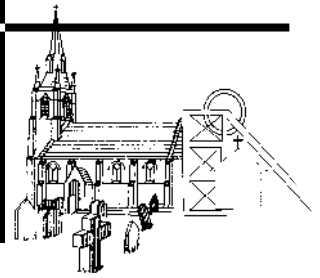


OUR COMMUNITY

www.st-thomas-keresley.org.uk



The Big Read 2011

For Lent this year we are encouraging groups and individuals to join in with the Big Read, a national initiative, studying Matthew's gospel through a book, video and online resources.

People across Great Britain are getting ready to take a fresh look at the Gospel of Matthew during Lent with the Big Read.

The Big Read is part of the Big Bible project, an online digital community that promotes regular Bible reading and engagement with contemporary culture. After the success of last year's Big Read, which was based in Durham, this year's project is bigger and better as it aims for a wider outreach. This year, it's gone national on Twitter and Facebook and with multimedia resources available through the Big Bible blog, with a 'blend' of physical and digital materials. The

latest statistics show that the website has more than doubled its visitors between November 2010 and February 2011*.

The Project is launching this year's Big Read with Tom Wright's *Lent for Everyone: Matthew*. As well as using the book, house groups will be able to take advantage of free online study materials from a range of contributors, including week-by-week group resources, videos and audio reflections, and a challenge to carry that learning through the week. The

(Continued on page 3)

MARCH 2011

50P

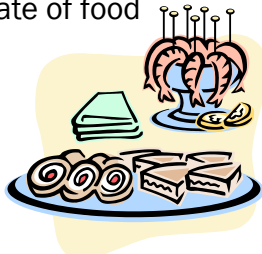
*It is a great
deal better to live
a holy life than
to talk about it.
Lighthouses do
not ring bells
and fire cannon
to call attention
to their shining
— they just shine!*

D L Moody

Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting of St. Thomas' Church will be held on Sunday 27th March after the 10.30 service (c.12.00 noon), followed by a faith lunch, so bring a plate of food to share.

If you have not completed a form for the Electoral Roll and are a member of the Church of England (*that is baptised and aged 16 or over*) and either (i) live in the Parish or (ii) live outside the Parish but have regularly attended the worship for at least 6 months) and would like to enrol on the Electoral Roll, please see Margaret Bosworth, PCC Secretary or one of the Churchwardens for a form.



Members of the Electoral Roll can be nominated to serve on the **Parochial Church Council** (nominations are renewed every 12 months at the Annual Parish Meeting) serve on the **Deanery Synod** (nominations are renewed every 3 years) or serve as **Churchwarden**. Forms for these posts will be available shortly and must be completed before the Annual Parish Meeting takes place.

Members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) bring skills they have acquired in life and a love of God and the church to the meetings to discuss ideas and ways of building His Church for the future and maintaining the fabric and profile of the church here in Keresley. We need people of all ages and all walks of life in order to get a balanced committee.

Members of the Deanery Synod represent our church on the Coventry

(Continued on page 3)

Inside this issue:

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ST. THOMAS' CHURCH CALENDAR

March

Sunday 6th

9am Holy Communion. Rev Alison Evans
 10.30am Family Service and Thanksgiving. Ministry Team
 2-4pm **Messy Church.** Preparing for Lent. At Keresley Village Community Church, Rathbone Close

Wednesday 8th

7.30pm Ash Wednesday. Introducing the Big Bible theme

Sunday 13th

9am Holy Communion
 10.30am Family Communion. If you are going to Spring Harvest this Easter holiday there will be soup lunch after the 10.30am service

Sunday 20th

9am Holy Communion and hymns
 10.30am Family Worship. Ministry Team

Sunday 27th

9am Holy Communion
 10.30am Family Communion.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held after the 10.30am service .It will be followed by a Bring and Share lunch.

April

Sunday 3rd—Mothering Sunday

9am Holy Communion and hymns
 10.30am Family Service. Ministry Team

Saturday 9th to Thursday 14th April

A party from the church will be attending Spring Harvest at Skegness.

ROUTE 66:
 Biblical direction for
 the road we travel



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

First Steps . . . with Jesus

For babies and pre-school children
 with their parents and carers
 Meets in the Galilee Room, weekly
 in term time
 Mondays 1.30-2.30pm

Thursday at St T's

For 5-11 years
 Meets in the Galilee
 On Thursdays
 From 6pm to 7pm



Youth Essence new flavour

Thursdays
7.30pm to 9pm,
Galilee Room,
School year 9 upwards

Uniformed Groups

Meet in the Church Hall :
9th Rainbows, Mondays, 6-7pm
13th Brownies, Mondays, 6.00 - 7.30pm
9th Brownies, Wednesdays, 6.00 - 7.30pm
9th Guides, Thursdays, 6.30 - 8.30pm
 Meet in the Scout Hut:
41st Cubs, Mondays, 6.45 - 8.30pm
41st Scouts, Tuesdays, 7.00 - 9.00pm
41st Beavers, Fridays, 6.00 - 7.30pm
 (for 6-8 year olds)

Sunday Morning Activities at St. Thomas'

10.30am (during term time)
 1st Sunday Family Service in Church
 2nd Sunday 3-11s, Sunday School in Galilee Room,
 11+, Pathfinders in the Church Hall.
 All join the service around 11.25am
 3rd Sunday All ages start in Church
 4th & 5th 3-11s, Sunday School in Galilee Room,
 11+, Pathfinders in the Church Hall
 All join the service around 11.25am

This pattern may change occasionally for special services.

Sunday 6th March

2-4pm

(note new regular time!)

at Keresley Village
Community Church

Preparing for Lent

There will be pancakes!!



Refreshment for all

Tuesday afternoons, 1.30-2.30pm in the Galilee Room. Fortnightly



If you need transport or would like to request prayers, please contact Margaret Bosworth on 7633 7932 leaving a message if necessary with your name and telephone number and she will ring you back.

(Continued from page 1) Big Read 2011

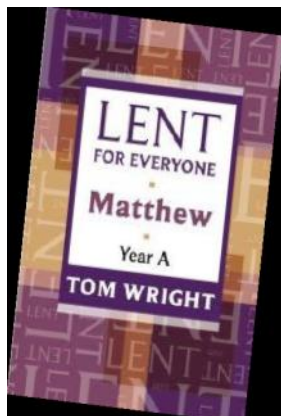
Big Bible website also allows people to discuss the text with people all over the world, from a range of different perspectives.

Bex Lewis, Big Bible Project Manager: "People become really comfortable in their own house groups, staying in the same one for years. The Big Read offers another layer of conversation in the online forums, where they can engage with others and where thinking can be challenged."

Revd Dr Peter Phillips, CODEC: "Researchers at Durham University have found that although three quarters of the population own at least one Bible, only one fifth of people commit to reading it week by week. BigBible offers a great opportunity to dust off your bible, share with your friends and neighbours and learn more about what God wants for your life"

The book should be available at the CLC Bookshop in City Arcade, or can be ordered online from Amazon or Christian online bookshops, and there may still be some available through Claire McArthur.

To introduce the course we are holding a special service on **Wednesday 9th March, Ash Wednesday**, at St Thomas' Church at 7.30pm.



Children's Society Collection Boxes

This year we collected £320.70 for the Children's Society. This was made up- of £103.25 from the small candles given out just before Christmas and £217.45 from the larger boxes over the last 12 months. So thank you to everyone who helped to raise this money. If anyone else would like a box

I have some spares so please speak to me after one of the services.



The
Children's
Society

Pam Pargetor

(Continued from page 1) Annual Parish Meeting

North Deanery Synod and serve for 3 years . The Deanery Synod is a group of lay and clergy representatives from a number of churches in the Coventry North Deanery which meets bi-monthly. There are three Deaneries in the City of Coventry Diocese which usually meet separately to discuss issues which have been fed from the Diocesan Synod and to receive instruction and training on topical matters. The representatives then feed this information back to the PCC members at their next meeting. Being a member of the Deanery Synod gives you a wider perspective of the church, an opportunity to meet with members of other churches which can lead to ideas which may work in our church and an insight into how the Church of England is structured and is planning for its' future.

A churchwarden is responsible for the day to day and weekly running of the church, for the upkeep of the fabric of the church and for the staff and a whole lot more.

If you want more details please see one of the current Churchwardens, Claire McArthur and Margaret Potter. *However, they are doing such a great job during this interregnum we hope they stay in post until a replacement vicar is appointed! (MB)*

Margaret Bosworth PCC Secretary

2011— year of the Bible that shaped our culture

The King James Bible—the Authorised Version—was published 400 years ago this year. Its appearance marked the moment that a regally endorsed English translation was available for all and there is no doubt that it had a significant influence on the language, culture, literature and spirituality of our land. Now more people than ever before could read or listen to the words of this special book for themselves and understand them. It also meant that individuals could meet the Lord of that book for themselves, and respond to his love and purposes for their lives.

The ups and downs of the struggle to produce an English translation of the Bible occupied the hearts and minds for many years before 1611 and they are a fascinating record of faith, endurance and intrigue in themselves! William Tyndale's story in particular stands out; he literally put his life on the line because he wanted 'even the boy who pushed the plough' to be able to read God's word for himself.

Today we take it for granted that we can have easy access to the stories of the people of God and of Jesus, but it was not always so. In fact, there are still people groups in the world today who have no Bible in their own language and indeed there are also places where, as in Tyndale's day, Bibles have to be smuggled in at great risk to those involved.

It is amazing what an influence the Authorised Version had once it became available in the language of its day. It shaped the thinking of generations of Christians who responded to its

stories and truths by founding new movements for social justice; charities and missionary work that reached out across the globe; as well as sparking revivals and new denominations, which in their turn touched the lives of more and more people with the story of God's inclusive love. There are countless stories of how reading even a few lines of the scriptures have turned individual lives around to bring in God's kingdom in new and surprising ways.

And this Bible has had a huge cultural and literary heritage too. Its words have shaped the poetry, hymns and thinking of countless writers, even up to the present day. Individual words and phrases which are part of our everyday speech come directly because of its influence—'a man after my own heart', 'a two-edged sword' and 'the eleventh hour' to name but a few!

So with all this to explore and celebrate, 2011 is surely an opportunity 'to big up the Bible' in our churches and communities. Why not get your church on board with the Year of the Bible and celebrate our special book!

Martyn Payne, of BRF Barnabas in Schools

*For more information and ideas go to: Biblefresh – <http://www.biblefresh.com/>;
The King James Trust -2011 – <http://www.kingjamesbibletrust.org/>;
Barnabas in Schools – <http://www.barnabasinschools.org.uk/2011/>;
The People's Bible by Martyn Payne, Price £5.99,
BRF - www.brfonline.org.uk/*

How universal free education in England began – 200 years ago

Did you know that universal free education in England began with the Church of England? 200 years ago the Church made a decision that slowly transformed the country: to offer free education to children in every parish in the land.

Currently about one million pupils attend CofE schools, and this year they will join in the celebrations to mark the founding of the Church of England's National Society in 1811, offering education to the poor in every parish - 50 years before the state joined in.

More than 15 million people alive today had the benefit of a church school education in England and Wales, including celebrities and leading figures in public life.

Nowadays, more than 1,000 of the CofE's 4,700 primaries are small schools providing vital educational provision in isolated rural areas and working closely with their parish church to serve the local community. The CofE, through its dioceses, is

also the largest sponsor or co-sponsor of academies under the first wave - the majority replacing vulnerable or failing schools and already showing a marked increase in academic achievement (latest DofE figures).

This year's celebrations will be marked by events in schools and dioceses across the country culminating in a special service at Westminster Abbey on October 14 (Full details are on the anniversary website www.natsoc200.org <<http://www.natsoc200.org>>).

Several of our young people attend the Coventry Blue Coat Church of England school.

The original Blue Coat School was founded in 1714 as a charity school for girls close to Holy Trinity Church in the centre of the City. The charity school closed in 1940.

Following agreement between the Trustees of the Coventry Blue Coat School, the Local Education Authority and the Church of England Diocesan Education Committee a school for boys and girls of all abilities was opened in 1964 on the present site. The School now has over 1350 pupils .

St Thomas' Keresley and Coundon

The report on the APM from March 1924.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

The Annual Church Meeting was held in the Council School on Tuesday, Feb. 19th. Apologies for absence were reported and the minutes read.

The Vicar presented the Revised Electoral Roll to which 28 new electors had been added since last year, and 16 had been taken off. The total number on the roll was 297.

Reports were given of the work done during the year by the Parochial Council, the Sunday School, the Churchyard Committee. Mrs. Sleath gave an account of the missionary work which showed an increase on the previous year, and the Vicar gave a short account of the progress made at the Hut. He pointed out that at present only a small beginning had been made there, but this year there would be a big addition to the population, and our responsibilities then would increase.

Mr. Tabberer presented the Churchwardens' Accounts. These showed one or two items of rather heavy extra expenditure on books and hassocks which could not be met by the ordinary Sunday Collections: the deficit had been made up by a grant of £10 14s. 2d. from the General Fund of the Finance Committee. He pointed out that the collection had suffered on several Sundays from the bad weather. The Vicar added that some people who had been away from home for several Sundays had generously given their contributions when they returned.

Mr. Plevins presented the report of the Finance Committee. The General Fund showed a total of £336 11s. 3d. which included the Free-will Offering and the profits from the Garden Fête. Grants from the General Fund had been given to the Choir Fund (£2); Local Stipend Fund (£7 14s. 0d.); and Diocesan Funds (£79 3s. 0d.), which after other general expenses had been met, left a balance in the General Fund of £216 2s. 2d.

The Sunday School Fund also showed a balance of £17 12s. 6d., and the Churchyard Fund a balance of £6 12s. 0d.

The adoption of the various reports was moved and carried.

The Vicar moved a proposition thanking the council, especially the officers and Miss Hands, the Hon. Sec., Mr. Plevins, the Hon. Treas., and the Sidesmen for their services in the past year. Then the following elections were made: Miss Rotherham, to the Diocesan Conference, and Mrs. Tabberer recommended to the R. D. Conference to be elected to the Diocesan Conference. Mr. Loasby, Mr. J. H. Clarke, Mrs. Tabberer, Miss A. Ensor, Miss Hands to the Ruri-decanal Conference, and in addition to these, Messrs. R. Cooper, M. Craner, G. Ensor, W. Ensor, W. Glover, Goodall, Green, Capt. Miller, Niblett, B. Turner, Miss Flowers, Miss Lloyd, Miss Martin, Mrs. Sparrow, Mrs. Niblett, Mrs. Miller, Miss Perkins, Mrs. Perry, Miss Ratliff, Miss C. Ratliff, Mrs. Sleath were elected too, from the Parochial Council.

The sidesmen were re-elected en bloc, with the addition of Mr. Wall, thus bringing the number up to eight. The Vicar then closed the meeting with prayer.

Fairtrade Fortnight

Fairtrade fortnight runs from Monday 28th February to Sunday 13th March.

Look out for the various events locally, and special offers on fair-trade produce in the supermarkets. If you haven't tried fairly traded coffee, tea, chocolate or even wine, why not make a conscious choice to do so



this fortnight.

Look out for this mark on products—you might be surprised at the range available.

In the beginning: The first three Fairtrade products appeared on shop shelves in 1994,

Go bananas: 1 in every 4 bananas sold in UK supermarkets is now Fairtrade

Changing lives: the Fairtrade premium, an additional sum for community development, is used by farmers' groups to build schools, provide clean drinking water, pay for sickness benefit and pilot organic conversion schemes to help farmers work for the future.

A fairer future: more than 7 million people in Africa, Asia and Latin America benefit from Fairtrade – farmers, farm workers, and their families

Fairtrade Wine Tasting Evening

The Criterion Theatre, Friday 11th March 7.30pm

Tickets £5.00 available from theatre Box Office and WDM members.

(Tickets include samples of six varieties of fairtrade wine)



FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT
SHOW OFF YOUR LABEL
28 February – 13 March 2011



Friday 11th March, 7.30pm

The Criterion Theatre

Berkeley Road South, Earlsdon, CV5 6EF.

Organised by Coventry World Development Movement and The Criterion Theatre, as part of Fairtrade Fortnight.

KERESLEY VILLAGE COMMUNITY CHURCH SERVICES

March

Sunday 6th

10.30am Family Service, Methodist
2-4pm Messy Church. Preparing for Lent

Sunday 13th

10.30am Holy Communion Methodist

Sunday 20th

10.30am Morning Service Miss Mary Coles

Sunday 27th

10.30am Holy Communion Rev Elizabeth Kerr or Rev Robin Trew

April

Sunday 3rd

10.30am Family Service

Regular Meetings

Mondays 5-6pm

Trailblazers Children's Club

Tuesday afternoons 1.30-2.45pm

First Steps, for babies and pre-school children with their parents and carers, during term time

Wednesday 7.30-9pm

'Drop-in' Centre for teenagers

Fridays 5-6.30pm monthly.

Friday Church, usually meets on the first Friday of the month.

What's the Big Idea? -

An Introduction to the Books of the Old and New Testaments: Ezra, Nehemiah and Colossians

Ezra

The book of Ezra describes Israel's story after their exile in Babylon (587 BC). This empire was soon replaced by the Persians under Cyrus, who allowed dispossessed peoples to return home. Ezra's account spans 92 years of Jewish history from the decree of Cyrus allowing the Jews to return home (539 BC) to the decree of Artaxerxes halting the work of rebuilding the city of Jerusalem (446 BC). It was Zerubbabel who first returned with a group in 538 BC to start rebuilding Jerusalem. Ezra followed 80 years later in 458 BC to oversee the rebuilding of the Temple and restore its sacrifices.

In the Hebrew Bible, Ezra was joined with Nehemiah and placed between Daniel and Chronicles. Jerome first divided the books in his Latin Vulgate, as we do so today. Ezra is generally accepted as the author, especially as there are sections where Ezra speaks in the first person, as Luke does in portions of Acts. Also as a scribe, Ezra had ample ability to write this book, 'For Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the Lord, and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel.' (7:10).

What is the message of the book, despite its many lists and official documents and letters? Ezra reveals God's sovereignty in bringing his people back to their homeland. As the God of the Second Chance, God brought the people back to the land, renewing his covenant relationship with them and offering them another chance to follow and serve him.

In returning home it was crucial that the Jews recovered their sense of identity as the people of God. 'Ezra used Worship and Text to do it' (Eugene Peterson). He engaged them in worshipping God, by rebuilding the temple and restoring its services (daily sacrifices, priestly ministries, Levites' praise, annual feasts etc), according to the law's requirements. He also led them into obedient listening to the text of Scripture. This is also the way that we can recover and

maintain our identity as the people of God, as we worship regularly and obediently read the Scriptures.

Therefore, Ezra is a book about returning, rebuilding and restoring our relationship with God. This journey is not always an easy one, as it brings its own pitfalls and temptations. In what ways does this message particularly challenge you today?

Nehemiah

Nehemiah was a contemporary of Ezra and cupbearer to Artaxerxes I in the Persia. The book describes his return to Jerusalem in 444 BC, when he challenged the people to rebuild the broken walls of Jerusalem. The first seven chapters of the book are devoted to the rebuilding of the walls, while the rest describe how Ezra and Nehemiah worked together to build the people spiritually and morally, so that the restoration would be complete. Therefore, Nehemiah is the natural sequel to the Book of Ezra, and was treated as one book for centuries.

On hearing about the state of Jerusalem's walls, Nehemiah prayed and fasted for a period of four months before he could bring his request to the king of returning to Jerusalem to restore its walls. He demonstrates a vital balance of dependence and discipline, prayer and planning. On arriving in Jerusalem Nehemiah inspected the walls and challenged the people to get involved in reconstruction. Work began immediately on the walls and its gates, with people building sections corresponding to where they were living. However, opposition quickly arose, with mockery which soon turned to conspiracy when they saw the work continuing to progress. Nehemiah overcame threats of force by setting half of the people on military watch and half on construction. The task was accomplished in an incredible fifty-two days, with even their enemies recognising that it could only have been accomplished with the help of God.

(Continued on page 7)

PARISH REGISTER

BAPTISM

30th January
Isobel Leigh Heritage

THANKSGIVINGS

13th February
Amelia Rose Brown
Harmony Diane Hunt

BURIAL OF ASHES

28th January
Eunice May Sanderson aged
87 of Somers Road



(Continued from page 6)

The restoration of the walls is followed by the restoration of the people, under the leading of Ezra. He read the Law to the people, translating from the Hebrew into Aramaic so they could understand. They responded with weeping, confession, obedience, and rejoicing. The Levites and priests led them in prayer, acknowledging God's holiness, justice, mercy, and love. The covenant was then renewed with God, as the people committed themselves to separate from the Gentiles in marriage and to obey God's commandments.

The book of Nehemiah has much to teach us, as we are engaged in rebuilding the walls of our own lives and society in line with the kingdom of God. Like Nehemiah we too must trust God, act prayerfully, and not be surprised when opposition comes. However, let's not forget Nehemiah's words to the people. *'Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength'* (8:10).

Colossians

In our multi-faith society, the key questions being asked include *'Who is Jesus Christ?'* or *'Is Jesus unique in revealing God to us?'* Such questions lie at the heart of Paul's letter to the Colossians. The church in Colossae was a fruit of his three years ministry in nearby Ephesus (52-55 AD). Epaphras, a native of Colossae and one of Paul's converts, was the founder and leader of the church. Paul wrote this letter, while a prisoner in Rome, around 61 AD.

Paul was writing against false teaching within the church, which appears a mixture of pagan occultism, Jewish legalism and Christianity. It was a form of Gnosticism, teaching that Jesus was not fully God and man, but only a semi-divine being.

Therefore, he lacked the authority and ability to satisfy the needs of the Colossians. Enlightened believers, however, could reach spiritual fullness through special knowledge and rigorous self-discipline. In answer to this Paul wrote: *'see to it that no-one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ'* (2:8).

He attacked this false teaching by focusing on the supremacy of Christ, *'in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have this fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority'* (2:9-10).

Paul affirmed the sovereignty of Christ as:

Lord of all creation, who sustains everything. As the exact representation of God, he is first born over all creation (1:15-17), and so there is no place for worshipping angels or any other power (2:18).

Head of the church (1:18), to whom the Colossians should submit (2:6, 7) and not be seduced by vain speculations (1:16-18).

Supreme Saviour (3:11), who has defeated all spiritual powers on the cross (2:15), resulting in them sharing in the power of his resurrection (2:20). As all are adopted in his family, everybody is equally forgiven. Therefore, there are no special qualifications needed to experience God's favour (2:8-20).

In chapters 3/4 Paul demonstrates the practical implications for the Christian's daily life. We are challenged to abandon the sins of the old life and cultivate the qualities of our new life in Christ (3:5-4:6). Therefore, if we maintain Jesus as our Lord, he will prove truly sufficient for all our needs.

-
- **Regular Activities in the Church Hall** •
- NB the Church Hall is not usually available for late night •
- Discos •
-
- Pre-school Playgroup: •
- Mondays to Fridays, 9am - 11.30am and •
- 12.30pm - 3pm •
-
- Brownies, Guides, Cubs and Scouts meet on •
- weekday evenings. See page 2 for details. •
-