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Prestbury Parish Magazine



 North Cheltenham
Team Ministry



April 2026

£1

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Views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Editors, the Clergy, the Parochial Church Council, or of any authoritative body of the Church of England

*The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of
St Mary and St Nicolas Prestbury Cheltenham - Registered Charity No 1130933*

continued inside back cover

Cover Picture:

An Easter image created during lockdown by Nichola Horswell, who, her husband Chris says, cut the grass and did the garden as well!

Reflections from the Reverend Jacqueline

In my garden is a large apple tree. During the summer months, its foliage is a dark green and the small apples that survive the squirrels and the wind slowly grow. As summer becomes autumn, the leaves turn russet, and the weight of the fruit pulls down the branches and collecting apples becomes a daily job. During the winter months, the bare branches and dark bark are unremarkable, host to a couple of wood pigeons, biding its time till the days grow longer and warmer weather beckons new growth.

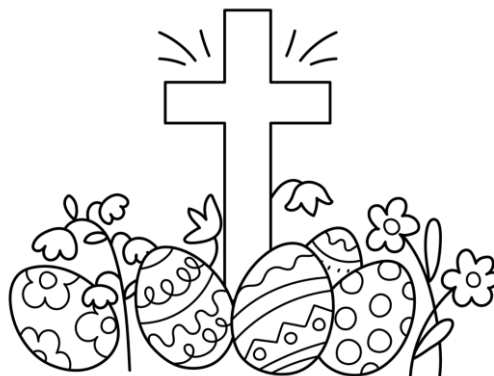
And then the magic happens. Over several days, white blooms emerge from their buds and delicate flowers hang from burgundy and lime green fronds. The insects attract a host of birds and from dawn to dusk the whole tree is alive with their presence. Then, the white blossom turns a delicate halo of pink. Looking up through the branches, the sunlight renders the blossoms translucent and luminous against the blue sky and its beauty is breathtaking.

Inevitably, after a few weeks, a wind blows the petals across the garden and shoots of dark green leaves appear in their place. And the cycle begins again.

This month, the Church celebrates Easter and we think about the transformation from Good Friday when Christ was crucified to Easter Sunday, when he rose again from the tomb. Jesus was distinctive in his time because of the way he transformed people by healing, listening to them and teaching them about how God loves everyone. We are all called to carry on this work; to be transformational in our communities – to come alongside those who might be struggling, who carry emotional burdens or who need an attentive ear. We live in a world where success is measured through material possession and disputes are resolved through violence. Perhaps as we celebrate Easter, we might think about how we can help to transform and bring new life to our corners of the world by loving our neighbours, whoever they are. When we change the conversations to ones of joy and good news, we will change our outlook to one of positivity and hope. And that is transformational.

Wishing you a very happy Easter!

Reverend Jacqueline



This month's theme is MODERN LIFE

Modern Life

I often get e-mails, particularly at work, that start, “I know that you are very busy but.....”. These messages usually go on to offer something of no interest to me – things that if the sender had bothered to do some work they would know that I would not be interested in. There is an assumption, in Modern Life, that we are all busy, you might be told that somebody is a very busy person, with an implication that if you are not a busy person you are a less valued member of society. I sometimes wonder what these busy people are doing. Actually, I am not nearly as busy as I used to be, the company that I have worked for since 2013 was acquired late in 2024 and I relinquished the post of Executive Chairman which gave me a lot more time and when I announced in November 2025 that I was going to retire people almost lost interest in me all together, it really is a most lovely position to be in.

I am an enthusiastic food shopper, I like to go to the butcher, the greengrocer, the fishman at the garden centre, even the florist – not for food of course. All of these things can be bought at a supermarket, but it is an enjoyable activity and helps to keep local traders in business. One friend commented that it was a lovely thing to do, but went on, nobody has time to shop like this anymore. I know that this friend spends a lot of time on social media and watching television, there is nothing wrong with that, their choice, but I think that we all have time to do what we want to do. Modern Life is a full-on assault on our senses, whether it be twenty-four-hour news, non-stop messaging apps or persistent background music, do we need to step away sometimes? Yes, in my view.

Silence and solitude are rarely present in Modern Life, but both are aspects of life to be appreciated, perhaps treasured. (I am mindful as I write that for some solitude is also loneliness which I know can be very tough). For many of us a time each day where we step back from Modern Life activity can be liberating. Bishop Rachel has spoken of the importance of silence in our prayer life; it is an aspect of our church services that has become forgotten as most contemporary worship mirrors Modern Life and fills every moment with noise, whether words or music. If we consider Jesus’ life as recorded in the Gospels, reflect on how many times it is written that he withdrew to be alone.

We often refer to the prayer that Jesus taught us, but in the same passage in Matthew’s gospel Jesus teaches “when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you”, indeed we don’t need to use many words, simply pray in silence “for your Father knows what you need before you ask him”. John Bunyan sums this up beautifully, when he writes in *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, “When thou prayest, rather let thy heart be without words than thy words without heart”.

Silent prayer has an important place in Modern Life. My friend Chris Whittington has recently written a book called *The Missing Peace*, it was launched at Pip and Jim’s with Bishop Rachel. Bishop Rachel has written of the book, “Many years ago, one of the greatest discoveries in my life was that of silent prayer and being still. In a world of constant noise, distraction and conflict, *The Missing Peace* is an invitation to discover the treasure of silent prayer and enter more deeply into the mystery of God’s love as we go on becoming who we are in relationship with God, neighbour, creation and with ourselves”.

Helen Mann has led silent prayer at St Mary's through Lent, (thank you Helen) I hope silent prayer is a form of worship that will grow and develop at St Mary's and through the North Cheltenham team. Modern Life is wonderful, but it can be all consuming. Silent prayer is a powerful way to step back and allow us to keep Modern Life – indeed, all life - in balance.

For those who are interested in more detail on the book, *The Missing Peace*, it can be found at: www.schoolofcontemplativelife.com. The book was featured in the *Church Times*, so don't worry, it is very orthodox!

Chris Horswell

Another take on Modern Life from Chris

I constantly used to rant to my children about the commercialisation of Christmas and Easter, Easter is not just an excuse to eat your body weight in chocolate. I thought they just ignored me, but something must have gone in, about ten years ago, when the four of them were all in their 20's they thought that it was very funny to present this to me on Easter Day - and so did I!

Chris Horswell



Southwark Cathedral

(see Bernard's article ►)

MODERN LIFE

The ringing of church bells by rope and wheel (change ringing) is an art and science almost exclusive to the British Isles. Campanology, to give bellringing its proper name (from the Latin, *campana*, meaning bell), goes back many hundreds of years and numerous are the different peals (tunes) created. Each peal has its own unique and unusual name: *Kent Treble Bob Minor*, *Little Bob Maximus*, *Double Norwich Court Bob Minor*, *Cambridge Surprise Minor*, being just a few. When I used to ring here at St Mary's some eighty years ago, the method most commonly used was *Grandsire Doubles*; it was less complicated than those mentioned above.

While pulling away on my rope, I used to imagine that this bell, along with the other seven, would be giving the 'hurry-up call' to my girlfriend who would be urging her 'always late' mother to get a move-on! Now, those same bells welcome me to church on Sunday mornings as they have done for my friends and family for well over a hundred years. A comforting thought. Church bells are a very positive way of linking modern life with the past. How refreshing then, that in these days of artificial intelligence, driverless cars, and with bus trips to the moon on the agenda, a brand-new peal rang out over southeast London, keeping the centuries-old tradition of composing peals for church bells alive and well.

This momentous occasion took place on 30th January 2026, and the ring of bells used to perform it were those of Southwark Cathedral, handled by the cathedral band of ringers who were responsible for both the composition and the naming of the new peal. This however was not done just for their own pleasure; the peal had a purpose. The music of those bells rang out at the end of the memorial service celebrating the life of author Dame Jilly Cooper who had died aged 88 in October 2025. There could have been no better tribute to that most popular of 'racy' writers whose more recent novels were collectively known as *The Rutshire Chronicles*, stories which brought joy to millions of readers. Very fitting then that this new peal should be named *Rutshire Surprise Maximus!*

Much of what follows is taken from *The Daily Telegraph* account of the service, written by the journalist Anita Singh. Her coverage gives the impression that she must have relished this assignment; and the words by The Very Reverend Dr Mark Oakley, Dean of Southwark Cathedral, who officiated, show just how sincere he felt about Dame Jilly. Prior to his post at Southwark, he was Dean of St John's College, Cambridge, where he was a Fellow and Tutor. Evidently, he and Jilly had first met over sixty years ago when they were both young authors, and became close friends.

Guests were greeted at the cathedral door by a sleek, black labrador who sat obediently inside the entrance. Jilly was very much an animal lover, and the dog was amongst the cast of *Rivals*, which to her delight had been adapted from her novel for television. *Who's Who*, that 177-year-old annual register of the UK's most notable figures, detailing in brief their biographies, lists Jilly Cooper's recreations as '*merrymaking, wildflowers and greyhounds*'. Such was her love for greyhounds that she became patron of the charity *Greyhounds in Need*.

According to Anita Singh, the service was "*a funny, beautiful, joy-filled occasion*" with tributes to her warmth and generosity of spirit. The Dean said, "*Here was a person with a champagne soul, of good vintage and sparkling for all it was worth*". He described her as, "*Full of light, she lit up places and people, a collage of rare humane qualities, and a friend who*

brought comfort, compassion and excitement". The cathedral rang with laughter as another dame read extracts from "The Gossip Diaries" kept by Jilly Cooper. That dame was Joanna Lumley, for whom I have much respect and admiration. I will always remember sharing a conversation with her at The Dorchester, where at a charity lunch in which I was involved (raising funds for animal welfare), she was guest speaker. I was introduced to her by he who was universally known as 'The Voice of Racing'. To enjoy those two wonderful voices, Sir Peter O'Sullivan's smooth and cultured, and Joanna's seductive and captivating, was something special, both of course using perfect English grammar and diction. That would have been about fifteen years ago. Now in this modern life one so often hears words used such as 'uncomfortableness' instead of discomfort, 'celebray-id' instead of 'celebrated', and 'Bri-ish' instead of British, where it seems fashionable not to sound the 't' wherever possible!



It was The Dean who was also at Dame Jilly's private funeral in Gloucestershire towards the end of last year. He was anxious to share an unusual moment from that occasion with those present at her memorial service in January. This is what he had to say: "As we walked away from the grave a remarkable thing happened. Five horses in the field next to the graveyard walked over and stood in formation with military precision and stared, not at us but in the direction of Jilly's resting place. Nothing would

move them. It was as if they were reminding us of what we had just done – laid to rest a beautiful, precious, rare human being, a friend to us and to them. Seeing those horses made fragile hearts feel strong again".

There is no doubt that many things in this modern life have changed for the better. A thanksgiving service like this just would not have happened in the distant past; nor would five different types of sherry be on offer to those in the congregation who stay behind after the 11 o'clock Eucharist at St Mary's on Sunday mornings!

As Jilly Cooper's service came to an end, waiters appeared bearing trays of Moët et Chandon and glasses were raised for a toast. At the same time, Queen Camilla's tribute to her long-standing friend last October was read out: "Very few writers get to be a legend in their own lifetime, but Jilly was one. May her hereafter be filled with impossibly handsome men and devoted dogs". Laughter and champagne flowed with equal abandon throughout Southwark Cathedral.

What a wonderful way to end! A toast written by The Queen, champagne for all, and to the delightful sound of the cathedral bells pealing out all over that part of London, the newly composed *Rutshire Surprise Maximus*! It is encouraging to think that in this very modern life, the ancient British art of campanology is still alive, relied upon to add depth and meaning, and to put the finishing touch to a service such as this.

Bernard Parkin

CONNECTIVITY and OTHER COMPLICATIONS



WEIRD, WIRED and WOEFUL

Hutber's Law: 'improvement means deterioration.'

But then it came to pass that they invented yet another form of communication: the fibre-optic cable through which signals could travel at high speeds, sometimes even approaching almost the speed of light itself. A decree went out throughout the land that all cables should become fibre-optic and the contract was given to an outfit euphemistically called Open Reach. And their white vans, operatives and sub-contractors were seen ministering unto all corners of this cabled island.

It was rumoured abroad that 'service-providers' would no longer support primitive copper wires and all people of whatever persuasion would only be on the ubiquitous Internet if they went fibre-optic. If we wanted connectivity, we needed a new router even though the old router still seemed new to us.

At first, we said we did not want it because the Open Reach engineer proposed to drill a hole in the wall and festoon the kitchen with the new cable. 'Customer refused,' he said. 'No. Customer declined,' I replied. It sounded less final. We returned by post the new router in its box.

Some months later, another Open Reach engineer in a high-viz orange jacket was eyeing up our local telegraph pole and so I asked why. He explained his mission: a recce before the arrival on Friday of another engineer who would replace the copper cable with a fibre-optic wire pulled by pulley along the old wire and over the buddleia.

Later in the week, a polite young man called Rico arrived and explained that he was meant to replace the cable. He wanted to know its route into the house and so I showed him where it went.

'Ah,' he said. 'I can't do that.'

'Why not?'

'I haven't been flat-roof-trained.'

'But I can walk on that roof.'

'I'm not covered for it.'

'Anyway. It's not entirely flat. It's on a slight slope. Otherwise, the rain wouldn't drain off it into the gutter.'

'I'll see if I can locate someone who has been flat-roof-trained.'

He tapped numbers on his mobile phone and declared that one flat-roof-trained operative was in Liverpool and another was currently being flat-roof trained in Hereford.

‘Sorry.’

‘So what happens next?’

‘We’ll come back again with someone who has been flat-roof-trained.’ While we wondered whether that training was practical or written or both, Rico took a photograph of the roof and socket on his phone and left.

Weeks later, we were told that another engineer would arrive. A cheerful young man called Lee (32) arrived with his loud voice, confident manner and extensive toolkit. Originally a Devonian from Torquay, Lee accepted tea with milk and one sugar and set to work, explaining the options as he went. He climbed the street-side telegraph pole as if to the manner born and ran the black superfast speed-of-light fibre-optic cable past the buddleia and wisteria tendrils and affixed it high on the wall adjacent to the blinking burglar or intruder alarm.

Lee guided the dark black cable into a grey box and then drilled a hole in the wall with a hammer-drill and threaded it through two layers of brick and one of render. Unfortunately, Sky, whose left hand never knows what its right is doing, had not sent the brand-new router in advance by courier or Royal Mail. So Lee had to leave the wires dangling with supposedly simple instructions on how to connect it when the router eventually arrived.

And thus for weeks we were without landline, television, broadband, radio, Alexa, computers and printer, and connectivity was not achieved on the designated day. At least, on a mobile phone, which had nothing to do with their Sky-high incompetence, Debbie could speak frequently and firmly to Sky and various levels of operatives after a long interval of electronic muzak.

Eventually, after much exasperating pestering of assistants on the ‘helpline’, the new router arrived by express courier called Yodel in a cardboard box with that day’s date on the side in blue felt-tip. I opened the box with an antique silver paperknife and then it was only a matter of fitting the wires into the router, alias swear-box, and finding the right sockets for sprockets but nothing seemed to match in colour. Purple to yellow? Blue to white? I couldn’t even look it up on the computer because we had no Sky broadband internet access and the printed instructions were techno-gobbledegook to me. The Ethernet (what is that?) cables plug in to sockets called Ethernet ports. LAN ports. WAN ports or simply jacks. I had asked Lee what WAN stood for and even he didn’t know. (Wide Area Network, I later discovered.)

Ultimately, Debbie patiently got the recalcitrant router working and its four green lights started blinking at us. One by one, she then coaxed each other device to work, even the telly, and had long conversations with Sky operatives asking what it really meant to be a Platinum Sky customer. She deserves a cybernetic medal and she’s not even flat-roof-trained. Under the new dispensation and without the old copper wire land-line, the bedroom phone doesn’t work any longer and there’s no reliable signal in my study downstairs where I’m often told I’m cracking up. So much for obligatory superfast broadband.

Duncan Forbes

Oh, dear!

Yes, we all have to change to ultra-fast fibre-optic broadband even if we think we do not need it but it need not be as bad as Duncan experienced.

Once upon a time those who could afford it had a pair of copper wires connecting a telephone exchange to a telephone in their homes provided by the GPO so telephone calls could be made. It used to be crackly but in recent years this improved. Now we all have telephones.

Then came computers and to be more useful these needed to connect to other computers so messages and data could be exchanged, the Internet. At first a dial-up connection was made to an Internet Service Provider which connected you to the computer you wished to contact. Whilst this happened you could not make phone calls and generally this was awful. If this worked you might have exchanged data at 50 kilobits a second.

In 2000 broadband became available in the UK. You could get transfer rates of 500 kilobits a second over so called ADSL. You can regard this as an extra signal travelling on your phone line so you could have phone calls and the internet simultaneously; very convenient. The signal, though, deteriorated with distance from the exchange.

In time this form on broadband improved with part fibre, fibre between the exchange and a street cabinet, and speeds of 50 megabits a second (superfast) became common and the Internet could be used for video calls and 4K television. Meanwhile the smartphone in your pocket could do all these things and more, as well as making phone calls.

Local Loop Unbundling (LLU) began in 2001 in the UK. This allowed competitors to use BT's copper cables in much the same way as electricity suppliers use the same wires to your homes but you pay a new (cheaper) company whilst you enjoy the same electricity. The gas supply is similar, but water is not.

The next innovation for broadband is the introduction of fibre cables to your premises. Instead of electrical signals passing along copper wires, light signals are passing along glass fibres. The light does not experience degrading in the same way over long distances and a much higher data rate can be achieved. Some companies offer 8 gigabits a second to your home. It is unlikely most of you will need this speed but it is achievable. 250 megabits a second (ultrafast) will be quite sufficient for many households. The fibre cables are much cheaper than copper wires and more reliable.

OFCOM declared the old copper wire network will be replaced by fibre-optic cables. What is happening is instead of having a telephone line and adding broadband to it to use the Internet, you will have a broadband connection to use the Internet and use this to make telephone calls if you wish. More and more people are using their computers to talk to others at no cost wherever they are in the world often in a video call. It is likely that in a decade or two all of us will receive our television programmes over broadband rather than from aerials on our roofs.

The plan is to switch off the copper wire networks at the end of January 2027. All households with a landline are encouraged to allow the switchover to fibre optics. This entails an engineer to come inside your home to install an Optical Network Terminal (ONT). A small hole is drilled through your outside wall for the optic fibre to be connected to the ONT. This converts the light signals into electrical signals used by the router. The

router in turn connects your computers and smart devices (mobile phones, televisions, light bulbs, speakers, security cameras etc) to the internet. It is possible some routers allow you to use (for an extra fee) your current telephone handset. The ONT and router both need to be near electric sockets.

The big decision you need to make is which company to provide your internet connection. It is easy to stay with your current provider. They will be pleased to take your money but will offer little to reward your loyalty. You could take the opportunity to change to another company. You will not notice much difference between any of them except for the price you pay. The big four have had their day. There are dozens of smaller companies, known as altnets, you might like to use. You can find out which are available to you by using a comparison website or visiting <https://bidb.uk> and entering your postcode. Not all the altnets have fibres coming to your street, so your choice is limited at the moment. So much for Local Loop Unbundling.

In making your choice of internet provider you need to consider what you require of broadband and the internet provider and whether you are still under a long contract. If it is only a telephone service just go for the cheapest. If you have a computer or similar device to exchange a few emails and the occasional look at a few websites the cheapest will also do. If, as well, you wish to connect your smart television to make use of the iPlayer or itvX to watch your favourite programmes at a time convenient to you, you might wish to go up one step in the range. If you have a large demanding household then perhaps you need to share a 500 Mbps connection. Then again you may like to have a bundle with TV and various subscription services such as Netflix and Sports channels. If, on the other hand, you are into playing shoot-em-up computer games over the internet against remote players you will need the best connection you can afford.

Whatever your need, you will have to change to full-fibre soon as your copper line will be closed down, supposedly by January 2027. It need not be like Duncan's experience. If you are clear what you need, a team of nice people will come to your home and set it up for you in a short space of time. Then you can enjoy the digital world.

Brian Wood

Good Friday

Mary laid on her bed and cried,
When her dear son Jesus died.
She only knew it was her son,
She knew nothing of redemption won.
She cried until no more tears would come,
Then she laid there feeling numb.
She heard a voice saying, "Mary, dry your eyes,
It is not the end, He will rise."

Holy Saturday and Easter

On Holy Saturday night we meet in the dark,
Outside the church a tiny spark.
The tiny spark grows very bright,
Becomes the new fire full of light.
From the new fire the great candle is lit,
The priest walks into the church with it.
The light of Christ to proclaim,
Each lights a candle from that tiny flame.
In the quiet night the service starts,
Its ancient message to impart.
The organ sounds as the Gloria is sung,
The lights come on and the bells are rung
For all the days of Lent are past,
And Easter time has come at last.
Easter is a time when we rejoice
That Jesus the Christ is our choice.
For Jesus rose from the dead,
And gives to his faithful people bread.
Though He went to his death like a lamb,
This Jesus was both God and Man.

Clare Wyatt

The Gold Cup Parking and Refreshments Team



L to R: Virginia, Janice, Gill, Margaret, Nigel, Brian W, Brian F

The Cheltenham Festival was held 10th to 13th March this year.

As usual, we at St Nicolas Church extended our hospitality to the racegoers by letting them park their cars (for a price) on our carpark and the grass field and offering hot drinks and snacks in the church hall.

We are grateful to Brian Frodsham who has organised the bookings for car parking spaces for several years. The others, in their hi-viz jackets, tried directing the drivers to park their cars close to each other but allowing each to be able to leave whenever they wished.

Margaret Compton and her team of helpers were busy in the Hall providing tea and coffee, toasted teacakes and other goodies to those who arrived in good time and ventured indoors after their long drives. They even brought out hot drinks and biscuits to those of us working outside. Thank you, ladies. Very welcome.

The weather for us this year was a lot better than previous years. Two of the days were sunny! We had had a fairly dry spell before the Festival which allowed us to us to park several cars on the grass area at the back of St Nicolas.

Brian Wood

"You've never had it so good," Harold Macmillan, July 1957...

was going to be my title, and I was going to write about the great medical and other advances made since that statement, and try to prove that it is even better now, but I was overtaken by events when on the 18th February 2026, I attended a lecture by Jo Miller at the University of Gloucestershire.

Jo Miller is a former national security professional in the UK Government, National Security Officer at Microsoft, and Board adviser.

Her basic premise was that geopolitical uncertainty is rapidly driving behaviours that risk further undermining democracy and fracturing the rules-based international order, which the West has dominated and enjoyed for nearly a century. Whilst unbridled technological innovation and bifurcation are accelerating both the progress and decline of humanity. We have been here before. Repeatedly. We know that we need to emerge from this: regenerated, improved, and connected.

It seemed to me that she was suggesting that the UK is a state that can still influence the world. It is well respected for balanced views and can succeed as a nation itself; it just depends on whom we decide to influence and whom we decide to work with. Fine, I agree, and nobody in the considerable audience raised any opposing points at question time.

Then today, the day I started to write this, St David's Eve, 28th February arrives, and another seismic shift in the world of geopolitics.

The attack on Iran. As a result, my neighbour's flight to Cyprus, scheduled for tomorrow, was immediately cancelled. An instant geopolitical reset to the life of a British citizen.

Is St David's Eve a metaphor for The Modern World?

A world of constantly and rapidly changing circumstances, one in which we, the ordinary citizens, are caught up in the instantaneousness of news, where we can watch a ballistic missile in real time, and a reporter can breathlessly ask, "How many people have been killed and injured?" to which the reply is, "I don't know, it hasn't landed yet!!!"

The deadline for this article is the 15th March, fifteen whole days in the future, and I ask myself, what does that fifteen-day future hold? For that, I must leave the next paragraph blank (for now, at least).

Well, 15th March 2026, Britain is, 25 days after Jo Miller's positive view of Britain, now, according to many newspapers, an irrelevance in world affairs.

Today is deadline day, and I must submit this article to the editor, but by the time you read it I dread to think what the world may be like.

Is this constant change now the modern world, and can we humans cope with the rapidity of technological and geopolitical constant shift?

It seems to me that whatever happens, we must try to hang on to what I took to be Jo Miller's conclusion to her lecture:

It is now up to us as individuals to influence events, however small those influences may be because small groups can have big influences on government direction.

Love and Hope are our best weapons.

Hope by not giving up.

Love by caring enough to want change.

The question is, am I too overwhelmed to care anymore, so should I keep my head down, and perhaps it will all go away?

It is at this point that the words of Ayn Rand, a Russian émigré and philosopher, come to mind:

“If you stop caring, you lose your soul.”

John Moles

Footnote:

Ayn Rand was a Russian émigré, a writer, and is known for her fiction and for developing a philosophical system which she named Objectivism. Born and educated in Russia, she moved to the United States in 1926. The above quote appears in her book ‘The Fountainhead’. (Variety of sources.)

Addendum 1:

I have the sense we are witnessing a genuine moment of national crisis, one that is only comparable to war. It is the worst of things, it’s the war of all, when the rule of civility and rules of civilisation show signs of acute tension and collapse. We must work together. (David Starkey, Telegraph 28th February 2026 published, though not written on St David’s Eve.)

Addendum 2:

The individual making a difference in the world.

Thomas Clarkson was born on 28 March 1760 in Wisbech, Cambridgeshire. He was the son of a clergyman who also taught at the local grammar school. In 1779, Clarkson went to Cambridge University, where he won a Latin essay competition on the subject of whether it was lawful to make slaves of others against their will.

While travelling from Cambridge to London in June 1785, Clarkson found himself thinking not about the competition, nor about the promising church career awaiting him, but about slavery. He got off his horse and sat down by the roadside at Wadesmill in Hertfordshire, feeling that someone should do something about this evil. Ending slavery became his driving passion for the remaining 61 years of his life. He translated his prize-winning essay into English, and it was published in 1786. The essay attracted a lot of attention and enabled him to meet other abolitionists, including William Wilberforce and Granville Sharp. (BBC History).

Conclusion:

Keep caring, folks, for God and Jesus’ sake, literally, keep doing **something**. (John Moles)



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Instagram: [@kw_sharpening](https://www.instagram.com/kw_sharpening) Web: www.kwsharpening.co.uk

Marle Hill WI

Marle Hill WI met on Monday 2 March when we had a very interesting speaker who is an adult tutor. She told us about what subjects she had taught over years - from music to cooking and the various establishments she had taught in. From schools to prisons. She then handed several members small hand bells and after a practice run and with her conducting (with a wooden spoon) Jerusalem was sounded out.

Do come and visit us and have some fun and 'me time'

Visitors are welcome. We meet on the 1st Monday of the month (unless it falls on a Bank Holiday when we meet the 2nd Monday of the month). we meet in St Nicolas Church Hall at 7:30pm

Sue Davies

Cheltenham Art Club Autumn Spring Exhibition 8th - 14th April 2026

Cheltenham Art Club Spring Exhibition will be taking place in the Gardens Gallery Montpellier Cheltenham. We are hoping for some spring like weather!

This is a great venue for club members to showcase their work and an opportunity for people to enjoy the work on display. We constantly have new people joining the club and therefore the type of work on exhibition is constantly changing.

There will be around ninety works of art for sale in a variety media and styles from traditional to experimental to contemporary, from the quite large to fairly small pieces. A fabulous selection of original cards will also be available. It has always been very satisfying to receive complementary and positive comments from our visitors regarding the standard of work.

Our stewards will be most pleased to welcome you so please do call in. Browse the exhibition, vote for your favourite painting chat to our stewards. There will also be a membership offer for anyone who might be interested.

Our website, www.cheltenhamartclub.co.uk , is full of information about the club.

Jill Hammond



Forthcoming Events

QUIZ in aid of Friends of St Mary's

on Thursday 2nd April 2026 7:30pm

at The Royal Oak Pavilion

£6 per person. Bar Meals available £10

Tickets Contact:

Helen Eagger 07765 903406 WhatsApp

Everyone Welcome!



David Lyle

07487 869152

Welcome on Wednesday

Wednesday 15 April at 2.30pm in the St Nicolas Room. There will be home-made cakes, tea or coffee for £2 and the chance to meet friends and have a friendly chat. So please come along, maybe bringing a neighbour?



Bereavement Friendship Group

We will be meeting in St Mary's Church, Prestbury on Monday 20 April at 2.15-4pm

If you have lost a loved one and would like to talk to others in a similar situation, please come along. You will be most welcome, whether you are new or have come before.

Light refreshments will be provided.

Marion Povey

Notice of Prestbury APCM – Sunday 26th April 2026

The Annual Meeting of Parishioners, which begins at 3.30 on Sunday 26th April (preceded by Afternoon Tea, with cake, at 3.00), at St Nicolas' Church, is a short meeting to elect Churchwardens: two for St Mary's and two for St Nicolas'. Candidates must be nominated and seconded before the meeting begins and nomination lists will also be displayed on the notice boards of both churches. Anyone who lives within the parish or who is on the church electoral roll may attend and vote at this meeting.

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting will follow the Annual Meeting of Parishioners. This is a chance to come to hear a review and reports of what has taken place during the last year, together with plans for the future and an opportunity to ask questions.

At the meeting, elections to the Parochial Church Council (PCC) take place. Nominations for PCC members will be displayed on the notice boards of both churches for at least the two Sundays prior to the meeting. Candidates must be proposed and seconded by a person who is on the Electoral Roll of the parish, and they should also have been asked if they are willing to stand.

Stella Caney, PCC Secretary

Cheltenham Philharmonic Orchestra Spring Concert

Sunday 26th April at 3pm

Venue: Princess Hall, Cheltenham Ladies College

Conducted by Stephen Belinfante

We invite you to join us for a Sunday afternoon of music making on 26th April. The programme includes many memorable tunes, with lively dances and glorious melodies which will keep you humming on your way home!

Khatchaturian	Masquerade Suite
Rachmaninov	Vocalise with solo Cello Victoria Sinitisa
Kodaly	Dances of Galanta
Rachmaninov	Symphony No 2

Tickets £20, Students £10, Under 18 free available from
www.ticketsource.co.uk/cheltphilorch or at the door

We look forward to welcoming you.

Wendy Price



Tewkesbury Choral Society

www.tewkesburychoral.org.uk

Directed by John Holloway

Verdi

Requiem

Hannah Davey, Rachel Roper, Alex Aldren, Thomas Humphreys
Regency Sinfonia

Saturday 16th May 2026 at 7.30pm
Tewkesbury Abbey

Tickets (unreserved) £20, Students £10, under 18 free from Society members,
the Abbey Shop 01684 856148, Alison's Bookshop or on line at www.ticketsource.co.uk/t-c-s



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EASTER SERVICES in PRESTBURY

St Mary's, Mill Street, Prestbury, GL52 3BQ

1st April — Holy Wednesday

7.00pm Stations of the Cross

2nd April — Maundy Thursday

10.30am Service of the Word

9.00pm Silent Watch at the Altar of Repose

3rd April — Good Friday

10.30am Breakfast Celebrate! All age service at St Mary's Church

2.00pm Our Lord's Passion Meditation

4th April — Holy Saturday

8.30pm Paschal Liturgy & First Eucharist of Easter

5th April — Easter Day

8.00am Said Eucharist

9.30am Breakfast Celebrate! - at St Mary's Church

11.00am Sung Eucharist

St Nicolas, Swindon Lane, Prestbury, GL50 4PA

31st March — Holy Tuesday

7.00pm Stations of the Cross

2nd April — Maundy Thursday

7.00pm Team Service Eucharist, then Watches at Churches

3rd April — Good Friday

10.30am Good Friday Reflection

5th April — Easter Day

9.30am Sung Eucharist

The United Reformed Church, Deep Street, Prestbury GL52 3AN

3rd April—Good Friday

10.30am Service followed by coffee and hot cross buns

5th April — Easter Day

10.30am Easter Day Service

TIMES OF REGULAR CHURCH SERVICES

St Mary's Church, Prestbury

Sunday		0800	Eucharist
	1st Sunday	0930	Breakfast Celebrate! – All-age worship
	Other Sundays	0900	Breakfast Celebrate! at Infant School
		1100	Sung Eucharist
	1st Sunday	1830	Evening Prayer at Capel Court
	2nd Sunday	1800	Benediction
	Other Sundays	1800	Evening Prayer
Thursday		1030	Said Eucharist

St Nicolas Church, Prestbury

Sunday		0930*	Sung Eucharist
Tuesday		1000	Said Eucharist

All Saints Church, Pittville

Sunday		0800	Holy Mass
		1030*	Solemn Mass
Weekdays			Holy Mass usually on 3 days, check noticeboard
Saturday	1st Saturday	1000	Holy Mass for Our Lady of Walsingham

St Lawrence Church, Swindon Village

Sunday	1st Sunday	0930	Family Communion
		1700	Evensong
	2nd Sunday	0930	BCP Holy Communion
	3rd Sunday	0930	Holy Communion
		1700	Evensong
	4th Sunday	0930	Holy Communion
	5th Sunday	1000	Benefice Holy Communion alternates with St Mary Magdalene

St Mary Magdalene Church, Elmstone Hardwicke

Sunday	1st Sunday	1100	BCP Holy Communion
	2nd Sunday	1100	Family Service (no communion)
	3rd Sunday	1100	Holy Communion
	4th Sunday	1100	Holy Communion
	5th Sunday	1000	Benefice Holy Communion alternates with St Lawrence
Thursday	2nd Thursday	1900	Celtic Evening Prayer
	4th Thursday	1900	Celtic Communion

* These services are usually streamed on the internet. These and other services are recorded so may be accessed live or later on the Team's YouTube page -

<https://www.youtube.com/NorthCheltenhamTeamMinistry/streams>

Parish Directory *continued*

Children's Work

Linda Biggs 01242 510856
linda.biggs@prestbury.net

Safeguarding Officer

Linda Biggs 07769 581822

Parish Magazine

Editor: Brian Wood 01242 515941
magazine@prestbury.net
Advertising: Richard Johnson 07535 417828
advertising@prestbury.net

St Mary's C of E (VA) Schools

Executive Head Teacher: Mr Matt Ferris
01242 383817

Hall Letting

Prestbury Hall, Bouncers Lane 01242 239590
bookings@prestburyhall.com
St Nicolas Hall, Swindon Lane
hallhire@northchelt.org.uk

Parish Giving Scheme

76 Kingsholm Road,
Gloucester GL1 3BD 0333 002 1260
info@parishgiving.org.uk

Copy Dates and Themes for Future Magazines 2026

Issue	Copy Date	Theme
May	Sunday 12 April	Pleasure
June	Sunday 17 May	The Sea
July	Sunday 14 June	British Summer Time
August	Sunday 12 July	Desert Island Discs
September	Sunday 16 August	Ireland
October	Sunday 13 September	Scotland
November	Sunday 11 October	Wales
Dec / Jan	Sunday 15 November	Memorials

Prestbury Parish Magazine is usually published on the last Sunday of the month. The copy date is usually the Sunday 2 weeks before this, but there may be scope for some flexibility.

Copy may be sent in a clearly marked envelope to 'Prestbury Parish Magazine'
2 Honeysuckle Close, Prestbury, Cheltenham, GL52 5LN
or preferably by email to magazine@prestbury.net

May 2026 Magazine Theme: Pleasure
Please send copy by Sunday 12 April 2026
or soon after

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