village and hopes to move in with her family during the May half term. There will be a service of welcome for her at St Peter's on Sunday 3rd July, details to follow.

## Follow in the footsteps of Capability



The magnificent frontage of Caversham Park

A rare chance comes along this summer for the general public to visit the house and grounds of Caversham Park, the BBC monitoring station and stately home. Visits are being arranged as part of celebrations to mark the 300th anniversary of the birth of Lancelot Capability Brown, the father of English landscape gardening.

During his career Brown advised on around 250 sites all over England, including Caversham Park, in his mission to create a better version of the English countryside. He got his nickname because he could see instantly the capabilities of a site.

The visits, organised by the Berkshire Garden Trust with the permission of the BBC, will include a talk on the work Brown did at Caversham Park, conducted walks in the grounds, a tour of the house and refreshments. They are by ticket only costing £7.50 per person.

The first visit was in April and was a sell-out. The others are on Sunday 12th June and Sunday 18th September from 2.0pm to 6.0pm. Phone Ben Viljoen on 01189 483170 or Kaye Warner on 01189 695260 to book or contact the Berkshire Garden Trust website.

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## Caversham Clergy

### ANGLICAN

St Barnabas

Revd Derek Chandler, 20 St Barnabas Road.

Tel: 947 8239.

www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

St Andrews

Revd Nigel Jones, St Andrews Vicarage,

Harrogate Road. Tel: 947 2788

www.standrewscaversham.org

St Peter, St Margaret, St John

Revd Mike Smith, The Rectory, 20 Church Road,

Caversham RG4 7AD Tel: 9479505

rector@ctmparish.org.uk

Revd Marion Pyke

Tel: 947 5834

Revd John Dudley Tel: 9470265

Riverside Church (Reading)

Revd Rob Beardsley Tel: 07736 353233

Email: robg.beardsley@sky.com

www.riversidechurchreading.co.uk

### CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP

Secretary: Dr Alison Johnston

Tel: 0118 947 5152

### METHODIST TEAM MINISTRY

Revd Jenny Dowding, 72 Highmoor Road.

Tel: 947 2223

### CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

Transitional Minister Revd Jonathan Edwards

Church office tel 954 5353

Email Secretary: sue.cantwell@cavershambaptist

church.org.uk

### GRACE CHURCH

(formerly Caversham Hill Chapel)

Crispin Fairbairn tel 9474529

### ROMAN CATHOLIC

Fr Paul Martin, The Presbytery,

2 South View Avenue.

Tel: 947 1787.

Deacon: Hugh Anscombe

Fr Paul Rowan

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

Revd H R Gayle Tel: 946 3009 (contact)

## TALKING POINT

by Headley Gayle

**The New Testament Church of God celebrated its 50th year in Reading in March this year. Here the Rev Headley Gayle, its current pastor, looks back at its history over half a century**

During the 1960s there was a movement of Afro-Caribbeans from their homes in the West Indies to the UK. Whilst making a new home for themselves, they also wanted to continue worshipping as they had done in their home country. As a result, they joined churches within the UK.

This was the case for two such members, Mr Noel Batten and Mr L. Wilson. Having moved to the UK to create new lives for themselves and their families Mr Batten and Mr Wilson became members of a church led by Mrs Burnett; this church was conducted from her bungalow at 171 Wokingham Road, Reading. Morning service and evening service were held at the canteen in the old Huntley and Palmers building.

The membership of this group of worshippers included Mr L Wilson, Mr and Mrs Nation, and their children, Hyacinth and Trevor Nation, Mr Batten and Mr Beckford. The membership soon outgrew the front room of the Nation's home and the brethren needed somewhere else to worship. The group moved to the St John's Ambulance Hall on Fatherson Road, Reading, where regular Sunday morning and evening service was conducted.

On 4th April 1965, the New Testament Church of God was formally recognised as a church with 10 members. It was on the Willesden District and was organised with the help of the Rev E G Kelly-Wright who was the district overseer.

In August 1968, the district overseer formally appointed the Rev Cyril L Hastings as the pastor of the Reading church. One of his very first initiatives was to purchase a minibus for the church. The New Testament Church of God became the first Afro-Caribbean church in Reading to own a minibus, which would regularly collect the children from their homes for Sunday school, as well as members and friends of the church for the main Sunday services. A transportation service which the church continues operating.

Some time during 1970, the opportunity to rent the hall at the Providence Church on the Oxford Road arose. The New Testament Church was warmly accommodated for over eight years, thanks to the kindness of Mr Belcher. During the years at the Providence Church, the church increased in membership.

Turn to Page 3

## SUNDAY SERVICES

### ANGLICAN

#### St Peter's, St Peter's Hill

8.00am Matins 1st and 3rd Sundays

Holy Communion 2nd and 4th Sundays

9.30am Holy Communion 1st, 2nd and 4th Sundays

6.30pm Evensong

#### St John's, Gosbrook Road

9.30am Holy Communion 1st, 3rd and 4th Sundays

9.30am All Age Worship 2nd Sunday

Fifth Sunday Services as advertised

#### St Margaret's, Mapledurham

11.15am Morning Worship 1st Sunday

Holy Communion 2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays

#### St Andrew's, Harrogate Road

8.00am The Eucharist

10.00am Parish Eucharist (Sung)

First Sunday, Family Eucharist

The Eucharist first and third Sundays

only, first Sunday BCP

6.30pm Evening Prayer (as announced)

#### St Barnabas, Grove Road, Emmer Green

8.00am Said Communion (BCP)

9.30am Parish Communion

9.30am COGS for all ages (1st Sunday of Month)

### RIVERSIDE CHURCH (READING)

Meeting at Hemdean House School, Hemdean Road, Caversham

10.00am Morning Worship & Teaching

### CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP

#### Meeting at Caversham Park School

11.00am Holy Communion (1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays)

Morning Worship (2nd and 4th Sundays)

All Age Worship (at Festival Times)

### CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH South Street

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2nd Sunday each month

3.45pm Messy Church - for all the family

Fourth Sunday of the month

### GRACE CHURCH Old Peppard Road

10.30am Worship and Ministry, Children's Church

6.30pm Prayer Meeting

### THE METHODIST CHURCH IN CAVERSHAM

#### Caversham Heights, Highmoor Road

9.00am (first Sunday), 10.30am

6.30pm (second and fourth Sundays)

#### Gosbrook Road

10.30am

#### Woodcote Parish Church

9.45am (second Sunday)

### ROMAN CATHOLIC

#### Our Lady and St Anne's, Southview Avenue

Saturday 5.30pm,

Sunday 10.00am and 6.30pm

Mapledurham House 6.00pm Mass (last Sunday of the month)

### SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers)

#### Church Street, Reading

10.30am

(House study groups Sept-June Tel: 9475783)

### NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

#### Church Street, Caversham

9.30am Sunday School

11.00am Divine Worship

6.00pm Evening Service

## Caversham Bridge

Contributions for the June 2016 issue should be sent to the Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham parish office by **Monday 2nd May**. The date for the July 2016 issue is Monday 6th June. Email address is secretary@ctmparish.org.uk

Advertising copy for the June issue should be sent to Mr A Wright, Advertising Manager by **Friday 29th April**. The date for the July issue is **Friday 3rd June**.

## PARISH OFFICES

### PARISH OF CAVERSHAM THAMESIDE AND MAPLEDURHAM

St Peter, St Margaret, St John

Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham RG4 8AX

Tuesday and Friday 9.30am to 2pm

Tel: 947 1703 email: secretary@ctmparish.org.uk

### ST BARNABAS

St Barnabas Centre

Tuesday and Thursday 8.30am-10.30am

Tel: 947 6310 Website: www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

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The Editors wish to make it clear that the views expressed in this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the board.

The Editors also would like to bring to readers' notice that the inclusion of advertisements in this paper does not mean an endorsement of the products or of the services offered.

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## Talking Point: from Page 2

In 1978, the Glendale Cinema in Caversham was for sale and the Rev Hastings felt it was suitable for the church to purchase at a cost of £40,000. On 14th October 1978, the New Testament Church of God at 34 Church Street, Caversham, was opened for worship.

In 1983 the Rev Hastings was transferred to Leeds and the Rev A N Lawrence was appointed to the pastorate. The Rev Lawrence was instrumental in ensuring that the mortgage on the building was cleared in full as well as renovating the main

church. He had to undertake a major task of curing the dry rot flooring in the main church. Once the flooring had been completed the trademark cinema seats were re-installed. These seats had been installed when the cinema was originally built in 1911.

One of the biggest achievements during the Rev Lawrence's tenure was when the youth choir was enlisted to be on Songs of Praise. Sir Harry Secombe from the BBC came to Reading for the rehearsal with the youth choir, which would sing on one of the episodes for the weekly

television programme.

In June 1997 the Rev Lawrence was transferred to the Croydon church and as a result, the Reading church entered a new era with the appointment of the Rev. Headley Gayle as the pastor. The church continues to flourish under his guidance. Further renovations were carried out with the church's trademark cinema seats being removed to create more room. The roof of the building was also replaced. We are excited for the future of the New Testament Church of God in Caversham

## New bridge is a winner



The new pedestrian and cycle bridge linking Caversham with the town centre, now officially called the Christchurch bridge, has won a commendation in the 2016 Civic Trust awards

The prestigious awards recognise the best in architecture, design, planning, landscape and public art nationally. At the 57th annual award ceremony in London in March,

Reading's bridge was awarded a commendation in the South-East category.

Awards are given to projects that demonstrate high-quality architecture or design, have demonstrated sustainability, are accessible to all users and have made a positive cultural, social or economic contribution to the local community.

Tony Page, Reading Council's lead member for strategic environment, planning and transport, said: "The bridge has quickly become established both as a major landmark in the region, and a key new route for pedestrians and cyclists. The Civic Trust award comes less than six months after the bridge opened and I would like to congratulate everyone involved in the planning, design and construction phases."

Development and infrastructure consultancy Peter Brett Associates was responsible for the technical design of the bridge, Design Engine Architects Ltd designed the structure and construction was carried out by Balfour Beatty.

The bridge was named after a recent public consultation process in which Christchurch emerged as the clear favourite from a shortlist of four. It comes from Christchurch Meadows, the area of riverside parkland on the north side of the bridge.

## Growth in community gardening

Those of you who sit on the top deck of the number 23 bus may have noticed the vegetable patch at the garden of St John's church in Gosbrook Road. We are back in business now that spring is here.

The community garden is open each Friday afternoon from 4.30 to 5.30. We are an informal group and spend the time sowing, planting, watering and weeding. We share out the fruits of our labour when the water and sun have done their share of the work.

We have a new bench so if you would like to sit, watch and have a chat you can. We have keen young waterers and slightly older weeders, so there is always plenty to do. All are welcome.

There is also a community garden at Amersham Road community centre, which runs on a Saturday. Now that the social Saturdays have started at the centre on the second Saturday of the month, the garden sessions will run from 10.30 to 12.30 on the first, second and fourth Saturdays and from 12.00 to 2.00 on the third Saturday, to tie in with the social events.

For more information email Sandra on [agough4060@aol.com](mailto:agough4060@aol.com) or ring 0118 9586692 or contact [www.food4families.org.uk](http://www.food4families.org.uk)

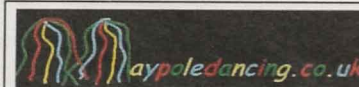


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## Neighbourly scheme just keeps growing

*Caversham Good Neighbours is a volunteer charity organisation which has been helping residents of Caversham for over 50 years and is finding that the need for its help is growing year by year. This article looks back at how it started, how it has developed and what it does today.*

The scheme was started in 1965 by a local GP, Dr Beale, and a local priest, the Rev Derek Eastman. Dr Beale had become aware that some of his patients found difficulty attending his surgery, collecting prescriptions and getting to hospital. The Rev Eastman had experienced in his previous parish an innovative scheme to help housebound people. This was one of the many ideas that were being discussed between the Caversham churches at this time as part of a drive, led by the Rector, Canon John Grimwade, to develop services in and for the local community.

The proposals for Caversham Good Neighbours (CGN) were adopted in 1965 by the Caversham Parochial Church Council and they were for an independent voluntary organisation to provide transport for older or disabled people to enable them to attend medical appointments.

It was always intended that the scheme should be broadly based and, to that end, one of the lay readers at St Andrew's, Bill Vincent, was asked to seek the co-operation of all the churches in Caversham. As a result, named volunteers were found in each of the churches who co-ordinated volunteers and linked them to those in need.

Bill Vincent became the first chairman of CGN. Over time, those specific links to the local churches were lost but, while it is still a broadly based secular organisation, there remain links to some of the local churches and the service continues to be based in Church House in the centre of Caversham.

In the early days, attempts were made to broaden the range of services: a scheme for young visitors from a local school to visit older people in their own homes; help with gardening for those who could no longer manage their gardens and a baby-sitting service for young parents. However, these services could not be sustained.

Nowadays the core of their service is for transport to hospitals and surgeries, although there are some trips to get people to social events which they may be unable to attend without help, and this has remained at the centre of the organisation. The service has always been funded solely from donations given by those who use it. The service is growing fast year by year and in 2015 nearly 1400 journeys were made to various locations. This year it looks on course for even more expansion as the need for help grows.

### How CGN can help you

Getting around can be difficult if you are elderly or disabled. Even if the family is nearby, there can be times when it is difficult to ask anybody to come round and visit or give a lift to an important engagement. Taxi drivers have to make a living and might not be able to give all the attention required in getting to a hospital appointment, and the Readibus which is a marvellous service, cannot always guarantee exact times to get

patients to appointments. That's why CGN was started: to help those living in the Caversham district north of the river.

The drivers will take the person to their appointments and, of course, take them back home again. It is always best to give a few days' notice so that a driver can be found for the journey. After the trip, the passenger will be invited to make a modest donation to help with running expenses.

### Being a driver

As a driver, you will be offering a true lifeline to someone in need. It is an activity that you can tailor to your own living pattern. You make yourself available as often as you feel you can - once a month, once a week or whatever. And the lifts are usually local. Quite simply, someone in the office will ring you from time to time and, giving a few days' notice, ask if you can make a specific trip.

The people we give lifts to have often led interesting lives and talking to them can be a treat in itself. We ask them to make a small donation for each trip and their gratitude for what we do is a real reward.

### Helping in the office

Our office volunteers provide an essential link in our network. They are the first line of call to CGN. The volunteers are placed on a rota which involves being in the office once or twice a month on a pre-agreed date.

The main part of their activity is in matching requests for lifts with drivers from our group. You also keep a log of the morning's activity and reimburse the expenses of volunteers when they call in with donations they have collected. And there's plenty of time for a chat if you fancy one! Of course, there is plenty of support to help the new volunteers.

### How you can help

You could help as a driver or as a volunteer in the office and if you would like to join us in either of these areas, we will ensure you are prepared and supported to do so comfortably and safely. We will give you training in dealing with the office database and if you would like to become a driver will explain the procedures we need to take prior to you taking your first client.

CGN would be delighted to hear from you and they can be reached by telephoning 0118 948 3466 between 9.30am and 11.30am Monday to Friday or emailing [pat@cavershamgoodneighbours.org.uk](mailto:pat@cavershamgoodneighbours.org.uk)

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## Thursday\* is Fisherman day!

\*every Thursday 2pm - 6pm

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# How King Oswiu got his own way

*There was much discussion this year over the date of Easter and whether it should continue to vary or be fixed. But we needn't rush to make a decision because it has been a hot topic for many centuries, as this look back into history shows.*

In the year 664 a dispute over the date of Easter was causing concern in the royal household of King Oswiu in the kingdom of Northumbria. Rather embarrassingly, he and his wife, the Queen, found themselves celebrating Easter on different Sundays. To settle the matter once and for all, the king called a synod at Whitby abbey.

At that time missionaries observing Irish traditions had come to Northumbria from the north, while from the south came missionaries sent from Rome by Pope Gregory the Great, led by St Augustine.

Historian Dr Michael Carter, of English Heritage, explains: "They evangelised different bits of the court here in Northumbria. So, King Oswiu was observing Irish traditions, whereas the queen was observing the Kentish, Roman, Continental traditions.

And one year it led to a terrible event - the king was observing Easter Sunday on one day, whereas the queen was still observing Lent, and the king couldn't

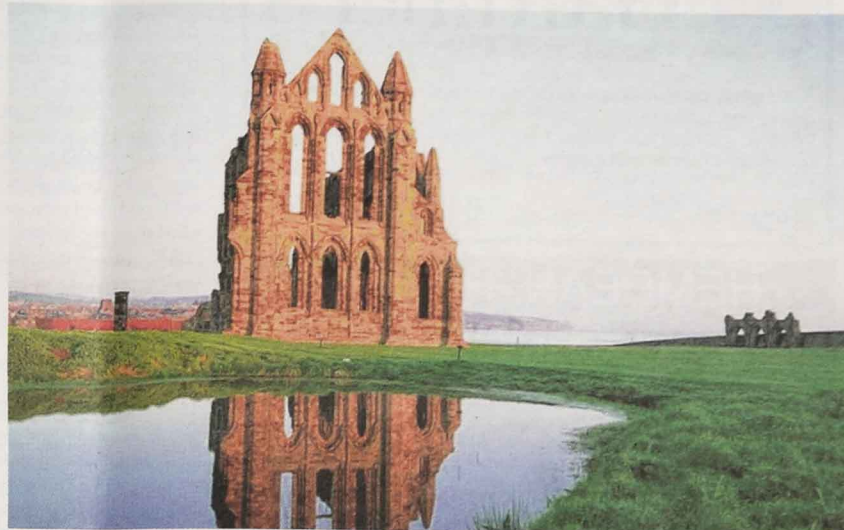
have that."

So the synod thrashed out the question of when Easter should be observed. The Celtic or Irish case was put forward by Bishop Colman of Lindisfarne, while St Wilfrid, a native Northumbrian who had gone to the continent and been trained in Roman ways, put the Roman case.

"At a crucial point in the debate he mentioned St Peter - the keeper of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, which he was given by Christ himself. And King Oswiu, who was chairing the synod, was incredibly impressed by this," says Carter.

The decision went in favour of Wilfrid and the Roman way of calculating Easter.

Carter continues: "The Synod of Whitby made sure that the English church observed the mainstream continental practice. It meant that the English church was unified in its observation of the most important festival of the Christian calendar, the day of Christ's resurrection, and that England was tied to the continent. And it was something that persisted in England, a thread of continuity, until the English Reformation, when England was broken off from the religious and cultural mainstream of Europe."



Ruins of Whitby abbey where the synod was held

## L-plate Christians on the march

A large group of Christians walked through Caversham on Good Friday, following a large cross and a banner declaring God's love for everyone.

Despite Holy Week being a busy one in all the Caversham churches, representatives from many of them took part in a united service at the Baptist church followed by the walk through the centre to Caversham Court. This was to mark the final stages of Jesus's journey to crucifixion on the cross.

The church service was led by the Rev Jonathan Edwards from the Baptist church with a gospel reading by the Rev Jenny Dowding, from the Methodist churches. The Rev Derek Chandler, from St Barnabas, Emmer Green, explained in his sermon why everyone had been given L-plates to signify that all Christians are life long learners.

The procession stopped in the shopping precinct to sing a hymn, hear a Bible reading and prayer led by the Rev David Little from St. Barnabas.

The final act of worship, led by the Rev Nigel Jones, of St Andrew's church, was held in spring sunshine at Caversham Court. The knowledge of the Easter message of God's love for each and everyone signified in the life, death and resurrection of his son, Jesus, meant there was an atmosphere of happiness and hope.



The final act of worship in Caversham Court

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### Bible Friends

## Jonah runs away

"Jonah," God said, "I want you to go to the town of Nineveh.  
"I want you to give the people a message from me."  
"I'm not going there," thought Jonah. "It's a terrible place!"

So, Jonah went down to the harbour, got on a boat and sailed somewhere else. When the boat was out at sea, there was a big storm. The wind blew and the waves got bigger and bigger. Everybody was very scared. "We're going to drown," they said. "What shall we do?"

"It's my fault," said Jonah. "I shouldn't have tried to run away from God."

Jonah told the sailors to throw him into the sea. "That will make the storm stop," he told them.

But God kept Jonah safe. He sent a big fish to swallow Jonah and carry him on to dry land. "I'm sorry, God," said Jonah. "I should have done what you asked."

Jonah 1-2



## Ofsted praises Caversham school

Must do better is the stock phrase of school reports. However, this month Thameside Primary School are celebrating an Ofsted report that acknowledges that the school has done a great deal better.

In November 2013 an earlier report rated the school as "Requires improvement". The school was revisited by Ofsted this March and the report recently released has identified that the school has done a lot better. In fact, the school is now rated as "Good" and some areas examined by the report rated the performance as "Outstanding".

The inspectors praised the head and other school leaders including governors for setting out a clear direction following the last inspection. They also said that expectations and aspirations are higher and all leaders are determined that the school continues to improve.

The quality of teaching is deemed to be good with a broad and balanced curriculum providing a wide range of opportunities. This is strengthened by the pupil's having positive attitudes to learning and working well together. The report says: "All pupils, whatever their ability or background, have the chance to take part in all the school's activities and achieve well."

The school's work to support pupils' personal development and welfare is described as outstanding. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is said to be a strong feature, which results in well-behaved, courteous, hard-working children. Children say they are exceptionally well looked after and feel safe, and parents also express strong support for the school's leadership and all aspects of its work.

Headteacher Helen Wallace said: "The inspection provides positive affirmation for all that we are striving to achieve here at Thameside, particularly as the report highlights the school's work to support pupils' personal development and welfare."

Mark Harper, chairman of governors at Thameside, said: "The governors are delighted for

head teacher Mrs Wallace and all the teaching and support staff whose efforts, dedication and skills have been recognised in this report.

We are confident that the school will go from strength to strength as we continue on our journey towards outstanding."

Councillor Tony Jones, Reading's lead councillor for education, said: "Everyone at the school deserves congratulations on such a good Ofsted report. It is obvious a lot of hard work has gone into raising standards in all areas in a relatively short period of time.

As well as the leadership and staff, the children should also be praised for their good manners and behaviour which clearly impressed the Ofsted inspectors."



Children at the school cheer their success

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## CHURCHES

## Mass closes deanery visitation



Archbishop Bernard blesses the icons  
Photo: Jane Shaw

Archbishop Bernard Longley came to the church of Our Lady and St Anne, Caversham, in March to celebrate Mass for the closing of the deanery visitation.

Over the past few months, Archbishop Bernard and Bishop William Kenney have visited seven of the parishes in the deanery. Although he had carried out most of the visits and had written the reports, Bishop William was not able to attend the Mass because he has recently been taken ill.

Archbishop Bernard passed on his regrets but pointed out that whereas normally the bishop

would be deputising for the archbishop on this occasion it was the other way round.

Mass was concelebrated by Archbishop Bernard, Mgr Timothy Menezes, vicar general to the Birmingham archdiocese, Father Paul Martin, dean and parish priest of Our Lady and St Anne, and three of the other deanery parish priests. Deacon Francis from St Michael's, Sonning Common, also attended.

The choir sang the Latin of the Mass and led the singing of the hymns. The Archbishop based his homily on the gospel of the day saying that Jesus did not order people to come and see him, but he came to see them and he still comes to us in the Blessed Sacrament. He came to earth not to be served but to serve.

After the homily, the new icons in the reredos were blessed. They represent the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Anne, Blessed Dominic Barberi and Blessed Hugh Faringdon.

After Mass, all retired to the cenacle for refreshments but then went back into church for the formal part of the evening – the reading of the reports. Most were written by Bishop William but Archbishop Bernard summarised the visits to the two parishes that he had visited. He particularly praised the co-operation that exists between the parishes despite the geographical distances that separate them and also commended their close relationship with Birmingham despite their being such a long distance away from the cathedral of St Chad.

## Handyman sale

The annual household and handyman sale at St Barnabas Church, Emmer Green, will take place on Saturday 7th May from 10am to 12 in the church hall and grounds. Tool and knife sharpening will once again be available.

To offer donations please contact Richard Gash on 947 5744 or Wendy Howell on 946 1365. No electrical goods please. Once purchased, large items can be delivered for a nominal charge. All proceeds to our chosen African charities.

Caversham Heights Methodist Church Highmoor Road

## Network Fellowship Summer programme

Everyone welcome – gentlemen and ladies

All meetings commence at 2.30 and are held in the church hall unless otherwise advised.

Thursday 12th May  
Mission Aviation Fellowship

Thursday 26th May  
Tales of Wildlife

Thursday 9th June  
Wiltshire Farm Foods

Thursday 23rd June  
A members afternoon  
(please bring something beginning with 'P')

Thursday 7th July  
Researching and Writing Historic Novels

Thursday 21st July  
A relaxed event with afternoon tea

## St Peter's craft group

A group of ladies from St Peter's church, under the leadership of Pat Jones, have been busy creating a new altar cloth for the Lady Chapel. The cloth is embroidered with six small decorative crosses in the corners and along the sides, together with a larger cross as its centrepiece. It will be blessed at a service in the near future before being located in its permanent position within the church.

The picture, taken at a recent meeting after the cloth was completed, shows a number of members of the group admiring the finished article. Among other things, the group made a number of articles, including bespoke cushions and Christmas decorations, for sale at the St Peter's Christmas Fair, and are now busy preparing hand-made items for the fete in Caversham Court in July.

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# The future of Caversham library

The process of consulting local people over the future of Caversham library is continuing until the middle of this month. So there is still time to make your views known and to help protect the library which we value so much.

The first phase of the consultation took place in the autumn and the results from it have been used by Reading borough council, along with its information about library visits, library use and local needs, to come up with proposals for the seven libraries in the town. A total of 1792 people took part.

As a result of this feedback, the council has reduced the amount of savings to be made. You can see details of the plan for each library online at [www.reading.gov.uk/libraryreview](http://www.reading.gov.uk/libraryreview) where you can also have your

say about the proposals.

If you prefer to write you can email [libraryreview@reading.gov.uk](mailto:libraryreview@reading.gov.uk) or write by conventional mail to the council offices. The consultation process ends on May 16.

The council says in its consultation document: "People used to rely on their local libraries to access books and information. Today people have more choice, ranging from e-books to internet access. Users can even download e-books or order books from the library service without stepping foot in a library. Many of you make good use of the free IT and internet provided at the borough libraries. You have also told us how much you value free library events and activities, like Rhymetime for example."

"At the same time, every local council is having to make major savings as a result of Government cuts in funding and increasing demands for services. In Reading, we now need to save a further £51 million over the next three years. That is on top of the £65 million of savings we have already made since 2011. We need to prioritise limited resources."

"We've already made savings by making the library services more efficient and making better use of technology. Another way to help find savings is to make the best possible use of our buildings. It's not unusual these days to find a number of other services provided from library buildings, alongside more traditional library services."

The council's proposal for Caversham is to retain the library but reduce staffing and opening hours from 50 and a half hours to 35, closing the branch on Wednesdays but still opening on Saturdays.

The document says: "The library occupies a central and prominent position within Caversham, opposite a supermarket and other local shops. The Grade 2 listed building is relatively small for the volume of use, with limited space for additional usage, whilst wheeled shelving offers the opportunity to use parts of the public area for events out of hours."

"After Central Library, Caversham is the most actively used library in the network, and serves the largest catchment population as well as the greatest number of residents aged 65-plus of all Reading's branch libraries. Caversham library is also relatively small and offers little opportunities for developing the site into a wider community hub. However, it is recommended that the space continues to be used flexibly to offer a range of activities, and connections with local adult learning and children's centres should be strengthened."

## New polling station for May elections

Voters in Mapledurham ward have been told of a change of polling station for both the council and Police and Crime Commissioner elections on Thursday 5th May.

The pavilion on Mapledurham playing fields has been the polling place for many years. The ongoing closure of the pavilion due to structural problems means that this year the local polling station will move to Caversham Heights Methodist Church, at the junction of Woodcote Road and Highmoor Road. The church is conveniently located for all parts of the ward, by foot, car or public transport.

Mapledurham ward has a local electorate of 2,420, of whom 463 have postal votes. It is traditionally the ward in Reading with the highest turnout – 87 per cent in the 2015 General Election.

## Big donations from Santa Run

Representatives of sponsors and some of the recipients of the proceeds of last December's hugely successful Santa Run were the guests of Reading Rotary Club at a presentation evening at Caversham Heath golf club in March.

The event raised £17,000 for distribution by the club and at least £4,000 went directly to good causes chosen by the runners. Daisy's Dream and the Duchess of Kent Hospice were each presented with a cheque for £7,000. The rest of the £17,000 will be forwarded to other local charities.

Acknowledging these gifts, Claire Rhodes of Twyford-based Daisy's Dream, which supports children afflicted by life-threatening illness or family bereavement, said: "Your support will make a huge difference to a significant number of children."

Fern Haynes of the Sue Ryder charity, which runs the Duchess of Kent Hospice in Reading, said: "This incredible donation can pay for a nurse to provide care for three months to our patients in the hospice."

This was Reading Rotary Club's second Santa Run and was sponsored by recruitment consultants Roc Search, commercial property consultants Vail Williams and 18 other businesses. The event began and ended in Forbury Gardens and the runners certainly seemed to enjoy themselves.

Club president Bill Montague thanked all the members and friends who had contributed to the event stressing what a monumental effort it had taken to organise. He also thanked the businesses who had helped on the day including the Protein Drinks Company.

Bill had particular praise for club member David Gibbins, who led the teams that organised the first and second Santa Runs. David is already planning to make this year's an even greater success and is particularly looking for corporate sponsorship. Local businesses who are interested should contact him on 07815 322 320.



The library in Caversham

Reducing opening times and staffing levels by introducing self-service technology would deliver a saving of £41,900 a year, while maintaining local library services in the north of the town.

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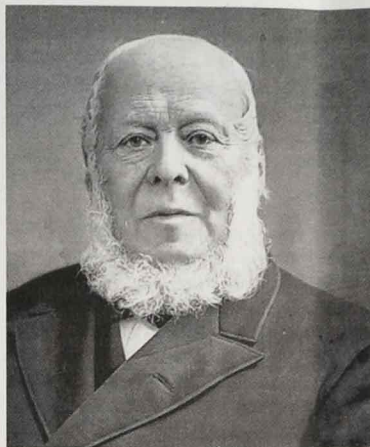


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# The remarkable Ebenezer West



Portrait of Ebenezer the son

Before embarking on this month's topic, I feel I should own up to my mistake in the article about Toot's Farm in the March edition. The granary was demolished in the 1980s, and not the 1960s as I wrote. I'm grateful to those who pointed this out to me.

The name Ebenezer is recorded in the Bible in the First Book of Samuel, chapter seven. The Israelites won a victory over the Philistines, and Samuel set up a monument which he called Ebenezer, meaning in Hebrew, stone of help.

Perhaps the best-known Ebenezer today originated in the mind of Charles Dickens

in the 1840s. Perhaps he was thinking of a stony-hearted man who was transformed for the better through divine help when he thought of Ebenezer Scrooge for the main character in his story, *A Christmas Carol*.

The name remained in use, though it was never very common. Reading had its Ebenezer Hill, who had a high-class shop selling toys and baby carriages in Broad Street, where I can remember buying presents for my younger sister. As far as I know, Reading never had an Ebenezer Chapel, though many places did.

Ebenezer West was a Baptist minister who opened a small boys' school in the manse. His early pupils included his sons, the elder son also being named Ebenezer. The school was successful, and moved to larger premises in Amersham High Street. In 1830, when only 20 years old, Ebenezer the son took over the school because his father's health had deteriorated. Its reputation grew, and larger premises were sought.

We shall probably never know why Caversham was chosen as the new location. Mr West commissioned the Reading architectural partnership of James Haslam and Virgoe Buckland to design the school buildings in Henley Road, which are now part of Queen Anne's School. He called it Amersham Hall, after the place where he had grown up, and called it "a school for the sons of dignified gentlemen." It opened in 1861.

Also in Caversham, Mr West was largely responsible for the building of the first Baptist chapel in Gosbrook Street, which opened in 1866. Gosbrook Street is now part of Gosbrook Road, and the chapel has been converted into apartments, and is known as The Waterhouse, after Alfred Waterhouse, the famous Victorian architect who designed it. Naturally, Mr West marched his young charges down Prospect Street each Sunday for worship. Soon, the chapel was proving too small for the Baptist community.

Mr West had contributed £1,000 towards the building of the 1866 chapel; only ten years later, he gave £8,000 towards the building of a larger chapel – the present-day Caversham Baptist Church, at the corner of Prospect Street and South Street. The architect was once again Alfred Waterhouse. Towards the end of his life, Ebenezer West also gave a house for the minister.

In his obituary, in 1894, it said: "If ever a man set his mark upon a town, Mr West set his upon Reading." His mark was set more particularly upon Caversham. Perhaps in the future I will return to the subject: there is a lot more to say about Ebenezer West, and about the buildings he has left us. Thanks are due to Reading Central Library for the splendid portrait of him.

I see from the front page of last month's Caversham Bridge that the members of the Baptist Church have ambitious plans to alter their building internally, which include the building of an upper floor, to make it more suitable for serving the community. I, for one, would like to wish them well

Happy Wanderer

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## WHAT'S ON

### The sounds of spring

Rivarate, the Caversham choir, performed its eighth spring concert in Caversham Heights Methodist Church in March which, according to one loyal supporter, was its most ambitious yet.

The evening's selection by Sarah Scotchmer, director of music, included a varied programme drawn from traditional, contemporary and familiar, sacred sources. She was supported by Pam Asbury, the choir's versatile and multi-talented accompanist.

The combined voices of the choir were enriched by vocal and instrumental soloists, which included members of the choir and visiting performers. One of the visitors, Andy Baldwin, was the first to play the church's magnificent organ in a Rivarate programme.

Lauren Martin, a final year student at the Holt School, gave a moving performance on the bassoon of a sonata by Schreck. Catriona Hull, a young professional with an exciting future, sang a traditional Irish air arranged by Britten and gave a powerful rendering of Mozart's *Batti, batti, o bel Masetto*.

Andy Baldwin, well known to concert goers and congregations in this part of the Thames Valley accompanied the choir in Parry's arrangement of *I was glad* and *Jerusalem* and in Bach's *Jesu, joy of man's desiring*. His solo piece was Dubois' *Toccata for Organ* which he delivered with great passion to an appreciative full house.

Soloists from within the choir included Alastair Muirhead with his entertaining rendering of *The gas man cometh* and there was a surprising but hilarious performance by Carolyn Lobley of *Just an old fashioned girl*.

The choir's most challenging piece was Parry's *I was glad*. But there was also a rich performance of choral highlights from *Frozen*, a selection of American folk songs, a Bee Gees number and one by Billy Joel

### Two choirs in concert

Children from Caversham primary school are joining the Reading Male Voice Choir to stage a concert at St Andrew's church, Caversham, on Saturday May 7th. The two choirs will provide a varied programme of songs.

Also they will get together for two numbers, giving the audience a chance to hear the special sound of men and children singing together.

Tickets, priced £10 in advance or concessions, are available from Waltons the jewellers in Prospect Street, Caversham – not open Mondays and only cash accepted. They can also be bought by phone from 01189 474166 or on the door for £12, under 16s £5.

### A date for your diary

The annual Caversham church fete will be held on Saturday 9th July. The event is organised by the churches of St Peter's, Caversham and St Margaret's, Mapledurham. You are invited to come and enjoy all the fun of a traditional English fete in the beautiful surroundings of Caversham Court Gardens.

Attractions will include entertainment including music and dancing; stalls for cakes, plants, toys and bric-a-brac, jams and preserves; sideshows; and refreshments. It all starts at 1.45pm with the ringing of St Peter's bells. More information will be available nearer the time.

Please put the date in your diary and come along and support the work of the churches in your community.

### Caversham Horticultural Society

The popular spring plant sale is the first of two events to which all gardeners are invited. This takes place on the Oakley Road allotments on Saturday 7th May between 10.00 and 11.30am. Come and stock up for the new season. This is followed by a talk by the popular speaker Noel Kingsbury on Wednesday 11th May. His talk is entitled *The Politics of the Garden*.

The talk, at our usual venue, Caversham Primary School in Hemdean Road, starts at 7.45pm. Entrance for non-members is £5.00. However if you are not a member why not join on the night, household membership is only £5 or £3 for people over 60, and provides free entry to this and other talks this year. Gardeners wishing to become a member before the May talk should visit the Oakley Road allotments trading shed between 10.00 and 11.30am on a Saturday.

### St John's May Fair

The May fair at St John's church, Caversham, will be held on Saturday 21st May, starting at 2pm. Stalls will include cakes, books, bric-a-brac, and tombola and there will also be a raffle. The church is on No 23 bus route

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## CLUBS

## Rosehill WI

President Margaret Pyle welcomed everyone and thanked Ryszard Palarczyk for the table flowers. She told us that there were name badges for us all to wear during our meetings, so that we all know who we are. She also mentioned that 2017 diaries can be ordered next month, costing £4.50. Margaret Seal then gave out buttonholes for all who had a birthday in March. Margaret Pyle then gave a special welcome back to Mary Richings following her absence after an operation.

The balance of the money for the Sonning Mill show is required by the May meeting. The other proposed visit to Denman with a cookery demonstration will be on the 5th December providing at least 25 members wish to go.

Next we came to the main business, namely the annual general meeting in which the treasurer, secretary and president all gave their annual reports. This concluded with the president thanking everyone for all their hard work. Margaret then went on to tell us of the upcoming programme for 2016/2017 and it seems we have quite a varied programme to look forward to.

Margaret Pyle has agreed to stand for another year as president, and Mary Robinson as secretary. Doris Goddard has resigned as treasurer and Yvonne Wright has agreed to fill this post. The president then told us that we have 10 members on the committee including one new member, Judith Sharp.

We then had a short talk by Chris Brooks, who told us about her role as a first responder. These people are all volunteers and are sometimes called upon to attend an accident or medical emergency, arriving before the emergency services. They are only asked to drive a short distance, usually five minutes from their homes. They are trained by the emergency services and have a kit which they use to the value of £2,000.

We meet on the first Wednesday of the month at St Barnabas Church Hall, Emmer Green, at 2.00 pm and welcome any visitors.

## The Caversham Heights Society

Members experienced three very different events during March. The first was rather disappointing but the second and third were both inspiring and enjoyable.

On 2nd March Chris Chadwell gave an illustrated talk on Alaska. Most of the talk was devoted to different species of mountain flowers, clearly a passion for the speaker, who is a leading world expert on flowers in the Himalayas and the European Alps. Some of the photographs were excellent and would have been of great interest to botanists of a like mind, for whom the talk was originally designed but for a general audience, they were too specialist.

On 16th March we had an outstanding and informative talk about the history, trials and tribulations, of the Royal Albert Hall. Tony Weston told us about the building of the Crystal Palace to house the Great Exhibition of 1851 in Hyde Park, paid for by a public subsidy. It attracted over six million visitors, one-third of the total population at the time. The profits from the Great Exhibition helped to finance the building of the Royal Albert Hall in 1871 and the Victoria and Albert Museum in South Kensington.

Originally the design for the hall was to be modelled on the amphitheatre in Nimes and was to seat over 30,000. This ambitious scheme was gradually reduced to 7000. The current seating capacity is for 5,900. Built in an elliptical shape the Royal Albert Hall is recognised as one of the finest musical venues in the world. It is also one which has evolved over time. For example visitors originally had to cross the road to use the toilets in the Crystal Palace!

More recently it took a computer over three months to design the carpets for each floor to fit with only one join! From the outset the acoustics left much to be desired since there was a slightly delayed echo. Despite numerous attempts to resolve this issue it was only in 1969 that the BBC came up with the idea of installing 85 mushrooms suspended from the ceiling to help defeat the echo.

Although the hall is best known for its musical events, most notably the promenade concerts in the summer, it has been used for conferences, speeches from leading statesmen, tennis matches, boxing, dinners and dances and even a marathon between an Italian and an Englishman.

We were also entertained by music from the Last Night at the Proms. This was particularly appropriate because over 50 members of the society went on the following evening to hear and see a classical spectacular there.

The CHS meets on the first and third Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm from September to April in the Highmoor Road Methodist church hall. New members are always welcome and inquiries should be made to Jill Hodges either on 959 5307 or by email to [irishjill@southcote.net](mailto:irishjill@southcote.net)

## Caversham WI

A few absences were noted when members met for their annual meeting – a nasty flu bug seems to have visited Caversham. After the business part of the meeting, the president gave her address covering the activities of the

past year with thanks to everyone who helps.

After a refreshment break there was an auction and the competition cup was presented to Romagne Flight who incidentally organised the competitions.

Members were encouraged to enter the competitions in the coming year. This month's meeting will be a visit by Jackie Briddle from the local garden centre.

## Chazey WI

Our March meeting was well attended and we had Jean Shepherd, our WI advisor, to give members a talk on the WI.

Voting took place to elect the committee for the coming year. We thanked Hazel Blackburn who was standing down after many years on the committee and she was presented with a gift. Hilary Morrison was elected to be president for the coming year.

The prize for the most competition points for the year was won by our president and she received a plant and the crystal vase to hold for the year. The competition for March, a home-made Easter card, was won by Hazel Blackburn.

The book club still meets on a Thursday at the Grosvenor pub every month, new members welcome.

A cream tea was had by members at the Herb Farm and our lunch visit was to the Shoulder of Mutton at Play Hatch, both very enjoyable.

The kiosk in Caversham Court was manned by members on 17th-20th March. The early dates were made difficult by the very cold weather, but well done to all those who took part.

We are hosting the Caversham group meeting on Wednesday evening 25th May at the Methodist Church Hall and we hope that our members support us.

Chazey meets on the first Tuesday in the month at 7.30pm for 7.45pm at the Caversham Methodist church hall and we welcome new members.

## Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

Preparations for the guild Roadshow in April took up a lot of our time. Our Scrabble group and luncheon club continued as usual and the ambling club enjoyed the spring flowers.

For our main meeting in April, Margaret Edwards told us all about being a film extra. The social studies group heard about *Charles and an Oak Tree* from Mr John Brearley.

May 19th will be our next meeting when Mr C Parrish will be talk about *The Cambridge Family, Queen Victoria's colourful cousins*. Any ladies who would like to visit us will be welcome. We meet at 7.30pm at Caversham Heights Methodist church hall.

## Probus

The speaker at the March meeting was John Pearson, whose subject was 'Blessed are the cheesemakers', a title which was taken from the film *The Life of Brian*. John retired from Marks and Spencer in 2008, where he had worked in several food departments, including bread and wine, and ended up in cheese. Since his retirement he has been a consultant for several firms, and is an international cheese judge.

Today more and more varieties of cheese are being produced. A local cheese, Barkham Blue, which is made in Barkham, near Wokingham, was last year's winning cheese. A well-known fictional cheese is Borchester Blue, featured in *The Archers* radio soap.

There are many different types of cheddar, 36 varieties were shown at the recent Frome show.

John told us many interesting facts regarding food, especially dairy products, and recounted some hilarious anecdotes from his time at M&S. He told us how cheese is made, and said that compared with some other countries, we in the UK eat very little. Half of the cheese eaten in the UK is cheddar. He considered the best to be Montgomery's traditional cheddar.

John finished his presentation by asking the members to participate in a cheese-tasting session, in which three varieties of cheddar were tasted and members voted for their favourite. There was no clear winner.

Probus is a club for retired men, who enjoy a meal once a month in the congenial company of like-minded men. Lunch is followed by a talk, on a variety of interesting subjects. The club meets at the Caversham Heath Golf Club. For further information visit the website [www.probusclub-reading.org.uk](http://www.probusclub-reading.org.uk). If you are interested in joining, contact the secretary David Laird on 0118 9470709.

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