

March 2026

PARISH MAGAZINE



MOTHERING SUNDAY

MARCH 15TH 2026

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*Interregnum***

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S Oswald's:

Reader Emeritus

Mr Bill Bowen, BEM

Commissioned Lay Workers

Mrs Jenifer Chippett Williams

Mrs Lindsay Clarke

Miss Sally Wright

Churchwardens

S Oswald's: Miss June Williams

Mrs Muriel Jones

Mr John Abram MBE TD

Christchurch: Mrs Elizabeth Stanley

Rosemary Davies

Tel: 652544

Tel: 653598

Tel: 653316

Tel: 676450

Tel: 07813757498

Parochial Church Councils

S Oswald's: Hon Secretary: Ms Carron Boulton

Hon Treasurer: Mr Paul Evison

Tel: 652861

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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Father Phil writes.....

We are well into the season of Lent now, a time for all Christian people to prepare for the celebration of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in Holy Week and Easter.

A time of pilgrimage, marked by penitence expressed in prayer and fasting!

It is a time of self-examination, and putting things right. We are given the opportunity to clear out the cobwebs of all that is wrong in our lives and everything that hinders us; in other words to do a thorough spring-clean, and come closer to the Lord.

In the light of the Epstein scandal, and seeing how the rich and powerful fall from grace; we can be more mindful of all the wrong we have done. Lent is a time to put things right!

A sense of Preparation, and of eager expectation, with Good Friday and Easter Day, always in view is what Lent is all about.

It is my prayer that all at St Oswald's and Christchurch, and indeed all Christian people around the World, will during this Lenten season take to their hearts the call to Repentance and the assurance of Forgiveness proclaimed in the Holy Gospels. May we all grow in faith and in devotion to our Lord, as we journey together through Lent and during the Interregnum.

I am delighted that shortly before Harvey left, he commissioned three Lay-Workers: Jenifer, Sally and Lindsay. This number will be increased in due course.

I endorse the ministry of Catherine who has come forward to offer Bereavement & Pastoral Support. Catherine has produced a leaflet which will be both available in Church and on our Website, and please do read her article on page 12 of the Magazine. I and my colleagues who look after funerals will be able to hand to each bereaved family, a copy of the leaflet.

Let us pray for True Repentance this Lent, a turning of hearts and minds and lives.

Father Phil

BONUS BALL



Can you help
St Oswald's raise
£1,560
each year?

Each week we use the National Lottery "Lotto"
Bonus Ball number to determine the winner of the
St Oswald's Bonus Ball Draw.

Each Bonus Ball Number costs £1 each week but paid
quarterly, half-yearly or annually to suit you.

When your Bonus Ball Number is drawn
you receive a cheque for £29
and the church gets £30

Ball Numbers

1 and **33** are available now.

To maximise the benefit to St Oswald's
all the numbers need to be allocated.

Interested? Ring Paul Crosby on 658606

**CHURCH SPRING CLEAN
SATURDAY 28TH MARCH 9.30AM—3.00PM**



As many people as possible are needed to give St Oswald's its annual spring clean in time for Easter. Please come along with brushes, mops, vacuum cleaners, etc. etc. so we can clean those places which are not done on a weekly basis. We welcome newcomers to St Oswald's, as well as our regular helpers, to assist with this annual task.

A list of areas to be cleaned will be available in church and it would be appreciated if you could please indicate which area you have cleaned so that cleaning isn't duplicated.

Natasha Bell and Muriel Jones

ELECTORAL ROLL

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. 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 mid April. 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

PRAYING FOR OUR WORLD

The next meeting is March 4 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.

The Scholars & Gentlemen

**at St. Oswald's
Director: Michael Donkin**

VICTORIA

Master of the Spanish Renaissance



Requiem 1605

with

**Versa est in Luctum
Olonso Lobo**

St. Oswald's Parish Church

Sunday 22nd March

6.00pm

Entry Free

**give what you like on the way out
All proceeds to St. Oswald's Church
and its music**



BIBLE READING ON HOLY SATURDAY

We have over the past few years begun to establish a tradition of reading aloud from the Bible for a couple of hours on the afternoon of Holy Saturday. Many of us have enjoyed this opportunity to listen to a continuous narrative of the life, ministry and Passion of our Lord, Jesus Christ. We first read the gospel of Luke, then Mark and, last year, John. On all three occasions we have read from 'The Message', which is a translation of the Bible into a direct and accessible contemporary language. But there are other, older versions that are also dear to many of us. Last year, after we had finished our afternoon's reading, our much-loved and missed friend Maureen Crosby said to me, 'How about doing King James next year?' It would be lovely to honour Maureen, and her contribution to the ministry of reading at St Oswald's, by reading from the KJV this year. And there are also other reasons for doing so. This year, 2026, marks the 500th anniversary of the publication of William Tyndale's translation of the full New Testament. Working directly from the original Greek, he was the first to make the scriptures available to be read in English. At a time when translating the Bible into the language of the common people was forbidden, Tyndale's work came at great personal cost; he had to flee the country, was eventually imprisoned, condemned for heresy and executed in 1536. But his legacy is immense. His memorable words and phrases became the foundation for subsequent English translations and his influences can be seen (and heard) throughout the King James Bible of 1611.

It is now 15 years since we pulled off the remarkable feat of reading the entire KJV non-stop over 3 and a half days to celebrate 400 years since its publication. In all, 275 readers took part, from St Oswald's, other local churches, primary and secondary schools and the local community. Many of you reading this will have been among them. I would have liked to mark the tenth anniversary of the event, which was a wonderful experience in the life of our church, but that fell in the pandemic period, so let's remember 15 years instead and commemorate again the pioneers who first who placed the word of God into the hands of ordinary people.

For Holy Saturday then (4 April 2026), between 2.00 pm and 4.00 pm, in church, we will read a sequence of passages mostly drawn from the gospel of Matthew, including his account of the Passion, with some additional excerpts from the gospels of Luke and John. If you would like to take part in the reading please be in touch with me during March. Or perhaps just take some time out to come and listen, and let the word speak to you: 'Who hath ears to hear, let him hear' (Matthew 13:9).

Elaine Leek (leek1@btinternet.com)

BEREAVEMENT & PASTORAL SUPPORT

Are you bereaved or struggling with whatever life is throwing at you at the moment?

It can feel overwhelming sometimes and we'd very much like to support you by listening and helping you to feel understood.

We may well be able to help or signpost you towards practical assistance too.

- **Don't be afraid to ask**
- **You are not alone**
- **Whatever you share**
- **with us is Confidential**

It can feel isolating when facing a difficult situation and particularly if alone. We appreciate how difficult that can be and would wish to help and support you at this time.

I have twenty years experience of listening and supporting those who are bereaved and struggling in various ways under the umbrella of The Samaritans and Cruse Bereavement Support and have a Diploma in Counselling.

Catherine

Bereavement and Pastoral Care

Please contact 01691 688817 or 07563014895 or cmcloud@me.com

THE SCHOLARS & GENTLEMEN

In 2015 I took four choral scholars and six men from St. Oswald's Choir to perform at a fund-raising supper for the Llanfechain Show (Llanfechain is the village in which I live). Afterwards the group decided to stay together and The Scholars & Gentlemen was born.

The Scholars & Gentlemen is a chamber music ensemble based at St. Oswald's, with a remit to perform music of the Renaissance and Baroque periods to a high standard.

Next Concert

The Scholars & Gentlemen's next concert will be at St. Oswald's Church on Sunday 22nd March at 6.00pm. when they will perform the Requiem Mass written in 1605 by the Spanish Renaissance composer Tomas Luis de Victoria.

Victoria was the most famous composer of the Spanish Renaissance, and was admired above all for the intensity of his music and of the Requiem in particular. Unlike that of his colleagues, he wrote exclusively sacred music believing that the composer was merely a channel through which music passed from God to the listener.

From the 1580s, Victoria worked at a convent in Madrid where he served as chaplain to the Dowager Empress Maria, sister of Philip II of Spain, and wife of Emperor Maximilian II. The Requiem was composed for the funeral of the Empress who died on February 26, 1603. After the funeral Victoria made revisions to the work which was published in 1605. This piece was Victoria's last composition before he died in 1611. It was then sung at his own funeral.

Bruno Turner memorably encapsulated the work's reputation and perceived historical position thus:-

“It has become revered as well as admired, for it seems to be somehow a Requiem for an Age – the end of Spain's golden century, the end of Renaissance music, the last work, indeed, of Victoria himself”

We hope that this performance will not only be an enjoyable evening of truly great music but also a fitting beginning of Passiontide which begins on 22nd March.

Entry is FREE OF CHARGE but those attending will be invited to make a donation to St. Oswald's Church and its music on leaving.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Mike Donkin

Director: The Scholars & Gentlemen

Interested singers should contact the Director, Mike Donkin at michaeldonkin44@gmail.com

CONFIRMATION

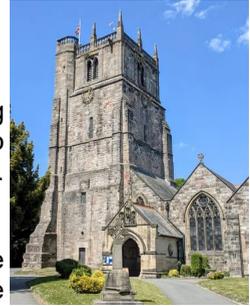
The Bishop of Shrewsbury will be presiding at the Sacrament of Confirmation on Sunday 31st May.

Anyone wishing to be confirmed please contact Muriel our Church Warden.

CHURCH REPAIRS/ IMPROVEMENTS AND THEIR FUNDING

Following on to the Article last month about Building and Maintenance. Firstly, thank you to the people who have responded and offered some assistance. However, we are still open to any further offers of help.

This month we want to highlight another issue, the funding of repair and improvement works to the Church and the Parish Centre. We have an ancient Listed (Grade 2*) building, and it is a bit like the Forth Bridge and its painting, there is always something that needs doing, be that large or small.



When it comes to funding the cost, that always falls to the Parish. For the last 20 or so years we have been able to get some assistance in this by being able to recover most of the VAT we pay on such work, under the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme. As some of you may have seen in the news there has been a very recent announcement that this scheme will now end in March 2026.

History – The Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme was first introduced by the then Chancellor Gordon Brown in 2001 and was available to places of worship of all faiths provided the building was Listed. My understanding is it was introduced in anticipation of an EU VAT change which never took place and was always intended to be a temporary measure pending that change. Well, it lasted over 20 years and has become an essential funding source for ancient churches such as ours.

It has been announced that the scheme will be replaced by a £92 million four-year-fund called the Places of Worship Renewal Fund. In theory that sounds fine, but we fear the devil is in the detail, which has yet to be announced. The present scheme is simple and effective. When we need work done, we employ a contractor, pay any VAT he is required by law to charge us, and then retrospectively claim the VAT back, which Paul Crosby has undertaken on our behalf. VAT represents 20% of the cost, so being able to recover it is significant.

The new scheme we fear will be one where we have to apply for grants up front for **each** specific item of work. Some items we expect will now be excluded, and also that it will become a competitive process pitching one church's case and needs against another. All no doubt to reduce the cost to Government, but that will leave a funding gap to fill for churches like us and be a slower process.

So, what do we need to do? Basically, seek to maximise what we can get from the new Places of Worship Renewal Fund, and also to find alternate sources of funding to help fill the gap. This brings us to the main purpose of this article. We need someone to volunteer to take on the lead role of Fund Raising and Grants Officer for St Oswald's.

We see the role having the following strands: -

- Investigating the new Places of Worship Renewal Fund and making applications under it as necessary. If it is a scheme where we have to apply in advance of doing the work, then we cannot even commence any work until we have made an application and know it has been successful, thus slowing down the speed with which we can progress things.
- Investigate other sources of grant funding to help fund any work we need to do. We think there may be many but do not know. But each is likely to be specific in its reach, only for organisations fulfilling a particular function, only to a Registered Charity, only for carbon reduction purposes, only for electrical carbon reduction improvements etc etc. Some may be only available for a limited period. Much of the initial searches can probably be done via the internet, possibly followed by a telephone call.
- Raising funds either from the local community or the congregation, or both. This will not only be important for just the money it raises, but also if the funding grant we are seeking if is one that requires some match funding from us, such that for every pound they will grant we have to fund an equal amount, or that the grant funding body will fund x percentage if we fund the rest.
- If, as we expect, certain types of work because of their nature, their small scale etc, will fall outside the scope of the new Places of Worship Renewal Fund, then new sources of funding will need to be found to cover the 20% VAT element that we could previously recover under the present scheme for those items of work.

This is an important task that will be too much for the Building and Fabric Committee to undertake, although we are sure the Committee can provide some assistance in providing information to support an application case. So, if someone would be willing to take on this role, possibly with a couple of others to assist spread the load in making enquiries, helping make the application case etc, if the role is considered too much for one person, then that would be great.

If anyone feels able to take on this role/assist with this role, then please speak with any of us, or if you would just like to chat it over, then initially speak with David in the first instance.

David Smith, Muriel Jones, John Abram, Paul Evison

Haydn Jones writes.....

My testimony -

On March 8th, my birthday in 1996 - 30 years ago at 12.20pm, I became a Christian.

This is my testimony—

I went to Horeb, the Welsh Methodist Sunday School from an early age. This is where I first read Bible stories, said prayers and sang hymns - mainly in Welsh! I went to Horeb until I was twelve and after that, it was church for weddings and funerals.

I have always believed in God, with a love of nature, astronomy and with a sense of wonder at creation.

In 1992, I knew that St Oswald's had a Sunday School, so I brought our son Jason age six to join it, and our daughter Faye joining soon after.

I liked the sense of peace I had at church and always enjoyed the music.

I did not understand what 'religion' meant and how the life of Jesus could be relevant to me. I needed answers to lots of questions I had.

I started going to the local Christian Bookshop and started reading books about the Christian faith. The book which really made me think was 'It makes sense' by Stephen Gaukroger - this book answered so many questions I had about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, other religions and life after death. It gradually dawned on me that it could be all true - Jesus died for me and the Holy Spirit is with all who believe.

On my birthday - 30 years ago - I took a leap of faith. I said a prayer to Jesus asking for his forgiveness for all I had done wrong in the past and I invited Jesus into my life. Immediately I felt like a mild electric shock going through my body - I was a Christian.

I pray that people will believe the gospel and the good news of Jesus Christ.

Haydn Jones

SWIMATHON

My wife, Heather, will be swimming 200 lengths in March to raise money for the Marie Curie charity - a cause close to our hearts. A sponsor form will be on the table in church and all donations will be appreciated.

Thank you

Haydn Jones

REPORT OF MEETING IN WOLVERHAMPTON OF THE LICHFIELD DIOCESE COMMUNITY OF EVANGELISTS

It was a cold, wet dreary Saturday that we travelled to Wolverhampton but received such a warm welcome when we arrived at St. Mathew's Church. Judi unfortunately couldn't be with us as 'bug ridden' with a cold.



We were here to support Jassica, who was the guest speaker at this event.

What a privilege it was to hear her recount her journey in Faith in both words and especially song, the highlight being a very moving duet with her son, El-Nathan.

Her family are all well and very busy and send their love to all back in Oswestry.

The session concluded with prayer groups then lunch. We didn't join them for an hour long walk around the area as we had to get back to Oswestry.

It was an extremely uplifting morning!!

Carron Boulton & Alan Neale

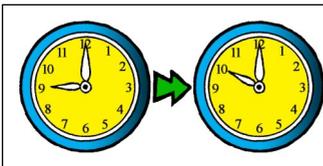
MOTHERS' UNION FELLOWSHIP GROUP

Richard Major was our speaker at our February meeting and gave us a very interesting talk about the history of our Church Bells.

We used our Mothers' Union Wave of prayer for our worship and members read about our various links around the world.

Our next meeting will be on March 12th in the Parish Centre at 2.15pm when the speaker will be Kate Donkin. All welcome

Pam Musson



**Clocks go forward
March 29**

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE – 272. THE DOUBLE-HEADED EAGLE OF THE LLOYDS OF LLANFORDA



The focus for this month's article is the heraldic representation of a double-headed eagle¹, to be seen on the font, in the north aisle of St Oswald's, beneath the millennium window. The font bears the date 1662, and was part of the rebuilding of the parish church and its fittings after the immense damage caused during the Civil War.

It is well known, in Oswestry, that the double-headed eagle relates to the Lloyd family, of Llanforda and Llwynymaen, also of Drenewydd in the parish of Whittington, and it is believed that our font was a gift by Edward Lloyd of Llanforda (1609-1663). The emblem, also to be seen on Llwyd Mansion, at the junction of Cross Street and Bailey Street, has long been linked to an act of bravery carried out by Meurig Llwyd, an ancestor of the Lloyds: it is said that he had rescued the standard of an Austrian commander during the Crusades, being rewarded with the right to use the symbol for his own heraldic arms.

Edward, and his elder brother John, were both baptised at St Oswald's, sons of John Lloyd of Llanforda, on August 22nd 1609. Edward's father John died in 1634, and his brother John died in December 1635, at which point Edward inherited the Llanforda estate. Edward Lloyd is best known to posterity as a loyal supporter of the king during the Civil War; he was for a time the Governor of Oswestry Castle. His royalist leanings cost him dear, as his land and property were badly damaged and plundered, and he was subject to heavy fines imposed by Parliament.

Both Edward and his wife Katherine (daughter of John Trevor of Brynkinalt) survived to see the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, with the coronation of Charles II. Katherine died in December 1661, and Edward in 1663². Their gravestones, above the Llanforda vault in the north chancel, were recorded by Stanley Leighton at the time of the restorations of 1872/74. On Frances's stone was the inscription:

“Who bore her sexe with peril of her life
A loyal subject and a loving wife
Her God and King restorde her heart ran o'er
More than brimful with joy could hold no more”.

¹ Also described as a spread eagle, or an eagle displayed

² By the modern calendar. Our registers give the date of burial as March 3rd 1662

On Edward's gravestone, which gives his date of death as February 13th, was an inscription in Latin which has been translated as

“One who durst be loyal just and wise,
When all were out of countenance here lyes”.

A letter to the *Advertiser*, from December 1872, indicates that Edward Lloyd's stone bore the double-headed eagle, beneath this inscription.

Unfortunately, neither of these gravestones are visible today. At the time of the restorations of 1872/74, a number of gravestones formerly in the chancel were moved and affixed to the inside walls of the church tower. These include the stone relating to Edward Lloyd's son – another Edward Lloyd (1635-1681)³. Those stones which were not removed to the tower were, it must be assumed, left in situ. They would have been lowered, and then covered by the new tiled or boarded floors. We must conclude that this was the fate of the stones commemorating Edward Lloyd, his wife Katherine, and also those of members of the Lloyd family of Llwynymaen (which also bore the double-headed eagle).

Readers will be aware of current activity to restore Llwyd Mansion so that it can be preserved for future generations. This work includes research by local volunteers, working with the project coordinator Samantha Jones, to understand the history of this iconic building which, despite bearing the date 1604, is much older, dating to the 1460s. I have been part of this work, so it is all very fresh in my mind (which has helped greatly in putting this article together!).

It seems clear that Llwyd Mansion belonged to the Lloyds of Llanforda – as the double-headed eagle would suggest - and that the property passed from the Lloyds in the 1670s to Sir William Williams and from him on to the Williams-Wynn family. We know its ownership from Victorian times onwards. Isaac Watkin, in his book *Oswestry, with an account of its old houses, shops etc.* (1920), tells us that in the 19th century it belonged to the Bennion family⁴, and was sold in 1875 to Stanley Leighton of Sweeney, who carried out a major programme of restorations. Along with many other lines of enquiry, we are currently working on the period in between – from the 1670s/1680s through to the early years of the 19th century - looking to add more to what is already a fascinating history

John Pryce-Jones

³ The father of the scientist and Celtic scholar Edward Lhuyd

⁴ The family whose impressive monument stands next to the vestry door, facing Church Street

MUSIC NOTES MARCH 2026

The congregation can sing!

What another amazing month it has been in the musical life of our church. The feedback continues to flow in about how much you are enjoying the music, and that honestly means the world to us. The choir and I are so grateful for your encouragement and support — it truly makes all the difference.

One particular highlight was our recent singing afternoon. We sang together for around 45 minutes and then shared a light lunch afterwards — and what an afternoon it was! This congregation can certainly sing. For me personally, it was such a fulfilling occasion, with a real sense of joy and community. You are all taking everything in your stride, and this church is very lucky to have you. It was such a success, we would like to hold another session on **Sunday 22nd March**, to go through mainly the Gloria of the MacMillan as well as some other music. This will be around 12pm, after the morning service, in the Parish Centre—again, a light lunch will be provided.

For those who enjoyed the afternoon and might be wondering about doing more, please do seriously consider joining the choir. Yes, it is a commitment — but I promise you, you won't regret it. It is a wonderful way to serve the church, improve your voice, grow in confidence, and be part of a supportive and uplifting team.

It has been a busy month in other ways too. We visited some local schools in the hope of encouraging some of the children to join us — and they were fantastic! So enthusiastic and full of energy. Fingers crossed that we may see our choir and church family continue to grow in the coming months.

We are also delighted that our previous Director of Music, Michael Donkin, will be returning to bring Scholars and Gentlemen to the church for a Passiontide concert. They will perform Victoria's Requiem on **Sunday 22nd March at 6pm**. There will be a retiring collection, with all proceeds going towards supporting the choir and the basic running costs of the church. Please do come along and support what promises to be a beautiful and moving evening of music.

Please do also join us during Holy Week. You will be most welcome. There will be a wealth of beautiful music to complement our services — truly something not to be missed. Please do choose to spend your Easter with us, we would love to have you.

Thank you, too, for all your suggestions and encouragement. I received so many thoughtful messages following the last parish magazine article — all incredibly helpful. I will certainly bear everything in mind as we plan ahead and will do my very best to implement as much as possible.

On a sadder note, we were very sorry to hear of the passing of Ruth Young. Ruth was a huge supporter of both myself and the choir for many years. We hold her, and her family, very much in our thoughts and prayers at this time. She will be greatly missed.

That's all from me again, thank you for taking the time to read this section and please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

With grateful thanks for your continued support,

With warmest wishes,

Samantha Lewis-Widhall
Director of Music
St Oswald's Parish Church, Oswestry

THANK YOU.....

to everybody who contributed to the Lunch after Harvey's final service on January 25th especially the kitchen team led by Elaine Leek and Mary Jones.

June Williams

COFFEE ROTA FOR MARCH

| | | | |
|----|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1 | Mary Jones | Natasha Bell | Sally Wright |
| 8 | Jane Mayne | Chris Abram | Jean Lawrence |
| 15 | Jane Wilkinson | Val Hamer | Carol Burke |
| 22 | Judi Neale | Babs Bone | Elaine Leek |
| 29 | Hazel Pryce | Dilys Lloyd | Jane Mayne |



Services at S. Oswald's

| | | |
|-------------------------|-------|--|
| March 1 | 08:00 | Holy Communion |
| <i>Lent 2</i> | 10:30 | Parish Eucharist with sung setting |
| <i>St David</i> | 18:00 | Choral Evensong |
| March 8 | 10:30 | Parish Eucharist with sung setting |
| <i>Lent 3</i> | 18:00 | Evening Prayer |
| March 15 | 08:00 | Holy Communion |
| <i>Lent 4</i> | 10:30 | Parish Eucharist <i>with the giving of flowers</i> |
| <i>Mothering Sunday</i> | 18:00 | Choral Evensong |
| March 22 | 10:30 | Parish Eucharist with sung setting |
| <i>Passion Sunday</i> | 18:00 | Music for Passiontide |
| March 29 | 10:30 | Blessing of Palms and Eucharist |
| <i>Palm Sunday</i> | 18:00 | Reflective Space |
| Every Thursday | 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)

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 | |
| | 19:00 | Eucharist of the Last Supper with Vigil | |
| Good Friday | 12:00 | Three Hours – St Oswald's <i>(Details to be confirmed)</i> | |
| | 19:00 | Devotional Service at Christchurch, Rhydygroesau | |
| Easter Eve | 14:00] | Gospel Reading | |
| | 16:00] | (a sequence of passages mostly drawn from the Gospel of Matthew, including his account of the Passion, with some additional excerpts from the Gospels of Luke and John.) | |
| | 19:00 | Easter Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter | |

Services at Rhydycroesau

First Sunday 09:30 All Age Service

March 1

Lent 3 09:30 Holy Communion

March 8

Passion Sunday 09:30 Holy Communion

March 22



Parish Church of St. Oswald, King & Martyr

MUSIC LIST - MARCH 2026

Sunday 1st March

Lent 2

10.30am Parish Eucharist

Kyrie: MacMillan - St. Anne's Mass
 Setting: Mathias - Common Service in C
 Anthem: Christ has no body now but yours (Ogden)

6.00pm Choral Evensong

Introit: Listen Sweet Dove (Ives)
 Canticles: Brewer in D
 Responses: Aylewood
 Anthem: God so loved the world (Chilcott)

Sunday 8th March

Lent 3

10.30am Parish Eucharist

Setting: MacMillan - St. Anne's Mass
 Anthem: Sicut cervus (Palestrina)

Sunday 15th March

Mothering Sunday

10.30am Parish Communion for Mothering Sunday

Kyrie: MacMillan - St. Anne's Mass
 Setting: Archer - St. Albans Service
 Anthem: The Lord bless you and keep you (Rutter)

6.00pm Choral Evensong

Introit: O taste and see (Vaughan Williams)
 Canticles: Sumsion in G
 Responses: Sumsion
 Anthem: Mother of God, here I stand (Tavener)

Sunday 22nd March

Passion Sunday

10.30am Parish Eucharist

Kyrie: MacMillan - St. Anne's Mass
 Setting: Mathias - Common Service in C
 Anthem: Drop, drop slow tears (Gibbons)

/Cont Overleaf

Music List Cont.

Sunday 22nd March

Passion Sunday

6.00pm Music for Passiontide

Scholars and Gentlemen : Requiem of 1605 -
Tomas Luis de Victoria

Sunday 29th March

Palm Sunday

10.30am Parish Communion

Setting: Thorne - Mass of St. Thomas
Anthems: Hosanna to the Son of David (Telemann)
Ex ore innocentium (Ireland)

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samanthalewiswidnall@gmail.com

CALENDAR FOR MARCH 2026



| | |
|--------------|--|
| Monday 2 | 1000 Clergy Eucharist and Meeting 1430 Ladies Group—Parish Centre |
| Tuesday 3 | 1030—1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre 1900 Lent Study Group at 8 Lower Brook Street |
| Wednesday 4 | 1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre 1900 <i>Praying for Our World</i> —Reading Area 1930 Lent Study Group—St Catherine's Chapel |
| Thursday 5 | 1400—1530 Lent Study Group—St Catherine's Chapel |
| Saturday 7 | 1900 The Movement Centre Concert (Fron Choir) |
| Tuesday 10 | 1030—1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre 1900 Lent Study Group at 8 Lower Brook Street |
| Wednesday 11 | 0830—0940 Oswestry School Assembly 1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre 1930 Lent Study Group—St Catherine's Chapel |
| Thursday 12 | 1400—1530 Lent Study Group—St Catherine's Chapel 1415 Mothers' Union Fellowship Group—Parish Centre |
| Tuesday 17 | 1030—1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre 1900 Lent Study Group at 8 Lower Brook Street |
| Wednesday 18 | 0815—1000 Oswestry School Assembly 1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre 1930 Lent Study Group—St Catherine's Chapel |
| Thursday 19 | 1400—1530 Lent Study Group—St Catherine's Chapel |
| Friday 20 | 1330—1600 Oswestry School End of Term Easter Service |
| Sunday 22 | 1200 Singing Workshop—Parish Centre (See page 20) 1800 Gentlemen and Scholars Concert Victoria Requiem of 1605 (See page 12/13) |
| Tuesday 24 | 1030—1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre 1900 Lent Study Group at 8 Lower Brook Street |
| Wednesday 25 | 1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre 1930 Lent Study Group—St Catherine's Chapel |
| Thursday 26 | 1400—1530 Lent Study Group—St Catherine's Chapel |
| Friday 27 | 1330—1600 Morda School Spring Assembly |
| Saturday 28 | 0930—1500 Church Spring Clean (See page 9) |
| Monday 30 | 1900 Stations of the Cross |
| Tuesday 31 | 1030—1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre 1900 Stations of the Cross |

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DONATIONS AND GIFT AID UPDATE

On behalf of St Oswald's, I would like to thank you for your continued donations which are very much appreciated and are significant in funding ongoing running costs and upkeep of the Church.

The HMRC continue to enable organisations like St Oswald's to reclaim tax from donations made by tax-payers. This brings valuable additional funding to the Church. If you are already donating to St Oswald's, and would like to check if we have recorded your donations as being eligible for Gift Aid please reach out to me by email or phone.

A little reminder on 3 easy ways you can make your donations:

Bank payments through standing order: You can choose the frequency of your Bank payments when setting up your standing order. I can provide the St Oswald's bank details for parishioners who would like to start donating in this way, together with a Gift Aid Declaration Form for tax payers.

Stewardship envelopes: The envelopes scheme provides a box of 52 envelopes which have a unique reference number assigned to the member. The envelopes are date stamped for each Sunday of the year.

Whilst the intent of the envelopes is to enable the member to easily make a weekly donation when they attend Church, the scheme is flexible regarding how often a member makes their donation and the amount they donate. If you are a member of this scheme and miss donations for a week or so, you can simply use the relevant dated envelope the next time you come to Church, without the need to submit envelopes for the weeks you missed.

Parishioners can join the scheme at any time of the year. If you would like a box of yellow envelopes with a unique reference number please contact me.



Blue envelopes: Blue envelopes are available in church for parishioners and visitors who would like to make occasional donations. These require name and address details to be completed on the front of the envelope, together with signature of the gift aid section if you are a tax payer. If you are regularly using this type of envelope for your donations you might like to consider the Bank payments option or Stewardship envelopes as an alternative and easier way to make your donations.

With warm regards

Alison Vincent

Gift Aid Secretary

Phone: 07541056235

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ST. OSWALD'S LADIES GROUP

It was with some anticipation that we welcomed back Justin and Sherie Soper. This time instead of brandishing a sword and helmet, Justin arrived with a quiver of arrows! He spoke about the battle of Shrewsbury in 1403, where the young sixteen year old Henry Prince of Wales had his first taste of battle in an attempt to drive back the Welsh rebels and in particular Owen Glendower.

This was the first time that the fine bowmen of England were pitted against each other in a shower of arrows where the archers would unleash nine arrows a minute!

Prince Henry was wounded in the battle by an arrow which penetrated his cheek and lodged in his skull. He recovered thanks to the skill and patience of a surgeon called John Bradmore who designed a special tool to extricate the arrowhead. Gruesome details! However Justin as always brought the whole history to life.

Turning towards more pleasant times, our next meeting will be our Annual General Meeting on Monday 2nd March at 2.30 p.m. in the Parish Centre when after an informal Eucharist, June will be talking about jewellery and her time at R. J. Christian Ltd.

Glenda Evison

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> |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 3 Jan | 4 | Chris Abram |
| 10 Jan | 9 | Sally Wright |
| 17 Jan | 4 | Chris Abram |
| 24 Jan | 29 | Maureen Crosby RIP |
| 31 Jan | 11 | Malcolm Clark |

If you look for the advert within this magazine (page 8) you will see that two numbers will become available in March when the new Bonus Ball year starts. The cost of joining is £13/quarter which, you can choose, is collected either annually, half yearly or quarterly.

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

Tel: 658606

Paul Crosby

WHAT IS IT TO BE RICH AND WHAT IS IT TO BE GENEROUS?

Ten million pound coins on a desert island would be as useless as a tissue paper canoe. Less useful, because burning the canoe would at least keep you warm. Physical money on its own has no value – you can't eat it, you can't build a shelter out of it, you can't easily use it to keep warm or dry, yet it has a peculiar hold over us.

Why? Probably because of what it represents. Bankers say that money serves three basic functions: it is a medium of exchange, a unit of account and a store of value. It makes buying and selling things easy, we can use it as a way of keeping count of our wealth and it is a way of holding onto wealth.

For example, if I tie up my wealth in cabbages, it wouldn't last very long. Two or three weeks after cutting the cabbages, they'd have no value because they'd be mushy and revolting. But if I sell them when they are fresh and green, I can get £100 to put in the bank to use whenever and wherever I want.

These very useful things about money are also at the core of some of our worst temptations. If I use money to buy and sell, I am distancing myself from the thing that I am buying and it makes it easier to do things that I wouldn't do if I was close up.

Once, if I wanted to swap my cabbages for your wheat, I'd have to meet you to do that. Today if I want to buy some cheap clothes, I don't have to take my vegetables all the way to a sweat shop in the far east and see the conditions of the children there. I can use my £100 in the bank to pay for clothes in a shop without worrying where they came from. Or if I send my struggling widowed sister £100 every month to help with living costs but never visit her, I never see that she needs company as much as she needs food.

If we have stored up our wealth, we don't rely on God meeting our daily needs. In the desert, when the Israelites tried to store the manna they were given every day by God, it went off. In the wilderness, the Israelites learnt how to trust God for their daily bread – money helps us not to have to trust.

Counting my wealth leads me quickly into the sin of pride – I'm somehow better than you because I have more money in the bank. Pride leads to anxiety – worrying about what will happen if we lose our wealth and our

status. In a number of places in the Gospels Jesus talks about the anxiety that accompanies money and things. He knows that pride and anxiety are the enemy of hope - they lead us into ungenerous lives, holding on to the things we have instead of opening our hands, letting go, and living simply so that others may simply live. "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money," he said.

As you think about your life, do you control your money or does your money control you? Do we hold onto more than we could ever spend in our lifetime when others in the world have so little? Can we be more generous with our money and our time? How can we use our money to bring hope to the hopeless and renew our own faith in the God who is always faithful?



Sam Rushton is the Chief Executive Officer and Diocesan Secretary of Lichfield Diocese.

This is the second in a series of three articles encouraging the whole diocese - parishes, clergy, lay leaders... everyone - to explore attitudes to money together, looking at 'Gratitude, Opportunity and Hope'.

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LAMB'S TAILS IN THE SPRING BREEZE

Whilst most plants are pollinated by insects, plus other invertebrates and small mammals, quite a few rely on the wind to reproduce. A common way for trees to do this is to have catkins, hazel and silver birch both being good examples with easily visible long catkins often called lambs tails, but oak, beech, hornbeam, walnut, pine and other conifers do too. Catkins are actually long slim clusters of flowers which release large amounts of small, light pollen that can be blown a long way.

Most flowers contain both male and female parts within the one flower, but wind pollinated trees usually have separate male and female flowers. These may occur on the same tree as they do in hazel or oak or sometimes on different trees for example willow and poplar. The male flowers form in clusters making the catkin, whilst the female flowers stand upright individually. Flowers of wind pollinated plants have small petals if they have any at all and catkins tend to be pale yellow, no need for bright colours, large petals or scent to attract insects when it is the wind that is doing the work! Both the male catkins and female flowers can be seen on the edges of the tree canopy where the wind will catch them, shaking the catkin, releasing the pollen and carrying it away. The female flowers then catch the pollen as it is blown past, they usually stand upright on top of twigs and often have a sticky tip or 'stigma' as it's known, to catch the passing pollen. The female flowers are sometimes red, looking a little like a small sea anemone. Have a look on a hazel bush and see if you can see both the dangling catkins and also the small, red female flowers, sometimes on the same twig. Once pollinated the female flower will develop into the seed, be it an acorn, pine nut or a hazel nut.

Wind pollination works well for trees that flower early, when few insect pollinators may be about, for trees that are found in cold and windy spots too. Hazel, birch, willow and pines are trees that are early to arrive and grow on bare, rocky ground and are thought to have been amongst the trees that first colonised patches left bare by retreating glaciers after the last ice age. Wind pollination would have been an advantage in this.

Another important group of plants that are pollinated by wind are the grasses. Whilst they do not have catkins or separate male and female flowers, there are parallels to be drawn. Grass flowers tend to be green, yellow or pale brown rather than brightly coloured. They are produced at the top of a grass stem that usually stands vertical, bringing the flowers above other foliage and into the wind. They tend to be clustered, often in a spike rather like a vertical catkin and they produce a large amount of pollen which can be carried over distance. Many grasses open up when

ready to release their pollen, looking like a miniature Christmas tree, so that all of the flowers will be caught in passing breezes. Some grasses do have strong colours, but this is due to the colour of the pollen not the flowers. Grasses may be at their most beautiful when releasing coloured pollen. One example of this is meadow foxtail, so named because the red pollen colours the flowering spike like a fox's tail.

Why not have a walk around your local churchyard, chapel yard or cemetery and see if you can see any signs of wind pollination taking place.

All the best,

Harriet Carty

Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor, harriet@cfga.org.uk, www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk - individuals and groups in the diocese receive 20% members discount on all CfGA materials. Use the discount code diomem22



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The beginning of the year is often a time where we feel like staying in and being cosy by the fire. But for the schools work project it has been a time of scheduling activities, preparing for the term, and getting out there sharing the gospel through assemblies, lessons and CU's. Schools have been keen to book activities with me, and bookings for Diary of a Disciple workshops have begun.

What's Happening in February

- Diary of a Disciple workshops begin 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 honesty, courage, ambition, forgiveness, teamwork and friendship.
- The Christian Unions will be focusing on the miracles of Jesus, what we can learn from them about Jesus, and why they are relevant today.

Thank you for your faithful support of the project.

Blessings

Jane Webber

Things to Pray For

- Pupils receiving results of mock exams
- Diary of a Disciple workshops starting this month.
- That my assemblies will have an impact on both staff and pupils

SAMARITANS

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LOVE AND SERVE ONE ANOTHER

On Maundy Thursday we recall the final command that Jesus gave to his disciples before his death. After the Last Supper, He rose and washed his disciples' feet. This was astonishing for a 'teacher' to do, but He had a firm purpose in mind: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." His disciples were to love through service, not domination, of one another.

In Latin, the opening phrase of this sentence is 'mandatum novum do vobis'. The word 'mundy' is thus a corruption of the Latin 'mandatum' (or command). The 'washing of the feet' ceremony was an important part of the medieval church's liturgy, symbolising the humility of the clergy, in obedience to the example of Christ.

| | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| Maundy | N A T C Y E F N D R M Y E N | As |
| Thursday | T I I E R D L I M I Y F P T | Loved |
| Final | P O T S E O I A N O T H E R | you |
| Command | N S B A V F U C U A I E N S | Must |
| Jesus | T L T E L N C E O C L O O J | One |
| Disciples | R H D T D A T R B M I I E D | Another |
| Death | E T U Y Y I V W E T M S A R | Service |
| Last | P S S R Y N E E A N U A P T | Domination |
| Supper | P U E A S T O N I S H I N G | Latin |
| Washed | U M R O L D I M C D H R U D | Ceremony |
| Feet | S H V P H M A O E E E E D S | Medieval |
| Astonishing | D T I D O D G Y V R H M D O | Humility |
| Purpose | S T C D I S C I P L E S A S | Obedience |
| Teacher | Y T E A C H E R A U O C I R | |

Solution on page 39

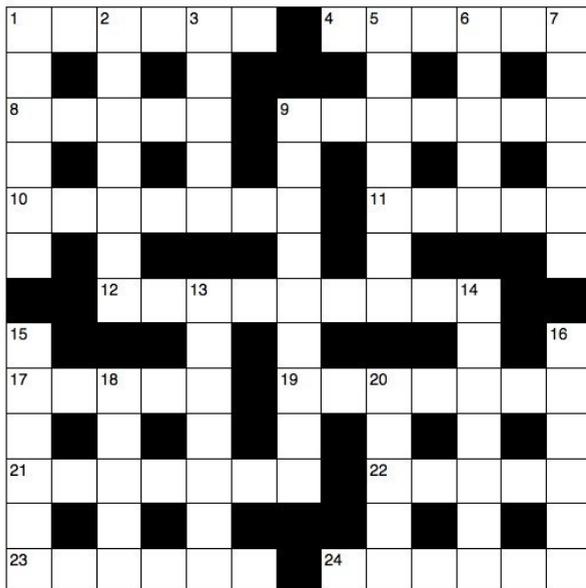
From a church in France (translated).....

When you enter this church it may be possible you hear the "call of God". However, it is unlikely that He will call on your mobile. Thank you for turning it off. If you want to talk to God, enter, choose a quiet place, and talk to Him.

If you want to see Him, try sending a text message while driving on the motorway.

Across

- 1 Arouse (Song of Songs 2:7) (6)
 4 Extinguish (Isaiah 1:31) (6)
 8 "They — —," you will say, "but I'm not hurt!" (Proverbs 23:35) (3,2)
 9 Unhappiness Nehemiah 2:2) (7)
 10 Jewish (7)
 11 Dirge (anag.) (5)
 12 'A truthful witness gives honest —, but a false witness tells lies' (Proverbs 12:17) (9)
 17 Paul quoted from the second one in his address in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:33) (5)
 19 'Do not use your freedom to — the sinful nature' (Galatians 5:13) (7)
 21 'As you can see, he has done nothing to — death' (Luke 23:15) (7)
 22 Name applied by Isaiah to Jerusalem (Isaiah 29:1) (5)
 23 'All the people — — one man, saying, "None of us will go home"' (Judges 20:8) (4,2)
 24 Lazarus, who was carried by angels to Abraham's side when he died, was one (Luke 16:20) (6)



Down

- 1 Appalled (Job 26:11) (6)
 2 'In an — to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea' (Acts 27:30) (7)
 3 Expel (Acts 18:16) (5)
 5 'But I have a baptism to —, and how distressed I am until it is completed!' (Luke 12:50) (7)
 6 'Of the increase of his government and peace there will be — —' (Isaiah 9:7) (2,3)
 7 Hurry (Psalm 119:60) (6)
 9 'For I desire mercy, not —, and acknowledgement of God rather than burnt offerings' (Hosea 6:6) (9)
 13 One of its towns was Sychar, where Jesus met a woman at Jacob's well (John 4:5) (7)
 14 Shouting (Acts 7:57) (7)

15 Arachnid (Isaiah 59:5) (6)

16 One of Paul's first converts in Philippi was Lydia, a — in purple cloth (Acts 16:14) (6)

18 Donkeys (5)

20 Raked (anag.) (5)

Sudoku

| | | | | | | | | |
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| 9 | | | | | 3 | | | |
| | | | 5 | 8 | 6 | | 1 | 9 |
| 6 | 3 | | | | | 2 | | 8 |

Easy

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| | 6 | | | | | | | 2 |
| | | | | 8 | | 6 | | |
| 6 | | | | | 4 | | 2 | |
| | 4 | 1 | 9 | | | | | 8 |

Medium

PUZ?LES

**Solutions
on page 39**

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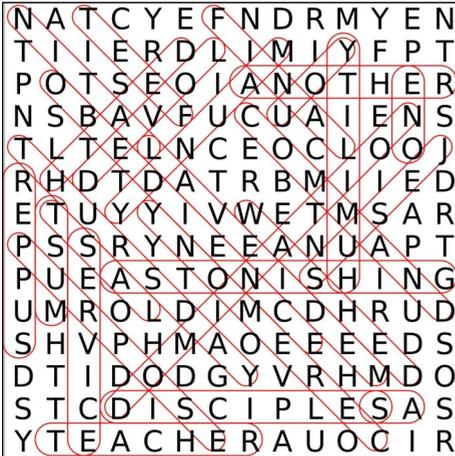
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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 2 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 8 | 3 |
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| 3 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 4 |
| 4 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 9 | 8 | 2 | 6 |
| 1 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 5 |
| 8 | 9 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 1 |
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Medium

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

PUBLICATION DETAILS FOR NEXT MONTH

Material required SUNDAY, 15 MARCH

Make-up day for working party, and publication:
Tuesday, 24 March

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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?
Email dianedawson15@gmail.com

REGISTERS



We welcome in HOLY BAPTISM

S Oswald's
February 8

Rowan Logan Burgess

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

S Oswald's
February 2
February 5

Marlene May Hudspith, aged 87
Ann Margaret Harding, aged 78



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.

CONTACTS - ST OSWALD'S

| | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------|
| BELLRINGERS | Captain: Mr Brian Rothera Secretary: Ms Jan Snowball, | 657778 671152 07732712484 |
| CARD SHOP | Ann Email: annashworth@btinternet.com Chris. Email: christine.abram@googlemail.com | 652138 653316 |
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| CHURCH CLEANING CO-ORDINATOR | Natasha Bell | 653783 |
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