

Parish Life Magazine

**Parish of Cirencester with
Watermoor and Chesterton**



May 2024 £1

Parish of Cirencester with Watermoor and St Lawrence (Chesterton)

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A Joyous Month

May songs are, in the folk tradition, about as important as Christmas carols... if not more so. If you were to rove out one May morning and set your Google Maps for the Vaughan Williams



Memorial Library, home of English traditional songs, you'd find 4,799 entries referring to the subject. By comparison, you'd find only 3,752 referring to Christmas.

So what is it about the month of May which encourages us to sing of the joys of this month? May Day is traditionally when we dance around the maypole – did any of you do that, perhaps as children, trying hard not to get all the ribbons muddled up? Looking out over my garden as I write on a blustery, wet day, the shrubs and flowers are growing vigorously - it's a very green picture. And I think that's why May is such a joyous month; we can believe that we are finally leaving winter behind and summer is approaching.

May is also a joyous month in our church calendar. This year Ascension Day falls on Thursday 9th May. It is one of the great Church festivals although in recent years it seems to slip by rather unnoticed. There will, however, be a service in church to mark this event of the greatest importance and if you can attend, please do. Ascension Day falls 40 days after Easter. In that time Jesus had made several appearances to his disciples and others to reassure them that he is alive – not resuscitated but having come through death into eternal life. But now it is time for him to take his place at God's right hand and to hand his work over to us.

Which brings us to the next red letter day in May – the Day of Pentecost on 19th May. This feast day is sometimes thought of as the birth of the church as the disciples – not drunk with wine so early in the day – but rejoicing as the Holy Spirit descends in flame and rushing wind to commission them to take the Good News into all the world. And they start this work by speaking in the languages of those present.

These Church festivals are occasions of great rejoicing which is certainly how Mary felt as she visited her cousin Elizabeth, a visit we commemorate on 31st May. Both women, one a young girl, the other a much older woman, have been chosen by God to play their role in his plan for his beloved people. Elizabeth is to bring John the Baptist into the world as the one who is to prepare the way for Jesus, to whom Mary is to give birth. Two very ordinary women, called to extraordinary work for God.

In celebrating these joyous festivals we can reflect on what they mean for us today. Christ is now released into heaven, no longer earthbound in a particular place and time but taking his place in the kingdom of his heavenly Father, a place which has been opened up for us too. But not before we have done what we can on earth to make known the Good News that God has brought in that kingdom here and now and to work towards its fulfilment. And if two ordinary women have been chosen to bring God and his forerunner into the world, how can we say “no” to whatever it is God has in store for us.

Happy Maytime!

Revd Karen

Mothers' Union



Dear Fellow Members,

I so miss being able to get to Branch Meetings and other events that you are involved in as a Branch. How grateful we are, as a Branch, to Pauline, Fiona and Angela for picking up the 'baton' from Kathie (and Peter too). Cirencester MU has a wonderfully supportive membership and I know you will continue to support and encourage the leadership team.

We have settled very well into our new home and we have made lots of new friends here. Like many others I am deeply concerned about the position of both the Christian faith in this country and the increasing evidence that the 'family' in its many forms is failing our young people today. We are unapologetically a Worldwide Christian movement that has, as its reason for being, a commitment to enabling, empowering and supporting families worldwide. So many countries, where MU was so strong, are no longer Christian. This means our prayers are urgently needed, especially at this time, as our members witness to their Christian faith in hostile and challenging environments. For many, confessing their Christian faith can mean intimidation, persecution and even death. The Christian faith in this country, too, is in danger. As a nation, its culture and democracy are under pressure. We have been living on the Christian investment of previous generations. We urgently need renewed enthusiasm and commitment! You have all received the Dates for your diaries. I highlight especially the Canterbury Provincial Gathering on **Saturday June 22nd in the Kings Centre Oxford. Tickets are £20 per person.** Please let a member of the Branch Committee know if you would like ticket and a seat on the coach which I feel sure the Diocese will organise and pick up in Cirencester!

With love

Pat Harris

Sign Posts

During my many visits to members of the MU throughout the Anglican Communion, I often found myself in remote regions of the country I was visiting. I remember especially visiting a group of members who lived miles outside the city of Antananarivo in Madagascar. We travelled for



hours across countryside that resembled a lunar landscape. There were no sign-posts. Nothing to give any clues about direction. We got hopelessly lost more than once on our journey. We were forced to stop, take stock, reconsider our direction and try again.

Our life here, on earth be it long or short, is a journey. It seems evident, as we read and view the reports of horrendous examples of violence, hatred, resentment and complete disregard for human life, that as a nation and peoples, we, too, need urgently to pause, take stock and reconsider our earthly journeys. Countless men, woman and children feel isolated, devalued, that no one cares about them as individuals, not where they are or what they do. There is a lack of respect for people, property and the environment. In this materialistic world, in the 'must have' society, we have a poverty much more harmful than material poverty.

Where, then, does it all go wrong? Surely it is our failure to recognise the crucially important role of the loving, stable family. It is there that we are given, from our earliest days, the 'sign-posts' for life. Within

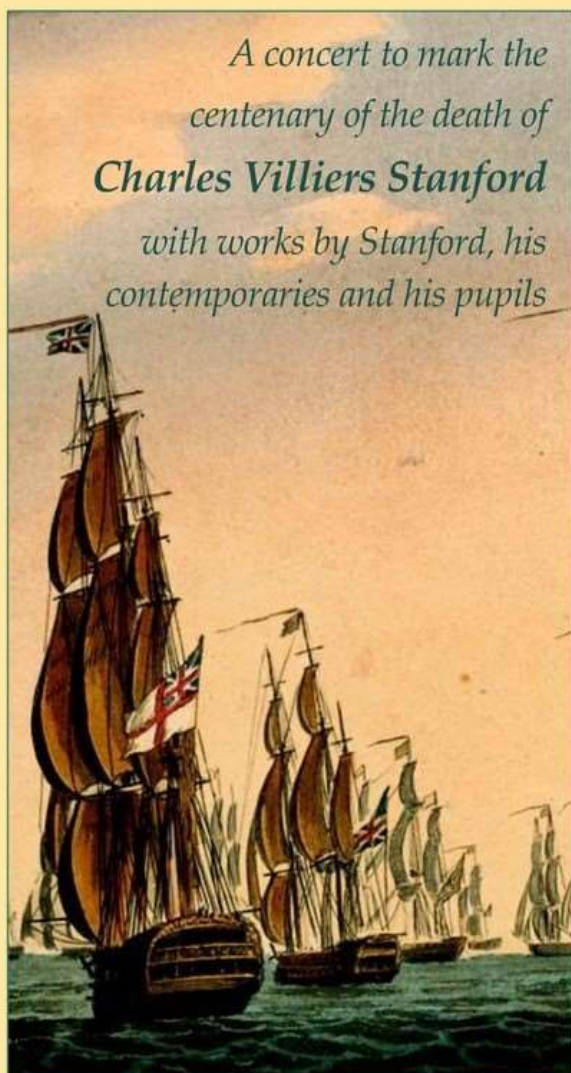
the home we should learn to love and be loved, to respect each other, to know the difference between right and wrong, tolerance, give and take and so much else. These qualities are ‘caught’ rather than ‘taught’ within the loving, stable home. Above all, of course, we learn that we are valued and are then able to value others. Parents especially have to be what they would wish their children to be. Children are great imitators and will largely copy, for better or worse, what they experience in the home. We cannot blame teachers and others in authority for the lack of respect and discipline in society today. The responsibility rests squarely with the parents.

Christian families are not exempt from problems and challenges. We won’t be marked out as a Christian family because we sail through, seemingly untouched by worry, temptations and anxiety. What will distinguish us as Christian families is how we feel with these challenges. Archbishop Robert Runcie said: ‘If we solve all our economic problems but fail to build loving families we will gain nothing, for the family is where the future is created.’

No matter what resources are ploughed into schemes and initiatives, nothing can compensate for a loving home and family. How greatly we need to go back to the beginning – the family – it is for better or worse, a crucially important sign-post in all our lives.



Pat Harris



Registered Charity No 276649

C V Stanford

Songs of the Fleet

Te Deum in B flat

O for a Closer Walk with God

C H H Parry

Blest Pair of Sirens

R Vaughan Williams

Five Mystical Songs

S Coleridge Taylor

By the Waters of Babylon

Carleton Etherington
Conductor

Ross Fettes
Baritone

Charles Matthews
Organist

Saturday 4 May 7.30 pm
Cirencester Parish Church

(doors open at 6.45 pm)

Tickets: £16.00 (Student £6, Child £3) (unreserved seats)
available online at www.cirencester-choral-soc.org.uk, from choir members
or, in April, from Cirencester Town Council (Bingham House, Dyer St)

Musings in Mark

Mark 4:1-8 NIV



[1] Again Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while all the people were along the shore at the water's edge. [2] He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said: [3] "Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. [4] As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. [5] Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. [6] But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. [7] Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. [8] Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, some multiplying thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times."

It's not so much the farmer as the stuff that attaches itself to his wellies, especially in this weather - soil! We are told that the farmer is scattering his seed; it's what he does, and the explanation that Jesus later shows us it's a picture of God's word being spread, his truth, his thoughts and his suggestions.

So the focus moves to the soil, the recipients of the word that God is seeking to speak to, whether for salvation, or guidance. Four types of soil are shown and they each have issues that we can relate to. Paths are made by regular walking across the soil, damping it down and

making it hard, and perhaps our thought processes, habit patterns or traditions have also become hardened, and when God speaks to try and change us, he can't break in! We only hear what fits with our comfort zone. They all need to be ploughed up, challenged!

Rocky soil suggests large rocks rather than small pieces. These take up space and hinder both light and nutrients. We could name these rocks as anger, fear, resentment, bitterness or hate. Each of these hinder the light of Christ that encourages us and the growth of the fruit of the Spirit. Seeds, or words planted, die under the effect of these rocks. They need removing. Seeds falling into clumps of weeds get choked before they can grow. Mark's gospel speaks of "the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things" and suggests that our growth potential is tied up in fear, and covetousness. Jesus points to our focus in life, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also (Matthew 6:21). A redirection of our focus so that we may move towards the final, best soil, where nothing gets in the way of the growth of the seed, "And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit." (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Jesus challenges us to look again at ourselves and see what gets in the way. And so the Kingdom grows, and so do we as we receive Jesus' word into our lives.

Paul Springate

Easter Garden



The Easter Garden under the high altar at The Parish Church was made by Pam Barnes with the help of ex-verger Steve Rogers. The garden stays in place from Easter Sunday until Pentecost.

Restore @4

On the 1st and 3rd Sundays Restore @4 offers a chance to worship in a contemporary way, pray for each other, the world, our church and for anything that currently concerns us. There is a time, too, to study scripture and hear how God has answered prayers.



At this time, the world situations need all our prayers. Please come and add your voice. **4pm at St Lawrence Church.** You will be made very welcome.

Craft Group

The pictures shown below were made by quilling by the Craft Group at their April meeting.



Jane Winstanley

Jubilate

CHAMBER CHOIR

One of Gloucestershire's leading chamber choirs

www.jubilatechamberchoir.com

President: Prof. Ian Tracey
Organist Liverpool Cathedral

"...Jubilate are really fabulous – a lovely mellifluous tone, technically very proficient and most musical – a joy to accompany...."

VACANCIES FOR EXPERIENCED SINGERS WHY NOT COME AND TRY A REHEARSAL

Jubilate currently has a few vacancies for enthusiastic, committed & experienced, Adult Singers, especially Sopranos, Tenors & Basses



WHAT WE DO

Jubilate, a welcoming / friendly choir founded in 2001, provides a mix of concerts, recitals and occasional services throughout the Cotswolds and beyond, always aiming to perform to a high musical standard.

OUR REPERTOIRE

A broad repertoire from sacred & secular works of the 16th century, through the romantic period, to the present day.

OUR PERFORMANCES

An opportunity to perform the most memorable music in some of the finest venues'

OUR REHEARSALS

In-depth and observant rehearsal is the key to a superb performance. Jubilate rehearses on Mondays - 7.30pm – 9.00pm in the main hall at St Edward's School, Cirencester Rd, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, GL53 8EY.

HOW TO JOIN

Please contact us through the website or the conductor: Ian Higginson

Mob: 07963 659579 ~**E-mail:** ianhigginson@pestalozzi.university

Dame Emma Kirkby:

".....How inspiring to see a full choir with a good spread of ages and vocal ranges, unfazed by a huge and demanding piece, and able to enter into every nuance of the work with healthy yet subtle sound!...."

Lost, Found and Cheery Thoughts.

“You will never do it, John. Your cricket team cannot even get on the field, it’s first four day game being completely rained off and your football team will be relegated.” Many doubters have poured scorn on my attempts to keep this a cheerful column.



Nonsense! Read on! A fortnight ago I dropped my wallet in the Brewery Arts Yard. Mrs Light and I returned home worried about lost cash and cards to be cancelled. You can imagine my anger.

This wretched state did not last long. We were greeted by our friend Hilary. “A kind gentleman called John brought your wallet! He would not give his full name so you could thank him,” she added.

Cash and cards were all correct. Yes, I was very lucky but how wonderful that there are honest people about who do not required a reward for doing the right thing. Well done, Sir, and thank you!

I have been unable to attend the 10 o’clock service at Holy Trinity recently, having been supporting Penny at St Lawrence but on the first Sunday in April that was remedied and it was a non-eucharistic service with many children present. What a joy this is.

Led by Ali and Ian it was well prepared, humorous, spiritual and in no way patronising. Other parents gave fine support, as do the talented music group. People say it is a fine service for the church of tomorrow. No – it is a service for everyone as young people are very much the church of today. This 10 o’clock service is well worth attending. I found it delightful. Sunday school 75 years ago was well meaning but scarcely exciting.

Good things were not over. Moving on from the success of the Lent Lunches, the Mothers’ Union fund raising soup lunch – always one of the most enjoyable occasions of the year – was held in the Parish Hall. There is nothing like a delicious home-made soup and those on offer were certainly that. This is always a delight to attend. Good company, good food and a plethora of raffle prizes.

This is yet another joyous column.

John Light

Longfield Hospice Updates

When a diagnosis changes everything Longfield Hospice is there for the patient, family and loved ones. If you would like to find out more about our services please visit www.longfield.org.uk

As a local hospice charity, we are incredibly grateful to everyone who supports our work. Their support means that last year we supported 1,633 patients and their loved ones through clinical care, counselling, support groups and wellbeing sessions.

Why not support us by going to one of these amazing events?

11 May at 7.30pm Cappella Nova Bath Chamber Choir celebrates the music of the Elizabethan ages at Tetbury Goods Shed Arts Centre 0333 666 4466

25th May at 7.30pm The Hill & Valley Singers & Guests present 'From Bach to Bacharach' at Cirencester Baptists Church 01285 720403

25th May at 7.00pm at Tetbury Choir present A Life in Song at Minchinhampton Church and tickets from longfield.org.uk/event/tetbury-choir/

26th May 2024 Frampton-on-Severn, Gloucestershire Open Gardens 1.30pm to 5.00pm

From the walled garden of the Manor, through to pretty cottage gardens, Frampton-on-Severn offers a fine selection to inspire everyone with an interest in gardening. All of the gardens are situated around the longest village green in England. As before, there will be a display of some 50 old and interesting cars on the Green from noon until 4.30pm. Delicious cream teas and cakes available. Dogs on leads welcome.

Louise Cook

Postcards?



Does anyone have any used or unused postcards lying around that they do not want anymore? At Holy Trinity Watermoor we collect postcards to send to MAF UK (Mission Aviation Fellowship).

MAF UK is the world's largest humanitarian air operator. They fly light aircraft over jungles, mountains, swamps and deserts to bring medical care and emergency relief - delivering relief workers, doctors, pastors, school books, food and medicine - everything that can only be safely and speedily delivered by air.

So far they have raised nearly £300,000 for their missions just from the sale of postcards.

If you do have any postcards you would like to donate, please can you drop them off at Holy Trinity on a Sunday morning or contact Fiona Hawes (01285 656992) who is happy to collect.



Fiona Hawes

May 14th St Matthias



There is no mention of a Matthias among the lists of disciples or followers of Jesus in the three synoptic gospels, but according to Acts, he had been with Jesus from his baptism by John until his Ascension. In the days following, Peter proposed that the assembled disciples, who numbered about 120, nominate two men to replace Judas. They chose Joseph called Barsabas (whose surname was Justus) and Matthias. Then they prayed, "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all [men], shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

No further information about Matthias is to be found in the canonical New Testament. Even his name is variable: the Syriac version of Eusebius calls him throughout not Matthias but "Tolmai", not to be confused with Bartholomew (which means Son of Tolmai), who was one of the twelve original Apostles; Clement of Alexandria refers once to Zacchaeus in a way which could be read as suggesting that some identified him with Matthias; the *Clementine Recognitions* identify him with Barnabas; Adolf Bernhard Christoph Hilgenfeld thinks he is the same as Nathanael in the Gospel of John.

The tradition of the Greeks says that St. Matthias planted the faith about Cappadocia and on the coasts of the Caspian Sea, residing chiefly near the port Issus.

According to Nicephorus (*Historia eccl.*, 2, 40), Matthias first preached the Gospel in Judaea, then in Aethiopia (by the region of Colchis, now in modern-day Georgia) and was crucified. An extant Coptic *Acts of Andrew and Matthias*, places his activity similarly in "the city of the cannibals" in Aethiopia. A marker placed in the ruins of the Roman fortress at Gonio (Apsaros) in the modern Georgian region of Adjara claims that Matthias is buried at that site.

The *Synopsis of Dorotheus* contains this tradition: "Matthias preached the Gospel to barbarians and meat-eaters in the interior of Ethiopia, where the sea harbor of Hyssus is, at the mouth of the river Phasis. He died at Sebastopolis, and was buried there, near the Temple of the Sun."

Alternatively, another tradition maintains that Matthias was stoned at Jerusalem by the local populace, and then beheaded. According to Hippolytus of Rome, Matthias died of old age in Jerusalem.

The Church of England's *Book of Common Prayer*, as well as other older common prayer books in the Anglican Communion, celebrates Matthias on 24 February. According to the newer *Common Worship* liturgy, Matthias is remembered in the Church of England with a Festival on 14 May, although he may be celebrated on 24 February, if desired.

From Wikipediaedia

Dates for May

Daily

12 – 1pm	Eucharist - Catherine Chapel	St John Baptist
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Monday, Wednesday & Friday

9 – 9:30am	Morning Prayer	St John Baptist
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5 – 6pm	Evening Prayer	St John Baptist
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Weekdays

10am – 12pm	The Parish Forum Open (except Wednesday)	
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10am – 12pm	Thursday Drop In at The Parish Forum	
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1 May, Wed

7 – 8pm	Eucharist	Holy Trinity
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2 May, Thu

7am – 10pm	Polling Station	St Lawrence
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7am – 10pm	Polling Station	Parish Hall, Watermoor
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10:30 – 11:30am	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
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2:30 – 4pm	Parish Tea party	St John Baptist
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3 May, Fri

10am – 12pm	The Parish Forum Open	
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10:30 – 11:30am	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
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4 – 6pm	Cirencester Food Pantry	Parish Hall, Watermoor
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4 May, Sat

10:30 – 11:30am	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
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7:30 – 9:30pm	Cirencester Choral Society Concert	St John Baptist
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5 May, Sun

8 – 9am	Eucharist	Holy Trinity
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8 – 9am	Holy Comm BCP - Lady Chapel	St John Baptist
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10 – 11:30am	All Age Eucharist	St John Baptist
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10 – 11:30am	Non-Eucharistic Family Service	Holy Trinity
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10:30 – 11:30am	Eucharist	St Lawrence
12:30 – 1:30pm	Baptism	St John Baptist
4 – 5pm	Choral Evensong	St John Baptist
4 – 5pm	Restore@4	St Lawrence
5 – 7pm	Junior Youth Group - 1st & 3rd Sundays	Parish Forum

6 May, Mon

10:30 – 11:30am	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
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7 May, Tue

10am – 12pm	The Parish Forum Open	
2:30 – 3:30pm	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
6:30 – 9pm	Bell Ringing	St John Baptist

8 May, Wed

10:30 – 11:30am	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
7 – 8pm	Eucharist	Holy Trinity

9 May, Thu

9:15 – 10:45am	Seedlings	St Lawrence
2:30 – 3:30pm	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
7:30 – 8:30pm	Ascension Day Service	St John Baptist

10 May, Fri

10am – 12pm	The Parish Forum Open	
10:30 – 11:30am	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
2:30 – 3:30pm	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
4 – 6pm	Cirencester Food Pantry	Parish Hall, Watermoor

11 May, Sat

10:30 – 11:30am	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
1:30 – 2:30pm	Wedding	Holy Trinity

12 May, Sun

8 – 9am	Eucharist	Holy Trinity
8 – 9am	Holy Comm BCP - Lady Chapel	St John Baptist
10 – 11:30am	Eucharist	Holy Trinity

10 – 11:30am	Eucharist	St John Baptist
10:30 – 11:30am	Eucharist	St Lawrence
11:30am – 1pm	Holy Trinity AGM	Holy Trinity
1:30 – 2:30pm	Baptism	St John Baptist
4 – 5pm	Evening Prayer	St John Baptist

13 May, Mon

9:30 – 11am	Little Angels	St John Baptist
10am – 12pm	The Parish Forum Open	
2:30 – 3:30pm	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
5:30 – 6:30pm	Vicars Open Office	Parish Forum

14 May, Tue

10am – 12pm	The Parish Forum Open	
10:30 – 11:30am	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
2:30 – 3:30pm	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
6:30 – 9pm	Bell Ringing	Holy Trinity

15 May, Wed

10:30 – 11:30am	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
2 – 3pm	Major Michael (Tom) Wills Memorial	St John Baptist
7 – 8pm	Eucharist	Holy Trinity

16 May, Thu

17 May, Fri

10am – 12pm	The Parish Forum Open	
4 – 6pm	Cirencester Food Pantry	Parish Hall Watermoor
5:45 – 7pm	Bell Ringing	St John Baptist

18 May, Sat

7 – 9:30pm	Bournemouth Male Voice Choir and Minchinhampton Stuart Singers	St John Baptist
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19 May, Sun

8 – 9am	Eucharist	Holy Trinity
8 – 9am	Holy Comm BCP - Lady Chapel	St John Baptist

10 – 11:30am	Eucharist	Holy Trinity
10 – 11:30am	Eucharist	St John Baptist
10:30 – 11:30am	Eucharist	St Lawrence
4 – 5pm	Choral Evensong	St John Baptist
4 – 5pm	Restore @4	St Lawrence
5 – 7pm	Junior Youth Group - 1st & 3rd Sundays	Parish Forum

20 May, Mon

9:30 – 11am	Little Angels	St John Baptist
10am – 12pm	The Parish Forum Open	
2:30 – 3:30pm	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
5:30 – 6:30pm	Vicars Open Office	Parish Forum
7:30 – 9pm	Quarter Peal	St John Baptist

21 May, Tue

10am – 12pm	The Parish Forum Open	
10:30 – 11:30am	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
6:30 – 9pm	Bell Ringing	Holy Trinity

22 May, Wed

2:30 – 3:30pm	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
7 – 8pm	Eucharist	Holy Trinity
7:30 – 9pm	Full PCC	St Lawrence

23 May, Thu

9:15 – 10:45am	Seedlings	St Lawrence
10:30 – 11:30am	Mothers' Union Corporate Communion	St John Baptist
2:30 – 3:30pm	Guided Tour	St John Baptist

24 May, Fri

10am – 12pm	The Parish Forum Open	
10:30 – 11:30am	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
2:30 – 3:30pm	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
4 – 6pm	Cirencester Food Pantry	Parish Hall Watermoor

25 May, Sat

10:30 – 11:30am	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
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26 May, Sun

8 – 9am	Eucharist	Holy Trinity
8 – 9am	Holy Comm BCP - Lady Chapel	St John Baptist
10 – 11:30am	Eucharist	Holy Trinity
10 – 11:30am	Eucharist	St John Baptist
10 – 11:30am	Eucharist	St John Baptist
10:30 – 11:30am	Eucharist	St Lawrence

28 May, Tue

10am – 12pm	The Parish Forum Open	
10:30 – 11:30am	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
2:30 – 3:30pm	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
6:30 – 9pm	Bell Ringing	Holy Trinity

29 May, Wed

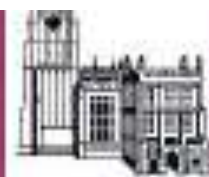
10:30 – 11:30am	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
7 – 8pm	Eucharist	Holy Trinity

30 May, Thu

10:30 – 11:30am	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
2:30 – 3:30pm	Guided Tour	St John Baptist

31 May, Fri

10am – 12pm	The Parish Forum Open	
10:30 – 11:30am	Guided Tour	St John Baptist
4 – 6pm	Cirencester Food Pantry	Parish Hall Watermoor



CHURCH SHOP



Open Monday to Saturday 10am - 4pm

Why not take a look at our Parish Church Shop, there's more than you expect!

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Tel: 01285 659317

