



April 2026

PARISH MAGAZINE

EASTER SUNDAY

5TH APRIL 2026

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and Christchurch, Rhydycroesau 50p**



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*Interregnum***

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Mrs Lindsay Clarke
Miss Sally Wright

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Mrs Muriel Jones Tel: 653598
Mr John Abram MBE TD Tel: 653316
Christchurch: Mrs Elizabeth Stanley Tel: 676450
Rosemary Davies Tel: 07813757498

Parochial Church Councils
S Oswald's: Hon Secretary: Ms Carron Boulton Tel: 652861
Hon Treasurer: Mr Paul Evison Tel: 653315
Christchurch: Hon Secretary:
Hon Treasurer:

Director of Music
S Oswald's: Mrs Samantha Lewis-Widnall
Email: samanthalewiswidnall@gmail.com

Organist:
St Oswald's: Josephine Sands email: joasands@hotmail.co.uk.
Christchurch:

Parish Office
S Oswald's: Church Street, Oswestry SY11 2SY. Tel: 652861
Parish Administrator: Ms Carron Boulton email: stoswald.office@gmail.com

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CHANGE

This year has been very interesting. The celebrations of Christmas passed off peacefully but days later Donald J Trump changed all that by kidnapping the Venezuelan president and his wife.

Our family's first experience of living and working overseas was in Venezuela. Later we were to live and work in the Middle East for seven years. We got there before Trump did. There I completed my ordination training. We'd few candidates for ministry training in the Gulf and so the half a dozen of us worked individually at home through our local churches and then came together every few months for training weekend in one of the Gulf countries. Each of those countries has been attacked by Iran in the last week.

Venezuela and Iran are very different but they are similar in one respect, each claimed to be a democracy. In reality both were governed by dictatorships who have ruled their people by fear; fear of 'being disappeared', fear of imprisonment, fear of torture and fear of death. As Easter approaches we have to recognise that Jesus lived in just such an environment of dread. The population suffered from a fearsome two-layered dictatorship with the Roman Empire on top then the Jewish religious establishment as the lower level. As we read of the disciples being scattered after the crucifixion we can see their human responses to fear. Some responded by running as far and as fast as they could. Peter did it by keeping his head down and being evasive. You can see those same reactions in the 9 million Venezuelans who fled their country and in those who had to stay and pay at least lip-service to the Marxist regime. The people of Iran seem to have nowhere to run to but still have to hold to a fine line between conforming to the Shiite interpretation of Islamic law and living in freedom.

As I write, we don't know what will happen in Iran but there seems to be an acceptance in the Venezuelan local press that real change is happening. Many, at all levels of government, who had power – even the power of life and death – have been sacked. Many who had no power will find themselves in charge. As the Magnificat says; *'casting down the mighty from their thrones and lifting up the lowly'*. We can say fairly firmly that in both Venezuela and Iran, nothing will ever be the same.

Are there any signs of hope? I don't have any insights into Iran but there are glimmers of hope in Venezuela. In January it was widely reported in Venezuelan newspapers that the churches had come together to pray for peace and being seen to work for peace. It brought together, as never

before, people from Catholic and Evangelical backgrounds. The church was a leading light in calling for the release of political prisoners. Amid all the uncertainty and the huge political upheavals, it was the followers of Christ who offered hope through the simple action of praying.

Many people find in Christianity a sense of comfortable continuity, of unchanging traditions. Jesus taught his followers to have no respect for religious tradition. The origins of our Easter faith were set in times which were every bit as unsettled and unsettling as those the world faces today. Jesus still calls the world to prayer. He also calls for repentance; not a weeping and a wailing about past misdeeds but a challenge to make a radical change of direction.

The whole thrust of Jesus' teaching is revolutionary; it encompasses change at a personal level, change at a local level, change within nations, change between nations. Our world is different to the one in which Jesus lived but his message today is just the same. To change so that *'the hungry are filled with good things and the rich sent empty away'*. To change so that truth triumphs and that real freedom prevails. Lent is a time for us to weigh up what changes we are called to and to get stuck into the task.

Here at St Oswald's we are (like it or not) in the midst of change. The only constant is God. All the other things which we might treasure are as nothing if they aren't designed to set Jesus and His Kingdom as first and foremost. So, pray for St Oswald's and look forwards to our continuing ministry for Christ's sake and our eagerness to embrace whatever new way to which we may be called.

John Chesworth



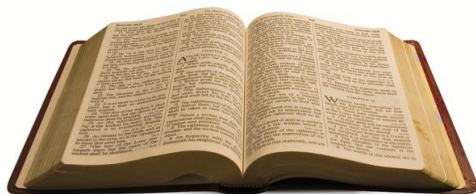
PRAYING FOR OUR WORLD

The next meeting is **May 6** at 7 p.m. in the Church Reading Area.

For people who wish to come in and pray during the day, prayer resources can be found in St. George's Chapel.

GOSPEL READING FOR EASTER SATURDAY

**St Oswald's Church, Oswestry
Saturday 4 April, 2:00-4:00pm**



**A narrative of the life, ministry
and Passion of our Lord,
Jesus Christ, read aloud in
passages from the gospels of
Matthew, Luke and John
in the King James Version.**

ALL ARE WELCOME.

**LISTENERS CAN DROP IN AND OUT AT
ANY TIME DURING THE READING.**

Self-serve tea and coffee available.

HOLY WEEK: STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Lindsay Clarke and I will be leading three Stations of the Cross in Church this year.

They will each be looking at the Lord's Passion from a different perspective, and it can be a very moving experience to follow Jesus' last journey as we approach Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

7.00pm Monday 30th March:- Stations of the Cross *for Our Times*.

7.00pm Tuesday 31st March:- Stations of the Cross *through the eyes of Mary, Mother of Jesus*

7.00pm Wednesday 1st April:- Stations of the Cross *with readings from the writings of Julian of Norwich*

These devotions will last between 45-60 minutes and we do hope as many people as possible will feel able to join us.

Lindsay Clarke and Sally Wright
Locally Commissioned Lay Ministers.

SEVEN PRAYER POINTS

Last year the Mission and Ministry Team set up seven tableaux around the church reflecting on events which took place on Good Friday. These were well-received, and many people found them thought-provoking so this year MMT plan to set up seven prayer points around the church, using an idea from Stephen Cottrell's book entitled "*The Things He Carried – a journey to the cross.*"

In the last chapter Cottrell tells us that Christ carried a broken heart - "*He carried his heart, open and vulnerable, from Jordan to Jerusalem, from Gethsemane to Golgotha. And then it was broken:*"

Jesus carried all the negative events that happened to Him, but most of all He carried the heart-breaking things that happen in people's lives today, and we hope that these prayer points will help us to not only reflect on our Lord's suffering but on the suffering of our brothers and sisters for whom life can be a harsh journey. We pray that they will know that Christ understands and is with them.

Please visit these prayer points if you are able. They will be in church from Palm Sunday until the first Sunday after Easter.

Mission and Ministry Team

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Come and see where we belong

ELECTORAL ROLL 2026

Last year we formed a brand new Electoral Roll so this year we just need to amend and revise it where necessary so please check your entry and advise me of any amendments.

The revised Roll is then presented at the Annual Parochial Church meeting on Monday 18th of May. Being on the Electoral Roll enables you to serve on the PCC, be an elected officer such as churchwarden or perhaps get married in church, even if you live outside the parish.

The Roll will be on display on the table by the main (south) door from 19th April until 3rd May. It will then be revised for any changes, additions or errors. It will exclude telephone numbers.

If you are not on the Roll and are in any doubt as to whether you are eligible (eligibility details are on the application form), please have a word with me or one of the churchwardens.

Andrew Clarke
Electoral Roll Officer
01691 659340
Email acsclarke@yahoo.com

MOTHERS` UNION FELLOWSHIP GROUP

We were pleased to welcome Kate & Mike Donkin to our meeting this month. Kate spoke about the discoveries she had researched in her families history and showed pictures of them and the places they had lived in, most of which she had visited in her learning about them.

Our next meeting is on Thursday 9th April at 2.15 when our speaker will be our Mayor, Rosie Radford, speaking about her year that will end in May.

All welcome.

Pam Musson



NEWS FROM YOUR PCC

The ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING will take place in the Parish Centre in May (at a date to be confirmed).

Now is the time to prayerfully consider whether you could offer yourself for ELECTION to the Offices of CHURCH WARDEN (4) elected annually. This year the PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL will also elect Three new members for three years.

These representatives have to be elected at the Annual Parochial Meeting,

QUALIFICATIONS OF PERSONS TO BE ELECTED: CRR M8

(1) A person is qualified for election as a parochial representative of the laity to the deanery synod or the PCC under Rule M6(1) (a) or (b) if:

- a) the person is aged 16 or over
- b) he or she is an actual communicant, and
- c) his or her name is on the roll of the parish and, unless he or she is aged under 18 at the date of the election, has been on the roll for at least the preceding six months.

(2) But if the person has his or her name on the roll of more than one parish, he or she must choose one of the parishes concerned for the purpose of qualifying for election as a parochial representative of the laity to the deanery synod.

(3) A person may not be nominated for election under Rule (M6(1) (a) or (b) unless -

- (a) The person has indicated his or her consent to serve, or
- (b) There is in the opinion of the meeting, sufficient evidence of his or her willingness to serve.

Disqualifications

(a) a person is disqualified from being nominated, chosen or elected from serving as a member of a PCC if the person has been disqualified from holding office under section 10(6) of the Incumbents (Vacation of Benefices) Measure 1977 (breakdown of pastoral relationships).

(b) to serve on the parochial church council if he or she is disqualified from being a charity trustee under the Charities Act 2011.

You will find details of the elections on the board by the South door together with nomination papers from Mid April.

All papers have to be in to the Secretary (Carron Boulton) BEFORE the meeting in May 2026 (date to be confirmed). Email: Carron at: stoswald.office@gmail.com.

Please keep the Parochial Church Council in your prayers.

Carron Boulton

A CONTRIBUTION FROM HAYDN JONES

HOLY SPIRIT

Jesus said, 'If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever - the Spirit of truth.

The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

John 14, verses 15-17.

When you become a Christian, you receive God the Holy Spirit. He is in you and with you and always will be. His job is to be your guide all the way to heaven.

Because the Holy Spirit is within you, your behaviour will change and you will become more loving, more forgiving, more patient and kinder.

You will have a new relationship with God and you will find that you are drawn to other Christians.

The Holy Spirit teaches you how to pray and what to pray for, and that God responds to your prayers. You will find that you have power over your addictions and your worst sins.

The fruits of the Spirit are - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.

Galatians 5, verses 22-23.



ST OSWALD'S LADIES GROUP

As June our Chairman was on holiday, Glenda Evison and Ann Sagar led the monthly meeting, which was our Annual General Meeting. Twenty-two Ladies attended with seven apologies. The reports had been circulated prior to the meeting and were all accepted. Unfortunately Olwen Phillips was unable to continue on the Committee. Thank you Olwen for your help and support over the years. Annette Jones was elected to serve on the committee. Jane Wilkinson, Val Hamer, Ann Sagar, June Williams, Glenda Evison and Judi Neale were re-elected. Subscriptions for the year will remain at £15. Mary Jones thanked the Committee for all they do for the Group. At present we have thirty members and we welcomed Catherine to the Group. We have organised some interesting Speakers for 2026/2027.

Following the AGM Margaret Smith spoke about her lifelong passion for choral music which began when she joined her church choir at the age of 9. Throughout her time at school, at junior and senior level, Margaret enjoyed being a member of the choir. After leaving school she went to teacher training college where she abandoned piano lessons, which she felt were going nowhere, and had three years of singing lessons instead.

While there Margaret joined a large London choir and so began many years of singing through the vast choral repertoire that is the staple diet of such forces. Most concerts were given in central London venues such as the Royal Festival Hall, Royal Albert Hall, the Barbican and numerous churches, some of which had far from ideal acoustics. There were three overseas weekend concert tours, the highlight of which was a performance in Reims Cathedral. The choir also took part in a BBC Songs of Praise broadcast. Margaret said it was very interesting but the singing of just five hymns over and over again was somewhat tedious! Taking part in Promenade Concerts was always a wonderful experience.

The church Margaret and David attended before moving to Oswestry was similar in many ways to St Oswald's, the choir even wore the same red cassocks. Whilst there Margaret sang with the choir and also ran a choir for the girls as it was boys only in the front row. The main choir occasionally sang Choral Evensong at Southwark Cathedral and once had the opportunity sing in the chapel of Exeter College Oxford.

On moving to Oswestry Margaret was delighted to find a splendid choir and so the singing continues.

Our next meeting will be on the 13th April at 2.30 p.m. in the Parish Centre when we welcome Pip Machin - Midlands Air Ambulance Charity as our Speaker. If you would like further details of the Group do not hesitate to contact me in church.

Ann Sagar
Honorary Secretary

COFFEE ROTA FOR APRIL

5	Val Hamer	Glenda Evison	KayCole/Fiona Pearson
12	Ann Sagar	Dilys Lloyd	Olwen Phillips
19	Mary Jones	Natasha Bell	Sally Wright
26	Jane Mayne	Chris Abram	Jean Lawrence



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A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE – 273 PROPOSALS FOR A DIOCESE OF SHREWSBURY

This month's article comes courtesy of a lecture given by the Rev. Canon Dr William Price at Shrewsbury Abbey on March 4th. In front of an audience of around 200 people, Dr Price told the story of “the cathedral that never was”, of plans drawn up for an Anglican diocese covering the whole of Shropshire, which looked sure to be achieved, but which were dashed by a vote in the House of Lords 100 years ago, on March 4th 1926.

Regular readers of this column may recall that three years ago, in February 2023, we looked at the post of suffragan (assistant, or area) bishop, and at the Suffragan Bishops Act of 1534 which authorised the appointment of suffragan bishops in England and Wales, naming 26 towns as suitable suffragan sees, including Shrewsbury, and at the Suffragans Nomination Act of 1888. We noted that, in Shrewsbury's case, apart from one appointment in 1537 (by the bishop of Llandaff), the post of suffragan bishop of Shrewsbury was not filled until 1888, when an appointment was made by the bishop of Lichfield under the 1534 Act, with subsequent appointments made from 1940 to date. Currently the Bishop of Lichfield is supported by three area bishops, of Wolverhampton, Stafford and Shrewsbury.

Dr Price took his audience back to the dissolution of the monasteries, and to the original plans of king Henry VIII to establish thirteen new cathedrals, one in Shrewsbury, covering Shropshire as a whole, and endowed with the income of the former Shrewsbury and Wenlock abbeys. We were told that these plans had to be scaled back, as the monasteries' wealth was needed to fund a war with France, so that only six new dioceses (including Chester) were established, and that the number of Anglican dioceses remained unchanged for the next three hundred years until the 1830s and 1840s when dioceses were created for Manchester and Ripon, with numerous new dioceses created in the 1870s and 1880s including Truro, Liverpool and Newcastle upon Tyne.

These 19th century changes reflected the urgent need for the Church of England to increase the number of bishops to serve the increased population of the country including the expanding industrial towns and cities. Rather than dioceses serving immense areas, the trend was towards smaller dioceses, often coterminous with county boundaries.

In Shropshire's case, the county was split between three Anglican dioceses: Lichfield, Hereford and, serving the north-west including Oswestry, St Asaph, and as the 19th century came to a close, the case for

uniting the county under a new diocesan bishop grew stronger, with a fund raising committee established (to endow the new post), and with grand building works at the Abbey church, including a new chancel, developed in anticipation that the church would soon be made a cathedral.

The idea had the backing of the bishops of both Hereford and Shrewsbury, and the support of an energetic local committee. Oswestry, and its neighbouring parishes had perhaps been preoccupied by the changes brought about by the Welsh Church Act 1914, implemented in 1920, which separated the Church in Wales from the Church of England, and transferred St Asaph's Shropshire parishes to the diocese of Lichfield.

Whilst that significant change was still very new, in April 1921, the Oswestry Deanery Magazine was reporting positively on proposals for 'a see for Salop' commenting that "the creation of small and workable dioceses is the first plank in church reform", adding that "for many reasons the county of Shropshire with the grand old Abbey Church at Shrewsbury as its cathedral would make an ideal diocese". In June 1921, the magazine reported on a conference held by the rural deanery, in Whittington, to consider the idea. The vicar of St Oswald's, the Rev. A.R. Langford Brown, proposed "that this conference of the Oswestry Deanery without committing itself to details expresses its whole hearted approval of the Shropshire Bishopric Scheme. Furthermore when the time comes for the collecting of funds, it promises all possible assistance"; this proposal was carried unanimously.

To become a reality, the scheme had to pass through three stages. Firstly, it had to be considered, and backed by the National Church Assembly (established in 1919, the forerunner of General Synod). In June 1924, a formal proposal – the Bishopric of Shrewsbury Measure – was debated and passed with 'general approval' by that assembly. The Oswestry Deanery Magazine noted this decision, adding that this was achieved "not without some dissension".

Next, it had to be considered in Parliament, first by the House of Commons, and then by the House of Lords. On February 25th 1926, the Scheme was considered in the Commons, and passed, with 57 votes in favour and 33 against. Oswestry's MP, W.C. Bridgeman, voted in favour.

Finally, on March 4th 1926, the Scheme went to the Lords where, despite the backing of the bishops of Hereford and Lichfield, and of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the proposal was defeated, 60 votes (including that of Lord Harlech) in favour but 61 votes against. Opposition was led

by Lord Forester of Willey Park, Broseley, and the Bishop of Durham, who argued against the creation of additional dioceses, favouring larger groupings of parishes. Both men highlighted the impact of the proposed change on Hereford diocese, and spoke of the opposition of the Shropshire parishes that would 'move' from Hereford into the new Shrewsbury diocese¹.

The *Oswestry Advertizer*, on March 10th 1926, commented that the decision of the House of Lords was "as much disappointing as it is unsatisfactory" adding that the majority of one vote was "thoroughly unsatisfactory, and cannot be taken as the last word on the proposal". The expectation was that the proposal would, before long, be revisited; and the *Oswestry Deanery Magazine* for January 1927 expressed disappointment that the matter appeared "shelved" adding that "to all who have the efficient working of the Church at heart this is a great blow". However, shelved the matter remained, and in fact it never returned to Parliament, so that a Shrewsbury (or a Shropshire) diocese remains, to this day, as "one that never was".

*By John Pryce-Jones, drawing heavily, and with thanks,
on the work of the Rev. Canon Dr William Price*

¹In fact, of 15 south Shropshire parishes proposed to be left in Hereford diocese, 14 petitioned to be included in the new Shropshire diocese supported the change; and a subsequent referendum of all parishes in Lichfield and Hereford dioceses voted by a sizeable margin in favour of a Shropshire diocese

BONUS BALL

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

<u>Date</u>	<u>Ball Number</u>	<u>Winner</u>
7 Feb	40	Hazel Pryce
14 Feb	14	Ann Sagar
21 Feb	19	Bill Bowen
28 Feb	23	Christine Townsend

The new Bonus Ball year starts in March and the cost of joining is £1 per week which can be paid either annually (£52), half yearly (£26) or quarterly (£13).

If you would like to join the St Oswald Bonus Ball, please let me know.

Paul Crosby
658606

CHURCH ROOF

It is possible that some parishioners are wondering why we have had scaffolding up at the east end of the church. Well, we have had an intermittent ingress of water at the entry to St Catherine's Chapel from the chancel. It first appeared towards the end of last year and despite having a roofer to investigate from a ladder, nothing was found. For a few weeks there was no water ingress, but in January it reappeared, again intermittently. At the February meeting of the Building and Fabric Committee it was decided that a more in-depth investigation was necessary before the water ingress got any worse and caused more serious damage.

During the first/second weeks of March these investigations, involving removal of some slates, took place, hence the need for scaffolding. The roofer found that some lead had slipped as a consequence of fixings failing to be effective due to age. Rainwater that had accumulated was seeping through when the wind was in a certain direction, hence the intermittent nature of the ingress. This has now been repaired along with another potential leak resulting from more slipped lead due to failed fixings in one area, on the other side of the same valley gutter.

Hopefully we are now watertight again in this area and the scaffolding will have gone by the time you read this! Maintaining St Oswald's, as with any other large old building, is like painting the Forth Bridge, so there will always be something that needs doing, but it ought not to be to this area of our roof for some time to come. However similar detailing will apply at quite a few locations elsewhere on the roof, but not ones accessible from this scaffold, so further areas may possibly need similar attention at some time in the future, but hopefully not too soon. These issues only highlight why last month's fund-raising article was included, which will hopefully produce a volunteer(s) for the role outlined.

David Smith



DERWEN COLLEGE SPONSORED WALK

Olive Morris will once again be taking part in the Derwen College 10k Sponsored Walk which this year is to be held on 18th April. If you would like to sponsor her, please sign the sponsor form on the table in the South Aisle. Thank you

NEW YEAR, NEW VOICE

Make your resolution count this year!

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samanthalewiswidnall@gmail.com

EASTER GREETINGS!

Another month has flown by, and suddenly we find ourselves entering the joyful season of Easter. It is always a special time in the church calendar, and one that brings with it both reflection and celebration through music.

I would like to offer warm congratulations to our ex-chorister Ethan on his success at the Oswestry Music Festival. He was joined separately by our Head Chorister, Ella, as well as our youngest member, Demi who were both successful also. Demi took part in both singing and flute and achieved places in all of her competitions—an outstanding accomplishment. We are incredibly proud of them all and truly fortunate to have such talented young musicians connected with our church.

It has been a real pleasure in recent weeks to hear the congregation singing so wholeheartedly. The choir and I have thoroughly enjoyed being supported by such strong and enthusiastic voices—thank you for being such an important part of our music-making. Your participation makes all the difference.

Looking ahead, there will be some new music for us to explore together next term, which I hope will both challenge and inspire. As I write this, I am also preparing for our upcoming singing workshop. If it is anything like the last one, I am sure it will be an enjoyable and rewarding experience for everyone involved.

Recruitment for the choir has been a little slow, but we remain hopeful. If you, or anyone you know, might be interested in joining us, please do come forward and consider auditioning. The continuation of our choral tradition depends on the willingness of people to take part, and we would be delighted to welcome new members into our musical family.

ADOPT A CHORISTER—ROYAL SCHOOL OF CHURCH MUSIC SUMMER SCHOOL, BATH

It's my first time fundraising for the annual Bath singing course! So any donations would be greatly received—please make cheques out to St Oswalds PCC and write on the back of the cheque 'adopt a chorister'. I for one, when I was a chorister myself, was very appreciative of all of your donations, as it gave us valuable experience that we wouldn't have had the finances to do. So for that, I thank you

Have a wonderful Easter season! Now go and eat all of the chocolate!

With warmest wishes,

Samantha Lewis-Widnall
Director of Music

HOLY WEEK SERVICES **March 30—April 4**



Monday	19:00	Stations of the Cross
Tuesday	19:00	Stations of the Cross
Wednesday	19:00	Stations of the Cross
Maundy Thursday:	10:30	Eucharist
	11:00	Chrim Eucharist at Lichfield Cathedral
	19:00	Eucharist of the Last Supper with Vigil
Good Friday	12:00—15:00	The Last Three Hours
Easter Eve	14:00—16:00	Gospel Reading— St James Bible
	19:00	Easter Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter

Services at S. Oswald's

April 5	08:00	Holy Communion
<i>Easter Day</i>	10:30	Parish Eucharist with sung setting
	18:00	Choral Evensong
April 12	10:30	Parish Eucharist with sung setting
<i>Easter 2</i>	18:00	Evening Prayer
April 19	08:00	Holy Communion
<i>Easter 3</i>	10:30	Parish Eucharist with sung setting
	18:00	Evening Prayer
April 26	10:30	Parish Eucharist with sung setting
<i>Easter 4</i>	18:00	Reflective Space
<i>Every Thursday</i>	10.30	Holy Communion (BCP)



MORNING PRAYER is streamed online through the church Facebook page at 9 o'clock on Wednesday and 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 Rhydcroesau

Good Friday 19:00 Devotional Service
April 3

Easter Day 09:30 Holy Communion
April 5

Easter 2 09:30 Holy Communion
April 12

Easter 4 09:30 Holy Communion
April 26



Parish Church of St. Oswald, King & Martyr

MUSIC LIST - APRIL 2026

Thursday 2nd April

7.00pm

Parish Eucharist

Setting: Communion Service in F

Anthem: Wash me thoroughly - Wesley
Ubi Caritas - Gjeilo

Maundy Thursday

Friday 3rd April

12noon—3.00pm

Last three hours

Anthem: Now the Green Blade Rises (Trad)
Such love (Trad)

Good Friday (No choir)

Saturday 4th April

7.00pm

Easter Vigil

Exultant
Anthem: Stars - Ešenvalds

Holy Saturday

Sunday 5th April

10.30am

Parish Eucharist

Setting: MacMillan - St. Anne's Mass

Anthem: Hallelujah - Handel (Messiah)

6.00pm

Choral Evensong

Introit: This Joyful Eastertide—Trad.arr Macdonald

Responses: Radcliffe

Setting: Stanford in C

Anthem: Blessed be the God and Father - Wesley

Easter day

/Cont Overleaf

Music List Cont.

Sunday 12th April

10.30am

Parish Eucharist

Setting: Addington - Shephard

Anthems: Be still for the presence of the Lord -
[Evans arr. Shephard]

Easter 2 (St. Oswalds Singers)

Sunday 19th April

10.30am

Parish Eucharist

Setting: Addington - Shephard

Anthems: Now the Green Blade Rises -
[Trad. arr. Bullard]

Easter 3 (St. Oswalds Singers)

Sunday 26th April

10.30am

Parish Eucharist

Setting: Archer - St. Albans service

Anthems: The Lord's my Shepherd - Goodall

Easter 4

CONFIRMATION - SUNDAY, 31ST MAY

The Bishop of Shrewsbury will be presiding at the Sacrament of Confirmation on Sunday 31st May.

Anyone wishing to be confirmed please contact Muriel Jones, Church Warden.

**EXTRACT FROM THE OSWESTRY DEANERY MAGAZINE
APRIL 1908**

**OSWESTRY PARISH CHURCH
HOLY WEEK AND EASTER**

We shall issue special leaflets with a full statement of the Services, and meantime we will only announce that the Rector of Whittington will give an address on Maundy Thursday at 7.30 p.m., and Canon Joyce has promised to conduct the Three Hours' Service on Good Friday.

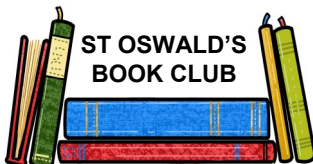
A Special Service of preparation for Holy Communion will follow immediately after Evening Service on Palm Sunday, and we hope most of our Communicants will attend it.

Easter Day is the one day on which our Prayer Book bids all parishioners to Communicate

CALENDAR FOR APRIL 2026



Tuesday 7	1030— 1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Thursday 9	1415 Mothers' Union Fellowship Group
Monday 13	0830— 0940 Oswestry School Assembly 1000 Clergy Eucharist and Meeting 1430 Ladies Group—Parish Centre 1930 PCC Meeting—Parish Centre
Tuesday 14	1030— 1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 15	1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
Tuesday 21	1030— 1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 22	0830— 0940 Oswestry School Assembly 1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
Tuesday 28	1030— 1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 29	0830— 0940 Oswestry School Assembly 1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre



St Oswald's Book Club continues to meet fortnightly on a Wednesday at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre.

All are welcome to join us for coffee and cake and lively discussion! We look forward to seeing you there.

Please check St Oswald's website and weekly pew sheet for information on dates

Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/stoswaldsoswestry

UPDATE FROM THE BELL RINGERS

Having completed our preparation work, we are still waiting for delivery of the training bells due to delays in manufacturing.

In the meantime, we have been embracing a “firsts” challenge from the Shropshire Association of Church Bell Ringers in its 100th year.

On practice nights our newer ringers have achieved quite a few with new methods, calling the changes, ringing up in peal to name a few. Ringing quarter peals (which take about 45 minutes) are a good way to consolidate and confirm progress to new levels. We’ve had two recently with firsts for Isla and Matt:

Sunday, 25 January 2026 in 47m (13)

1260 Plain Bob Triples

- 1 Brian J Rothera
- 2 Isla K Rothera
- 3 Anthony J Freemont
- 4 Pippa Tucker
- 5 Richard Major
- 6 Chris W Hoare
- 7 Cordelia Warr (C)
- 8 Peter Neil

Rung to thank Rev Harvey Gibbons for eight years service as Vicar of this Parish and particularly to thank him for his support for the bell ringers.

First inside - 2

First on the bells following adjustment of the rope circle

Sunday, 22 February 2026 in 46m (13–3–19 in F)

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- 1 Matthew T Leak
- 2 Richard Major
- 3 Cordelia Warr (C)
- 4 Peter Neil
- 5 William A M Barter
- 6 Anthony J Freemont

1st QP at 1st attempt - 1. Welcoming William. For Reflective Space.

We were also very pleased to be able to start what we hope will become a regular event, ringing at Whittington for their Sunday service as well as Oswestry. We have a very healthy band now in terms of numbers and capability and so, availability permitting, we are going to try to ring at

Whittington on the first Sunday of each month. Three of our ringers already support ringing at St Martins from 9.00am-9:30am so we are very pleased to be extend this to Whittington as well. We're hoping that in addition to the congregation enjoying the bells, we will encourage more people from Whittington to have a go and one day have a band of their own.

Brian Rothera

1ST APRIL – FOOLING AROUND

Probably the most famous April Fool's joke of all time was the 1960's BBC TV broadcast feature on the spaghetti farms of Italy. A BBC reporter interviewed Italian farmers about their work and the progress of the spaghetti plants in great detail. Spaghetti plants were filmed being carefully planted, and then being harvested. And all in the BBC's most serious documentary manner. It took a while to appreciate that this was Aunty playing games. Whatever next!

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BISHOP MICHAEL TO RETIRE IN SEPTEMBER 2026

After ten years as Bishop of Lichfield, the Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave has chosen St Chad's Day, 2 March, to announce his intention to retire. HM the King has graciously given his permission for him to resign the See of Lichfield at the end of September 2026 when he will have been ordained for 44 years. Bishop Michael shared the news with clergy and lay ministers gathered to celebrate St Chad's Day in Lichfield Cathedral late on Monday afternoon, 2 March. It was ten years exactly since his nomination as 99th Bishop of Lichfield.



Bishop Michael speaking at the festal evensong for St Chad's Day with the entire College of Canons present.

Announcing his retirement plans, Bishop Michael referred to the constant inspiration of St Chad over his ten years, describing himself as “humbled to be amongst one of the successors of St Chad, our first and greatest bishop.” He continued, commending Chad's example: “Chad was the first to bring to Mercia the life-giving, peace-making, soul-restoring gospel of Jesus Christ. As we face the challenge of re-evangelising our contemporary Mercia, I am convinced that we can only do that by walking in his steps of kindness, friendliness and humility in the service of others.”

In these last months of his ministry, Bishop Michael will be as occupied with this work just as he has been for the last ten years. It will be both business as usual and continuing to lay the foundations of the diocesan strategy for the coming few years. It will also include many opportunities for people across Lichfield Diocese to meet Bishop Michael before he leaves.

Speaking about his time in Lichfield Diocese and thanking those who share the task of ministry across the 1800 square miles of the diocese in 423 parishes and over 500 churches, in every community of Staffordshire, North Shropshire and the Black Country, Bishop Michael observes: “I know that I have been blessed over the last ten years to work in one of the friendliest, most down to earth and least pretentious parts of the Church of England; thank you from my heart.”

Responding to the announcement, the Rt Revd Jan McFarlane, Dean of Lichfield, said: “The time for farewells is, thankfully, some months' away

but as Bishop Michael prepares to retire we know already just how very much he will be missed. In the leading of our Diocese our Bishop has modelled true servant leadership, as a prayerful, wise and learned teacher and pastor. We will always remember his openness and honesty following the death of his son, Frank, when even in the very depths of his bereavement he courageously shared with us what he'd learned of God. A prayerful Bishop who loves God and loves his flock is a true gift. We will be holding Bishop Michael and Julia in our prayers as they prepare to say their farewells to a diocese they've served with distinction."

ABOUT THE BISHOP OF LICHFIELD

The Bishop of Lichfield's Role: he is the Diocesan Bishop of Lichfield Diocese and the chief pastor or shepherd of Christ's flock in Staffordshire, North Shropshire and the Black Country. He is guardian of the faith, proclaimer of the gospel of God's kingdom and leader of mission in the diocese. His responsibilities are shared with three area bishops: of Shrewsbury, Stafford and Wolverhampton, and with the Suffragan Bishop of Oswestry, and with the four archdeacons: of Salop, Stoke-Upon-Trent, Lichfield and Walsall, with the Dean of the Cathedral who is the senior parish priest of the diocese and with over 300 clergy and 150 licensed lay ministers in the 423 parishes of the diocese, supported by active retired clergy and lay ministers too. Bishop Michael is one of 26 Bishops in the House of Lords, introduced there by length of service in 2023. He is by virtue of office a member of the General Synod, the Governing Body of the Church of England. He chairs the Liturgical Commission of the Church of England, and is also a member of its Faith and Order Commission. He has a long-held interest and expertise in ecumenical and inter-faith matters, work for which he was awarded the OBE in 2012.

EARLY BUTTERFLIES



April is a lovely month to start searching for butterflies as quite a few of those which are often seen in churchyards, chapel yards or cemeteries are on the wing by now. Some species emerge from overwintering as adults, often looking a bit faded and battered, you'll need to wait until summer to see the newly emerged, resplendent adults. You may find Peacocks and Red Admirals, feeding on flowers prior to egg-laying. Both of these spectacular butterflies lay eggs on nettles.

Look for the Comma, with its distinctive wing shape, its upper wings coloured orange with black markings whilst its underwings, visible when

closed, are well camouflaged to disappear amongst dead leaves. Comma caterpillars also feed on nettles. Another butterfly that overwinters is the Brimstone, the male showing a characteristic yellow colour, the female more of a pale greenish yellow. It is thought the name butterfly comes from this species – a butter-coloured fly!

Other butterflies start emerging from pupation in April. These will look smart compared to those that have over-wintered, with bright colours and their wings unbattered at least at first. Have a look for the Holly Blue, known as the churchyard butterfly. This delicate blue butterfly will be seen in tree canopies, so you'll need to look up! Four species from the same family, the Whites and Yellows can be seen, green-veined white, large white, small white and orange tip. Both small and large whites are nicknamed 'cabbage whites' by gardeners as their caterpillars can devour both brassicas and nasturtiums. The green-veined white is less of a villain for gardeners, it's caterpillars, like that of the Orange Tip, feed on a variety of wild plants including cuckoo-flower, hedge mustard and garlic mustard.

Burial grounds are usually a mix of shady woodland areas and sunny grassland, and the butterflies found reflect both habitats and in particular, the scrubby edges between them containing coarse grasses, shrubs, nettles and brambles. Look for Speckled Wood emerging in April, its caterpillars feed on coarse grasses.

If you'd like to encourage butterflies then leave some nettles in full sun, whilst you may not wish to encourage nettles is there a place where they already occur? When planting trees, shrubs or flowers please use native species and include buckthorn or alder buckthorn, both food plants of the Brimstone. Perhaps most importantly, allow some areas to be a little bit scruffy particularly over winter. Leave some rough vegetation and dead stems as well as piles of autumn leaves, until all creatures that have been sheltering, hibernating and pupating have emerged into the spring sunshine.

As always, we'd love to hear about any butterflies you see.

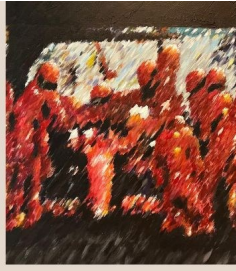
All the best,

Harriet

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As signs of spring arrive and new life appears, it gives us a chance to reflect on the new life that we receive when we accept Jesus into our lives. As Christians, the joy of our new life can be our motivation to share this good news with others.

For the Schools Work Project, March is a time of sharing the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and why this is important to the Christian faith. So let us join in prayer for all those in our local schools. Pray that they will know the transforming love and grace of God, and the joy of the new life that He brings.

What's Happening in March

- Diary of a Disciple workshops continue in primary schools this month. This workshop is based on Scripture Union's book, *Diary of a Disciple: Luke's Story*, a retelling of Luke's Gospel written in a contemporary and accessible style. It offers pupils an opportunity to engage with and explore the Bible and the life of Jesus in a fun and creative way. At the end of the workshop, each pupil will take home a mini copy of the *Diary of a Disciple* book.
- Assemblies continue this month and include themes such as courage, Easter, forgiveness, ambition, and hope.
- The Christian Unions will be focusing on the miracles of Jesus, what we can learn from them about Him, and why they are relevant today.
- RE lessons in St Martins School will focus on those who encountered Jesus and how He transformed their lives.

Thank you for your Continued support of the project.

Blessings

Jane Webber

Things to Pray For

- Diary of a Disciple workshops continuing this month.
- Easter assemblies in primary schools. Pray that they will have an impact on both staff and pupils.
- For wisdom in answering the many questions young people have about the Christian faith. Pray for each lesson and opportunity the young people have to ask questions about Jesus

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Across

- 1 Relating to the whole universe (6)
- 4 The disciple who made the remark in 8 Across (John 20:24) (6)
- 8 'Unless I see the nail marks — — hands, I will not believe it' (John 20:25) (2,3)
- 9 He urged King Jehoiakim not to burn the scroll containing Jeremiah's message (Jeremiah 36:25) (7)
- 10 Baptist minister and controversial founder of America's Moral Majority, Jerry — (7)
- 11 'Look, here is — . Why shouldn't I be baptized?' (Acts 8:36) (5)
- 12 Repossessed (Genesis 14:16) (9)
- 17 Port from which Paul sailed on his last journey to Rome (Acts 27:3-4) (5)
- 19 'Moses was not aware that his face was — because he had spoken with the Lord' (Exodus 34:29) (7)
- 21 Roonwit, C.S. Lewis's half-man, half-horse (7)
- 22 Grill (Luke 24:42) (5)
- 23 'The lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the — apostles' (Acts 1:26) (6)
- 24 'I was sick and you looked after me, I was in — and you came to visit me' (Matthew 25:36) (6)

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Down

- 1 Coastal rockfaces (Psalm 141:6) (6)
- 2 Academic (1 Corinthians 1:20) (7)
- 3 Publish (Daniel 6:26) (5)
- 5 For example, the Crusades (4,3)
- 6 11 Across is certainly this (5)
- 7 He reps (anag.) (6)
- 9 Liberator (Psalm 18:2) (9)
- 13 Man who asked the question in 11 Across was in charge of all her treasury (Acts 8:27) (7)

- 14 They must be 'worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine' (1 Timothy 3:8) (7)
- 15 The human mind or soul (6)
- 16 'O Lord, while precious children starve, the tools of war increase; their bread is — ' (Graham Kendrick) (6)
- 18 'We played the flute for you, and you did not — ' (Matthew 11:17) (5)
- 20 Bared (anag.) (5)

Sudoku

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Easy

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Medium

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**SOLUTIONS
ON PAGE 39**

Even as Jesus ate that last Passover meal with his disciples, he warned them he was about to be betrayed. He took the bread, blessed it, broke it and gave it to them; he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them to drink. The Old Covenant, based on Law, was ticking away its final hours; the New Covenant, based on Christ's body and his blood, was about to be ushered in. Jesus prayed in Gethsemane that this fearful cup might be removed from him, but even more, that God's will might be done. And it was. From Easter onwards we can only approach God through his Son, Jesus Christ, not on our own merit.

Jesus	B S E S O G W Y E G S H	Covenant
Ate	N O E H E E L P T U E	Law
Last	P D R D N T H A N K S M	Old
Passover	B R E A I H S A O L E B	New
Meal	O H T V W S N A A A J W	Body
Disciples	D C S T O E C E L D C A	Blood
Warned	Y A A V V M V I E U K R	Gethsemane
Betrayed	B O E O A A E S P N U N	Cup
Bread	I R C R V N S R I L B E	Removed
Blessed	A P G D B E T R A Y E D	Will
Wine	D P W I L L D W T O O S	Easter
Thanks	M A B B L O O D E G S A	Approach
Drink		God

Solution on page 39

PUBLICATION DETAILS FOR NEXT MONTH

Material required SUNDAY, 12 APRIL

Make-up day for working party, and publication:

Tuesday, 21 April

PLEASE COULD ALL ORGANISATIONS AND GROUPS
IN THE CHURCHES TRY TO SEND SOME NEWS IN - EVEN IF
YOU'VE NOT BEEN IN THE HABIT OF DOING SO.

Why not nominate a Correspondent?

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Easy

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Medium



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REGISTERS



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

S Oswald's

February 18

February 27

March 6

March 13

March 23

Alan Frederick Stratford, aged 91

Sondra Rosemary Fern Rowlands, aged 81

Pamela Jane Vaughan, aged 74

Doreen Mary Parry, aged 86

Ruth Elizabeth Young, aged 92



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Oswestry Parish Church exists to propagate and nurture the love of God through the teachings of Jesus Christ thereby serving the needs of the whole community and enriching everybody's lives, through worship and prayer.

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