

January 2024

PARISH MAGAZINE



St. Oswald, King & Martyr, Oswestry
and Christchurch, Rhydygroesau 50p

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‘For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven...’

These words from Ecclesiastes are a timely reminder that, in the words of Isaac Watts, time is *‘like an ever-rolling stream’*. Our stream has currently reached January, when we traditionally celebrate the start of another new year and the occasion when we mark the passing of another 12 months, or 365.25 days. It's 2024... Happy New Year!

Tradition also dictates that within our celebrations we mark the event by announcing things we will change in the coming year; maybe about ourselves or the situation we find ourselves in, perhaps habits or activities we want to give up or begin. Experience has shown that such endeavours rarely last beyond the month, let alone see the light of day when the next January comes round.

However, this year I am determined that one of my endeavours will stand up to scrutiny. Having avoided it for many years, I have decided that after 25 years of ordained ministry, I am finally taking a sabbatical.

A sabbatical, at its simplest, is a rest or break from work for an extended period of time, usually between 4 weeks and 12 months, intentionally spent on something that's not your routine job. In times gone by, clergy colleagues have spent time sailing the oceans, learning to be experts in wine tasting, or cheese making, or other new life skills. Many spend time travelling with New Zealand a popular destination - maybe it's something about being as far away as possible!

The concept is relatively modern and seems to have grown out of American universities which, during the 19th century offered an opportunity for their academics to rest and recover from work. It was also an opportunity for them to travel to see what was being done elsewhere, a sort of academic ‘looking over the fence’ into other university's gardens to see what they were up to.

Today, the taking of a lengthy, intentional break from a career is also found in non-academic professionals as well. For example in the UK, the NHS, British Army, supermarkets including Tesco and ASDA, and many corporations, encourage staff to ‘take a break’. Given the breadth of different organisations now offering them, it comes as no surprise that there are very few norms and expectations for these non-academic sabbaticals. However, the Church of England is a little clearer. It now

refers to sabbaticals as 'extended study leave' and the expectation is that the person will combine an area of study which will enrich their ministry, alongside some time given over to rest and recreation.

You might be thinking it's all a bit 'woke' but the concept of the sabbatical is ancient and based on two biblical practices. Firstly, the keeping of the weekly 'sabbath'; '*God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation;*' and secondly on '*shmita*' or '*sabbatical year*'. The sabbatical year is related to agriculture and described in great detail in Leviticus 25 which states that Jews in the Land of Israel must take a year-long break from working the fields every seven years. In practice it meant that in the sabbath year, each field was to lie fallow, a sound agricultural practice in a time when artificial fertilisers and agrochemical means to control pests and diseases was millennia away.

Israel's observance of the Sabbath day and sabbatical year was a function of the Israelites obedience to, and trust in, a God who would provide for their immediate needs and the future of their communities. It is also recognised that the Lord is not only the God who owns Israel's land, but sovereign over all time and nature.

So, despite years of denial and claims of 'it's not the right time', in obedience and trust, from January 28th until April 29th, I shall be away from the parishes. However, being away doesn't mean that I will be physically away from the vicarage, though time will be spent with family in various parts the country. I also intend to visit different dioceses as I spend time looking into the opportunities for increasing lay ministry in the Church of England, my chosen topic of study. I also intend to learn and hopefully embed, some good habits about my health so any comments about local gyms would be much appreciated.

What this does mean however, is that the focal point of the parish will change from the 'vicar and the vicarage' to... at St. Oswalds it will be church wardens Alan, June, Muriel and John, with Jassica who will be providing priestly leadership helped by Yin-An. At Christchurch it will be the church wardens, Elizabeth and Rosemary with Yin-An.

Jassica and Yin-An will be ably supported by our retired clergy colleagues and Carron in the church office and all their contact details are available in this parish magazine or on the church website. All emails addressed to '*revdharvey*' will be forwarded to Jassica and one of the church wardens will contact me in the case of any emergencies.

Having said all that, I will still be out and about so if you do happen to see Liz or me, please feel free to stop and chat – just not about the parishes.

I wish you all a blessed, happy, and intentional New Year.

Harvey



CHRISTINGLE & THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY HOUSE BOX COLLECTIONS

Following the successful Christingle Service held in January last year, we are planning to hold another one this January **on Sunday 7th**. We hope to collect in all the Children's Society House Boxes for this service so that they can be blessed before being counted and returned to their owners. You are therefore invited to come along and join in the Christingle Celebrations and bring your House Box. If you are not able to attend please drop your box off at the church or at the vicarage (in Penylan Lane, opposite the Scout Hut) beforehand or get in touch with me and I'd be happy to pop over and collect it.

The Children's Society continues to work to ensure that every young person has the good childhood they deserve. That's why they fight for the happiness of young people when it's threatened by abuse, exploitation and neglect. They see the hope and courage in young people every day, and continue to support them through their most serious life challenges.

The Children's Society's goal and vision are built around the hopes of young people, to achieve long-lasting change for this generation and the ones to come. The fight continues to be stepped up in these times of immense pressures on children, young people and their families.

If you would like to know more about the work of the Children's Society and how to support them, please take a look at their website www.childrenssociety.org.uk or get in touch with me if you would like to become a House Box holder.

Liz Gibbons,
St Oswald's Children Society Box Co-ordinator
St Oswald's Vicarage, Penylan Lane
Tel no: 01691 653467
Email: elizabethgibbons15@outlook.com

Sunday 7th January 2024
4.00 pm



St Oswald's Church
with House Box Collection



PATHWAYS IS BACK!

The new year often begins for many people with resolutions on how we can improve our lifestyle or learn something new in the coming year. These aspirations often focus on health and physical fitness goals, but it's also a good time to review our

mental and spiritual wellbeing – maybe reflecting on questions such as, what interests me, what can I offer, what's my role, how could I serve my congregation and community? These are questions we would call 'vocation' questions.

We've had a popular introductory course for thinking about vocation in Lichfield Diocese for many years, and after a short break the Pathways course is back! The Vocations and Training team have reimagined Pathways to make it more flexible and accessible and we'd love you to come and join us.

Pathways has three modules that run throughout the year. The modules are designed to prompt people to explore vocational questions through different books of the New Testament (The Gospel of Mark, 1 Corinthians and the Book of Acts). People can complete one, two or all three modules. Each module is designed to be completed during an academic term, around 12 weeks in total. Each module is structured as below:

- Introduction – 1 hour Zoom gathering.
- 4 weeks of online content (one section per week, around 1 hour)
- A mid-way 1 hour Zoom gathering.
- 3/4 weeks of online content (one section per week, around 1 hour)
- Final 1 hour Zoom gathering.

There are points throughout the online content where we will ask you to leave a comment on an online discussion board (forum) as part of the course. And there is the option at the end of a module to provide a final reflection.

Our 'Exploring Vocation through Mark's Gospel' module begins on Wednesday 24th January, 7.30 – 8.30pm with an online Zoom together. Costs should not be a barrier, but we ask for £10 from your parish, per module. Please contact us if this is an issue.

Applications need to be submitted through our online booking form which can be accessed from the website (search for Pathways). You will need your Incumbent/Vicar's agreement to join this course as well as access to a laptop/computer. Any questions please contact Helen (helen.scheven@lichfield.anglican.org)

There is also the option for deaneries to facilitate an in-person Pathways module(s) locally should you have the numbers for this – please contact Helen for further information about this option.



Helen Scheven is the Training Coordinator for the diocese's Vocations and Training department with a particular oversight of the Pathways course.

For further information and application form, please see lichfield.anglican.org/vocations-and-training/pathways-to-ministry

THE RECKONING *(for the New Year)*

And so new numerals for our broken gift,
but Time's numbers change not the self-made mind,
wired to the heart's Pharaoh obstinacy:
Christ have mercy, reshape us in LOVE.

And so we drowse in peace's brave old mirage,
but continue in the wrong direction,
down fooling slopes of serpentine winding:
Christ have mercy, rebuild us in LOVE.

And so we believe in progress' gold pot,
but forget the risen rainbow's promise,
spurning the raindrop's joy for remnant ashes:
Christ have mercy, remake us in LOVE.

And so we continue to climb Babel's tower,
but to scale Pandemonium's dead end,
where there is no way higher than down:
Christ have mercy, rebirth us in LOVE.

And so save us from re-fashioned law-crammed ways,
but deliver us from the disguising new,
that twists apart anew the healing Body:
Christ have mercy, restore us in LOVE.

December, 2023.

Mark Davis.

CHARITY CHRISTMAS CARD SHOP

December 9 brought to a close another successful year for our independent Charity Christmas Card Shop. This year we raised around five and a half thousand pounds for the twenty local and national charities who put their cards with us.



Both I and the charities wish to extend a huge thank you to the wonderful team of volunteers from St.Oswald's who took a turn on the rota in support of all these worthy causes and to all those who helped to make the venture a success by buying their cards from us.

Our warmest wishes to you all for a happy and healthy New Year!

Will we do it all again next year? Probably!

Chris. Abram

MOTHER'S UNION FELLOWSHIP GROUP

Our theme for the December meeting was Advent which was reflected in our worship and the afternoon's activities, that is preparing ourselves for the festive season. This was illustrated by readings and music after which we enjoyed a bring and share tea.

We will start 2024 in our usual manner by celebrating an informal Eucharist at which our Vicar, Rev'd Harvey Gibbons, will preside. The meeting will take place on Thursday 11th January at 2.15pm in the Parish Centre; all welcome.

Please remember that subscriptions are due next month.

Pam Musson
(656212)

It was....

50 years ago, from 1st Jan to 6th Mar, 1974, a three-day working week was introduced in the UK, in order to conserve coal supplies (used by power stations) during a miners' strike.

40 years ago, on 22nd Jan 1984 that the first Apple Mackintosh computer went on sale.

25 years ago, on 1st Jan 1999 that the euro officially became the new currency in 11 European countries.

ST OSWALD'S LADIES' GROUP

We gathered for our Christmas Lunch to make a full Orangery at Derwen College with a lot of festive chatter and a lot of Christmas jumpers. Ann Sagar provided a typed slip of what we had pre-ordered as people nearly always forget!



June welcomed everyone and Jassica encouraged us to sing "All good gifts round us ...". She then said a formal Grace thanking God for the Derwen and its work and the fellowship of the Ladies' Group and including a prayer for so many of the wrongs in this world.

It was interesting that the Tom Smith crackers we pulled contributed to the Trussell Trust which supports our own Food Bank here in Oswestry. Not all ladies wore their crowns!

We had a delicious meal and afterwards June thanked Glenda for organising the lunch and Glenda thanked the Derwen for providing our Christmas meal and the staff for serving it. An enjoyable start to Christmas festivities.

Our next meeting will be in the Parish Centre on Monday January 8th at 2.30 p.m. when Dr. Dawn Milner will be our speaker - 'My Nutrition Journey'.

Happy New Year to everyone.

Ann Boulton

COFFEE ROTA—JANUARY 2024



7	Mary Jones	Natasha Bell	Sally Wright
14	Jane Mayne	Chris Abram	Jean Lawrence
21	Jane Wilkinson	Val Hamer	Carol Burke
28	Judi Neale	Babs Bone	Elaine Leek

AN ANGLICAN JOURNEY - 2

Anglican or Episcopalian? - our very own Game of Thrones.

The journey through the Anglican world that Jan and I have made took us to some churches which describe themselves as Anglican and others as Episcopalian. The history of the difference is fascinating and involves revolutions and three separate civil wars.

Civil war number 1, England. It all starts in England with the war between the Royalists and the Parliamentarians - the one that led to St Oswald's being badly damaged (something that wasn't finally fixed until the Victorian renovations which we'll be celebrating next year). Eventually the Royalists won on points and Charles II was restored as king. His son, James II, took over at his father's death but he turned out to be far too Catholic for English tastes. James was kicked out after a group composed of six nobles, plus the Bishop of London, invited the Dutch Protestant prince, William, to invade England with a small Dutch army and take the crown. In a wonderful piece of political spin this was hailed as the 'Glorious Revolution'.

Civil war number 2, Scotland. North of the border things were a bit different; during the Reformation the church in Scotland was split between those who wanted the new fangled Protestant type of church and those who wanted to keep bishops. Some parishes became Presbyterian, following the teachings of John Knox, others remained faithful to the old order, the Episcopalians. At times the disputes became violent.

James II had come from the Stuart line of Scottish kings (he was James VII in Scotland). The old guard in Scotland refused to swear allegiance to the upstart Dutchman, William. On the other hand, the Presbyterians were delighted to have a Protestant king and were happy to become loyal subjects. The national church in Scotland came to be Presbyterian and the Episcopalians were left hopefully to fade away.

Move on to 1745 and the grandson of James II, Bonnie Prince Charlie (Charles Edward Stuart) still had his eyes on the British throne. With French help he landed in Scotland and formed an army which was largely of Episcopalians. They overcame many parts of Scotland before turning south towards London. On reaching Derby they realised that the English people just couldn't be bothered supporting them. (Note; apathy can be a very powerful political force). The army scuttled back to the north of Scotland in considerable disarray, arriving at Culloden, near Inverness. A

day later in battle they met up with an experienced army, mainly of Protestant Scots, supporting the British king, George II. Charlie's army lost and he fled. The Episcopalians were banned for decades (along with such things as bagpipes and tartan) but managed to remain as a sort of underground movement.

Civil war number 3, America. Later in the 1700s the American colonists revolted against the British Crown. The colonists had taken with them bishops and clergy of the Church of England who'd all had to swear allegiance to the crown. After the Americans won their war of independence they wanted an American church not one subject to a now foreign king. The Church of England refused to consecrate American bishops because that would take away one of the last holds that the British crown had over those revolting Americans. So, the Americans turned to the Episcopalians in Scotland who had no great love for the Dutch/German royal family and who were delighted to consecrate a new bishop for them. Accordingly on 14th November 1784 a priest called Samuel Seabury from what is now the Bronx in New York was consecrated in Aberdeen. He carried the line of bishops over the Atlantic to free the American church. Not surprisingly they took on the title of Episcopalian.

We haven't had any civil wars based on the church for a couple of hundred years and the Anglican Communion has gone on from those two stems to become the third largest Christian denomination in the world after the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches. It's not one church but a federation of 42 independent, self-governing churches. Even today, shadows of the battles between our pre-reformation roots in the Roman Catholic Church and the protestant theologies still persist, but with God's grace we can use the debates as a way of enriching our spiritual lives and own understanding of God's purpose for us in the twenty first century.

John Chesworth

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We would like to wish you all a peaceful and blessed New Year, and hope that you are going to join us as we celebrate this, the 150th Anniversary of St. Oswald's reopening after major restoration work was completed in the Victorian era.

We have a full programme of events planned for the year, including music, poetry, displays, peals of bells and guest speakers culminating in a grand service of thanksgiving, so keep your eye on the notice board by the font for details of upcoming events.

Harvey, John Abram and team

Haydn Jones would like to share these words with you (Author unknown)

When I come to the end of the road
And the sun has set for me,
I want no rites in a gloom-filled room.
Why cry for a soul set free

Miss me a little....but not too long
And not with your head bowed low.
Remember the love that we once shared.
Miss me....but let me go.

For this is a journey that we all must take
And each must go alone.
It's all a part of the Master's plan,
A step on the road to home.

When you are lonely and sick of heart,
Go to the friends we know
And bury your sorrows in doing good deeds.
Miss me....but let me go.

MUSIC NOTES – JANUARY 2024

A very happy new year to all our readers. There will be some big changes in the Choir this year. We start this month with the departure of Spencer Williamson to University in Bristol.

Spencer joined the Choir at the age of 8, after a recruitment campaign in local schools and turned up with a brother and sister in tow; so that was three for the price of one. Brother Michael left to follow other interests which clashed with Choir but sister, Hannah stayed until she left for university some 5 years ago.

Spencer worked through all the stages of the RSCM's 'Voice for Life' programme attaining the Gold Award and becoming firstly Head Chorister and then Assistant Choir Trainer, a role that they have carried out to the highest standard, both in training choristers and in directing the Choir. I am very grateful for the ten years of dedicated and faithful service that Spencer has given. I wish them well in, what I am certain, will be a bright future.

Spencer's leaving means that there will be a change in roles for those remaining.

Our current Head Chorister, Alice Williams will become Assistant Choir Trainer. Deputy Head Chorister Eleri Roberts will move up to the Head Chorister position. Alice and Eleri have completed the RSCM 'Voice for Life' programme, each now holding the Gold Award. Both have gone on to be awarded an Associate Diploma of the North and Midlands School of Music. They are well qualified to carry out their new roles.

The role of Deputy Head Chorister will now be undertaken by Ella Wilkinson. Ella joined the Choir shortly after her brother Myles. Myles became one of our first to receive an Oswestry School Chorister Award. Ella is now studying for her Silver Award in 'Voice for Life'.

We are certainly fortunate in having so many talented and dedicated young people in the Choir. This shows in the extremely high standard of music that has become the norm in our services. But now, we need to look to the future. Spencer is leaving this month, Myles and Alice will move on to university in September and others will follow within the next two to three years. There is a need to attract new choristers to continue the fine tradition that St. Oswald's has for its choral worship.

Children gain huge benefits by being members of a choir that operates, as we do, at the Cathedral standard.

Choristers lead busy but fulfilling lives. They make good friends and enjoy full social lives. Perhaps more importantly, a church choir is unlike any other choir in that it is producing new music to performance standard week after week. The chorister, therefore, soon develops the ability to learn quickly and make the most of his/her time. I have found that these skills affect all other aspects of the chorister's life. During my choir training career several of my choristers have gone on to study music, some as choral scholars at Oxford and Cambridge; indeed, Myles is the latest to be offered a Choral Scholarship at Oxford University. Most choristers who stay in the choir go on to some form of higher education

We also have chorister scholarships at Oswestry School, the details are on the music pages of the Church's website (stoswaldsoswestry.org.uk).

If you would like to find out more, please do contact me

Michael Donkin (Director of Music)
Cae Bach,
Llanfechain,
Powys
SY22 6UT
Tel: 07779 917724
Email: michaeldonkin44@gmail.com

There is much more to say about music events this year. Look out for more exciting details next month.

Mike Donkin
Director of Music



Services at S. Oswald's

January 7	08:00	Holy Communion
<i>Epiphany</i>	10:30	Parish Eucharist with sung setting
<i>Baptism of Christ</i>	16:00	Christingle
January 14	10:30	Parish Eucharist with sung setting
<i>Epiphany 2</i>	17:30	Question Time
January 21	08:00	Holy Communion
<i>Epiphany 3</i>	10:30	Parish Eucharist with sung setting
	18:30	Choral Evensong
January 28	10:30	Parish Eucharist with sung setting
<i>Epiphany 4</i>	17:30	Reflective Space
<i>Candlemas</i>		

Every Thursday 10.30 Holy Communion (BCP)

MORNING PRAYER is said in the Chapel of St Catherine at 9am on Mondays and Tuesdays. It is streamed online through the church Facebook page at 9 o'clock on Wednesday to Friday. Sunday worship is on the YouTube page.

Enquires for Baptisms, Marriages etc should be made to the Parish Office. Please email the Parish Administrator (stoswald.office@gmail.com) for an appointment.

Services at Rhydycroesau

<i>First Sunday</i> January 7	09:30	All Age Service
<i>Second Sunday</i> January 14	09:30	Holy Communion
<i>Fourth Sunday</i> January 28	09:30	Holy Communion



Parish Church of St. Oswald, King & Martyr
Music List - January 2024

Sunday 7th January

Epiphany

10.30 Parish Eucharist

Setting: Archer - St. Albans Service

Anthem: We three kings - Hopkins (arr: Stopford)

16.00 Christingle

(Juniors & Choral Scholars)

Anthem: Gaudete - trad

Sunday 14th January

Epiphany 2

10.30 Parish Eucharist

Setting: Mathias - Communion Service in C

Anthem: Behold the Lamb of God (from Messiah) - G. F. Handel

17.30 Question Time

(No Choir)

Sunday 21st January

Epiphany 3

10.30 Parish Eucharist

Setting: Thorne - Mass of St. Thomas

Anthem: Listen sweet dove - Ives

18.30 Choral Evensong

Introit: A prayer of St. Richard of Chichester - White

Canticles: Stanford in B flat

Responses: Morley

Anthem: Omnes de Saba veniunt - Lassus

Sunday 28th January

Presentation of Christ in the Temple

10.30 Parish Eucharist

(Candlemas)

Setting: Archer - St. Albans Service

Anthem: O thou the central orb - Wood

Voluntary: Prelude & Fugue (BWV543) - J. S. Bach

17.30 Reflective Service

(No Choir)

**FEAST OF THE
EPIPHANY**





CALENDAR FOR JANUARY



Tuesday 2	1030—1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 3	1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre 1930 St Oswald's Book Club in Parish Centre
Friday 5	1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
Saturday 6	0900 Orthodox Divine Liturgy
Monday 8	0900—1030 Oswestry School Assembly 1000 Clergy Eucharist and Meeting 1430 Ladies Group—Parish Centre
Tuesday 9	1030—1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 10	1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre 1930 St Oswald's Book Club in Parish Centre
Thursday 11	1415—1600 Mothers' Union Fellowship Group
Friday 12	1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
Monday 15	1930 PCC Meeting—Parish Centre
Tuesday 16	1030—1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 17	0830—0940 Oswestry School Assembly 1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre 1930 St Oswald's Book Club in Parish Centre
Friday 19	1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
Tuesday 23	1030—1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 24	0830—0940 Oswestry School Assembly 1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre 1930 St Oswald's Book Club in Parish Centre
Friday 26	1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
Tuesday 30	1030—1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 31	0830—0940 Oswestry School Assembly 1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre 1930 St Oswald's Book Club in Parish Centre

It was.....

175 years ago, on 13 Jan 1849 that the Colony of Vancouver Island was established. It became part of Canada in 1871.

150 years ago, on 25th Jan 1874 that Somerset Maugham, British playwright, novelist and short story writer, was born. One of the most popular writers of his era.

Follow us on Facebook at 'St Oswalds Parish Church Oswestry'

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A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE – 247

FURTHER THOUGHTS ON OUR CHURCH MONUMENTS

November's article focussed on the monuments and memorials to be seen in St Oswald's, both the Yale monument and the wall-mounted memorials to be found in St Catherine's chapel and on the tower walls in the nave. I posed the question whether a large church like ours, serving a sizeable parish and a prosperous town, a church with a history stretching back more than 900 years, should have more such monuments, noting as an example the impressive monuments to be seen in St Mary's, Chirk.

I asked whether there are reasons why we have no other monuments similar in style to the Yale monument, and concluded the article by noting that the memorial to Hugh and Dorothy Yale – formerly “within the chancell of this church commonly called St Marie's before its demolition in the late warrs” (very probably our north chancel) – was probably saved because Hugh Yale had set up a charitable trust to oversee payments to the poor of Oswestry, and those trustees would have wanted the monument to be restored as part of the restoration of the church in the years after the Civil War. Other memorials, perhaps without family members, or other associates, to speak for them, would not have been so fortunate, and would have been lost to posterity.

It is certainly the case that, in the long list of the gravestones to be found set into the floor of St Oswald's – both in the chancel and the nave – immediately before the great restoration of the church in 1872/74, there is only one gravestone which pre-dates the destruction of the Civil War, when in June 1644 the church and its tower were at the centre of fierce fighting between Royalist and Parliamentary troops. This is the stone marking the grave of John Edwards, aged thirty, who died in 1631 – details corroborated by the parish registers which record, on August 31st 1631, the burial of the mortal remains of John ap Edward, a tailor, “of the Beylee”.

So, to begin to answer the question why aren't there more monuments like Mr Yale's, or from the church's medieval or Tudor past, evidence suggests that we can lay some of the blame on the Civil War, on the great damage caused to the structure and the fabric of the church in 1644. Evidence, from fund raising efforts of the time from the 1650s through to the 1690s, from our churchwardens' accounts, and from what we know of our church building, its bells, and its furniture, tells us that the damage was sufficient for the restoration programme to extend over approximately

seventy five years. Many pre-Civil War monuments would have suffered damage in 1644, and (without surviving family members to fund their restoration) they would not have been a priority in relation to the rebuilding of the church.

Before moving on to the years after the Civil War, and to the monuments installed in St Oswald's from that time through to the 19th century, it is worth returning to the period before the Civil War – to medieval and Tudor Oswestry – and to observe that the FitzAlans, lords of Oswestry from the 12th century to the late 16th century, and from the late 13th century earls of Arundel, were not buried here in Oswestry. The tombs of the early FitzAlans were at Haughmond Abbey, to which they were great benefactors, and later generations of the family were buried at Arundel. So, our church does not have a FitzAlan chapel, or the great medieval tombs of its feudal lords. And the powerful men that the FitzAlans appointed to run their local estates, as steward, or to maintain Oswestry Castle, as constable, tended to be land owners from elsewhere in Shropshire or along the Welsh border. After the death of Henry FitzAlan in 1580, the rights and dues of the 'lord of the manor' passed to the Howards, then to the Cravens, and in 1697 to the earls of Powis, where they remain. In all cases, they were non-resident and, despite strong and often long-lasting links with Oswestry and, for the earls of Powis, with St Oswald's, burial in our parish church would not have been considered.

Returning then to the years after 1660 – and bearing in mind that the church, and those responsible for its upkeep, were focussed on its rebuilding and restoration right through to the early 1720s - should we be surprised that there are no truly monumental monuments in our church from the late 17th century, through the 18th century, or into the 19th century? It is not as if Oswestry was struggling as a town during this period, that there weren't prosperous merchant families, or land-owning families in the town and in the church congregation. The evidence from houses still to be seen in Church Street, Upper and Lower Brook Street, Willow Street and elsewhere shows that not to be the issue. Rather I believe the reason was perhaps threefold.

Firstly there was a move away from large monuments, set on the floor, towards wall-mounted memorials. Secondly, there would have been a realisation that St Oswald's needed to retain all the internal floorspace that it had to accommodate a growing local population. Thirdly, although there was money in the town and parish, the town's merchant class was of the 'middling sort', perhaps more capable of affording a wall tablet than

an ostentatious floor mounted monument. And many of the largest of our local land owners, active in the civic and social life of the town, such as the Williams Wynns or the Ormsby Gores, lived beyond our parish boundaries – in the parish of Llansilin or Llanyblodwel, Whittington or Selattyn.

All that being said, we should recognise that St Oswald's does have, on its walls, a fine collection of wall-mounted memorials from the 18th and early 19th centuries. Granted, the restoration work of 1872/74 means that these are sometimes well hidden – for instance, behind the church organ – or mounted so high on the tower walls that it is difficult, near impossible, to read them. The writers of the Shropshire volume in the Buildings of England series draw attention to four of these monuments: those to Richard Maurice (d. 1700), Robert Powell Lloyd (d. 1769), Thomas Trevor, vicar (d.1784), and Robert Watkin Lloyd (d. 1794), all in the north chancel and St Catherine's chapel. I have always liked the monument to the Rev. Joseph Venables (d. 1810), with its silhouette, above the doorway from the tower into the nave; also the much larger memorial to Thomas Kynaston of Maesbury, high up on the eastern flank of the tower – the subject of an article in April 2023.

John Pryce-Jones

BONUS BALL

Congratulations to November winners of the weekly Lotto Bonus Ball draw who have each received £29. The winners were:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Ball Number</u>	<u>Winner</u>
4Nov	43	June Williams
11Nov	32	Tony Beasley
18Nov	56	Graham Roberts
25Nov	49	Rev'd David Hart

Though all the numbers are currently taken, two numbers will be becoming available in March. If you would like to join the Bonus Ball and help to raise £1,508 each year for St Oswalds, let me know and I'll allocate one, or both, of these numbers to you. The cost is just £1 per week - collected quarterly, half yearly or annually to suit you.

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WINTER MOTHS

When the nights are long and cold, we do not think of seeing insects, but spare a thought for the Winter Moth which can withstand freezing temperatures and can be seen on the wing between October and January.

For many of us, we see the Winter Moth in car headlights when driving in small lanes after dark, it is pale brown in colour and can be seen fluttering. They are attracted to light however, and so will come to a moth trap if you want a closer look. Winter Moths are widespread, occurring in many places with trees and shrubs, so not particularly a churchyard species but, as with so many other creatures, churchyards will be a haven for them, particularly if they provide a space away from artificial lights which can be so disorientating to insects.

Unusually, females cannot fly, they have small stubby wings and are dark grey, giving them camouflage as they clamber up tree trunks to summon males. The females attract a mate by giving off pheromones, which draw in the flying males. Their eggs are then laid on the bark of the tree and don't hatch until spring, when tiny green caterpillars emerge. The caterpillars feed on tree leaves, eating a range of species including oak, sycamore, beech and willow. Caterpillars can also travel from tree to tree by spinning long threads of silk which act as a sail, carrying them through the air.

In the spring Winter Moth caterpillars are an important food for woodland birds, particularly the tit family. In January there is less food around and these small birds can be seen searching within the crevasses and nooks and crannies of trees for a range of adult invertebrates including Winter Moths, and also the overwintering larvae of other species.

Why not take a torch-lit walk and see if you can see a Winter Moth or even, if you are lucky, a female on a tree trunk. Alternatively wait for spring and look in April or May for the caterpillars chomping leaves, or a bluetit eating a caterpillar! The caterpillars are tiny, green and have a dark stripe on the top of their bodies. If you care for a church or churchyard then please consider the insects when planning outdoor lighting, having dark areas or lights which go off for part of the night can be beneficial to many species.

All the best,

Harriet Carty

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The SCWP is feeling truly festive with Christmas in a Box workshops well underway. It always feels slightly strange to be starting in the middle of November, but schools have been excited to explore the Christmas story and its importance. Knowledge of the birth of Jesus can be really varied amongst our young people, and it is a joy to be able to share it with them. These workshops continue throughout December, and by the end of the term I will have delivered it 13 times within 10 schools.



My first prayer space of the year was a success. 149 children explored five different prayer stations. This year we used images of the weather to inspire our prayers. The sun represented things that make us happy and thankful. The rain represented the things we do wrong, and how God can wash those away when we ask for forgiveness. A storm cloud represented things that we worry about. As they wrote their prayers they then placed them in a tent as a sign of asking God to give shelter and protection in times of worry. We also created a rainbow to remember God's promises and our hopes for the future. The final prayer station focused on those around the world whose lives are affected by extreme weather.

More Happening this Month

Advent and Christmas assemblies start in schools this month, allowing for the pupils and staff to be able to focus on the message of Jesus rather than just the commercial festivities.

RE lessons in St Martins school will focus on the core beliefs of Christians. These sessions are a great opportunity for the young people to ask questions about Christianity.

Mentoring and the Marches CU will also continue to support our young people in the local secondary schools. At the CU we are looking at characters from the Old Testament and how their stories can apply to us today.

Finally all of us at the SCWP would like to thank you for your continued support.

Many Blessings

Jane Webber

Things to Pray For

- For Christmas in a Box workshops and Christmas assemblies. Pray that these will allow the children and staff to engage with the important message of Jesus.
- For pupils in year 11 who are taking Mock GCSE's.
- For families for whom Christmas is a difficult time of year both

BULLETIN BLOOPERS

The church notices that did not come out quite as they were meant to do!

Any church member over 18 is welcome to join our new lay ministry programme. It requires minimal training and time: just six weekly classes of about 200 hours each Tuesday night.

The Seniors group will have a picnic on Saturday. Each person is asked to bring a friend, a vegetable, and a sweet, all in a covered dish. Meat and drinks will be provided.

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PUBLICATION DETAILS FOR NEXT MONTH

Material required in the Office
SUNDAY, 14 JANUARY

Make-up day for working party,
and publication:
Tuesday, 23 January

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Wordsearch – Wise Men and St Paul meet Jesus (Answers on p.38)

The Wise Men and St Paul were both on trips when they first encountered Jesus, but how different those trips were! The Wise Men, whom we remember on Epiphany (6th Jan) were seeking the One for whom the Star shone, and came to Bethlehem to worship him. St Paul, whose conversion we remember this month (26th Jan), was on his way to Damascus, seeking to kill those who worshipped Jesus. When the Wise Men encountered the Baby Jesus, they worshipped Him and gave Him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. When St Paul, the proud, fanatical Pharisee, encountered Jesus, he fell blinded on the road, and then worshipped Him by giving Him the rest of his life. St Paul endured years of suffering and hardships in his work as the great apostle to the Gentiles. His mighty faith in Christ has kindled similar belief in many hundreds of millions of people down the centuries.

Wise	H D D R M B A B Y G O O	Conversion
Men	L W E F E E D T K L E V	Seeking
Trips	B L I B T T N A R I P A	Kill
Paul	L E I S N H N B O I I P	Baby
Encounter	I N N K E L D U O R P O	Gifts
Jesus	N O I S R E V N O C H S	Gold
Different	D H S T E H K E S C A T	Proud
Epiphany	E S U F F E R I N G N L	Blinded
Star	D E S I F M R L N G Y E	Road
Shone	Y E E G I L U A P G D Y	Suffering
Bethlehem	A E J O D L O G T E F R	Apostle
	G I U I H S N O A S E O	

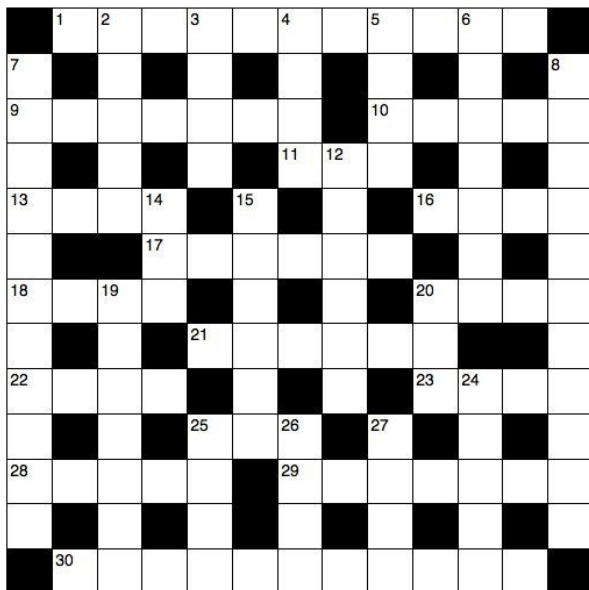
PARISH NEWS

A reminder that subscriptions for the forthcoming year are due by the end of January - £5 for the twelve months or 50p each month. This means there is no increase on last year's price.

Subscriptions can be placed in the wall safe at the back of the church, either in cash (please note that the opening to the wall safe won't be wide enough to accept 5 x £1 coins) or by cheque made payable to St Oswald's Parish Church. Please include your name and mark your payment 'magazine'.

ACROSS

- 1 Paul said the wrath of God 'is being revealed from heaven' against this (Romans 1:18) (11)
- 9 Go smite (anag.) (7)
- 10 'But — I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee' (Matthew 26:32) (5)
- 11 'Take and —; this is my body' (Matthew 26:26) (3)
- 13 Type (2 Thessalonians 2:10) (4)
- 16 'Woe to those who — iniquity' (Micah 2:1) (4)
- 17 'How shall we — if we ignore such a great salvation?' (Hebrews 2:3)(6)
- 18 Opposite of evens (4)
- 20 Previously cited (Latin) (4)
- 21 'There is surely — — of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife' (Genesis 20:11) (2,4)
- 22 The Thessalonians were warned to keep away from every brother who was this (2 Thessalonians 3:6) (4)
- 23 Beat (anag.) (4)
- 25 To trouble or afflict (Job 16:3) (3)
- 28 Part of a roof (1 Kings 7:9) (5)
- 29 Attain (Job 5:12) (7)
- 30 Insect noted for its gymnastic ability (Psalm 78:46) (11)



DOWN

- 2 Smell (John 11:39) (5)
- 3 Lion's home (Jeremiah 25:38) (4)
- 4 'Jesus Christ is the — yesterday and today and for ever' (Hebrews 13:8) (4)
- 5 Tidy (4)
- 6 Made their home (Genesis 47:27) (7)
- 7 Their task was to carry the curtains of the tabernacle (Numbers 4:25–26) (11)
- 8 Timothy's was called Lois (2 Timothy 1:5) (11)

- 12 The Lover likened the fragrance of the Beloved's breath to these
(Song of Songs 7:8) (6)
- 14 Times Educational Supplement (1,1,1)
- 15 Eight-tentacled sea creatures (6)
- 19 'And lead us not into temptation, but — us from the evil one'
(Matthew 6:13) (7)
- 20 D.L. Moody's legendary song leader, — D. Sankey (3)
- 24 Rarely used musical note (5)
- 25 'Your will be done on earth — it — in heaven' (Matthew 6:10) (2,2)
- 26 and 27 'The Lord Almighty will — them with a — , as when he struck
down Midian at the rock of Oreb' (Isaiah 10:26) (4,4)
- 27 See 26 Down

Sudoku

			7		8	1	5	
1		7	2					6
				5		9		7
				8		5	6	3
	1	3	6		7	2	4	
8	4	6		2				
7		4		1				
9					6	8		2
	2	1	8		5			

Easy

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			6				7	
		7			3	5		
3					7		4	
					2	6		
8	5						1	7
		9	3					
	9		5					3
		4	1			8		
	2				9			

Medium

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PUZ?LES

Solution on
page 38

REGISTERS



We welcome in HOLY BAPTISM

S Oswald's

November 26 Ella Netty Lucy Pugh

As God has lent them to us, so we say farewell and give back in HOLY DYING:

S Oswald's

November 22	Joan Telling, aged 96
November 24	Hugh Wight Findlay, aged 88
November 30	Michael James Brennan, aged 51
December 7	David William Morgan, aged 77
December 12	Yvonne Ann Brennan, aged 90
December 13	Pamela May Goldsmith, aged 86
December 19	Jane Martha Williams, aged 87



We are a group of volunteers running advice sessions in Oswestry Library, to assist the general public with Family & Local History. Our sessions are free and include access to Ancestry.com, Parish Records, Local Maps, Photographs and copies of the Advertiser 1849 to date. Family & Local Historians available: Monday: 10:00-12:00 Friday: 13:30-16:00
No appointments necessary

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Easy

3	9	2	7	6	8	1	5	4
1	5	7	2	4	9	3	8	6
4	6	8	3	5	1	9	2	7
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5	1	3	6	9	7	2	4	8
8	4	6	5	2	3	7	9	1
7	8	4	9	1	2	6	3	5
9	3	5	4	7	6	8	1	2
6	2	1	8	3	5	4	7	9

Medium

9	4	2	6	8	5	3	7	1
6	1	7	4	9	3	5	8	2
3	8	5	2	1	7	9	4	6
4	7	1	8	5	2	6	3	9
8	5	3	9	6	4	2	1	7
2	6	9	3	7	1	4	5	8
1	9	6	5	4	8	7	2	3
7	3	4	1	2	6	8	9	5
5	2	8	7	3	9	1	6	4



SMILE-LINES

Windows

A wife texted her husband on a cold winter morning: "Windows frozen." Her husband texted back: "Pour some lukewarm water over it." The wife texted back five minutes later: "Computer's completely not working now."

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