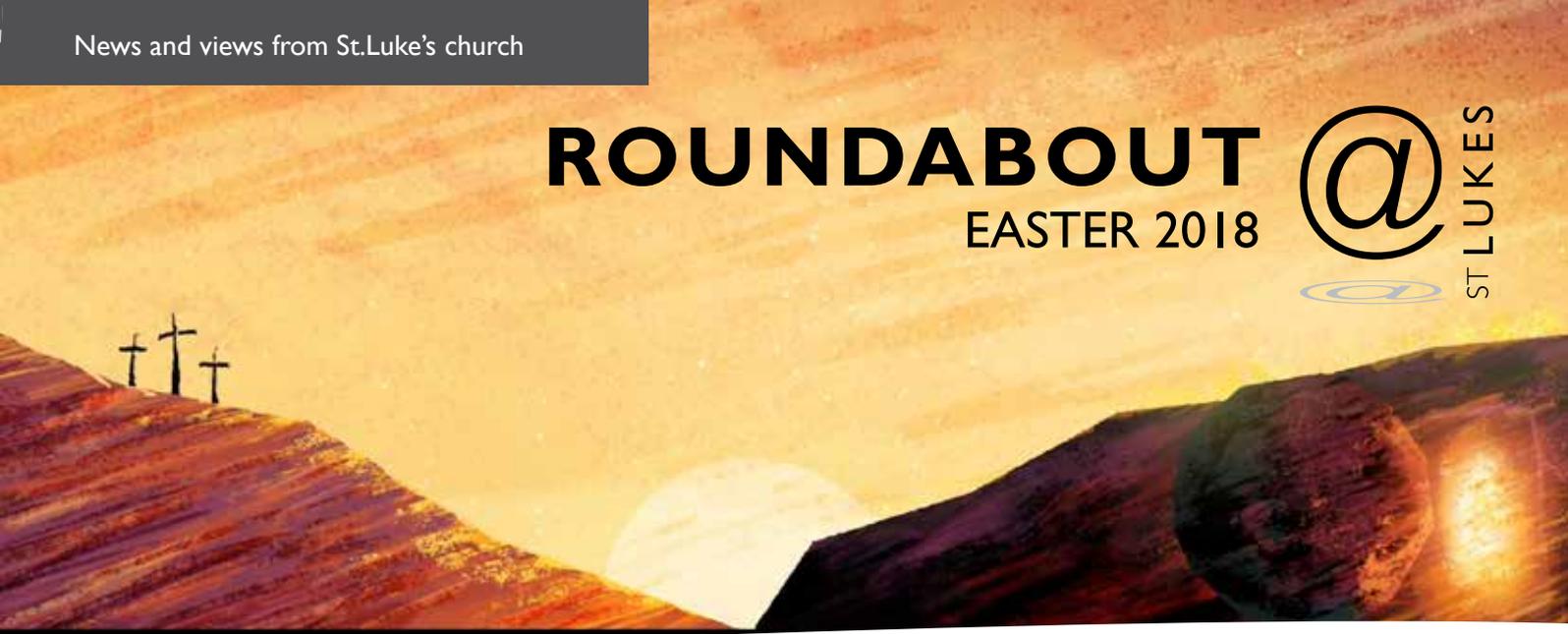


# ROUNDAABOUT

## EASTER 2018



# WELCOME!

Welcome to the latest Easter edition of Roundabout, the newsletter from St Luke's Church in College Road.

You can find information about our links with the local community, details of our services, and important dates for your diary. We hope you enjoy reading it. Revd Patrick Wheaton



## LOOK AND SEE REVD PATRICK WHEATON

'I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind.'

Writing this in the middle of Cheltenham race week I am drawn to observe thousands of people chasing after something. Great day out, a big win, quality time with friends, a restaurant space or simply a taxi home. I wonder how many catch hold of what they're really seeking?

The ancient words at the top come from the Bible. The author devoted their life to finding a source of meaning and purpose. They pursued wisdom, pleasure, hard work, material things, wealth, advancement and suchlike. But they concluded that in each was to be found only meaninglessness. The pursuit had been like chasing after the wind. Run as hard as you like, but it cannot be caught. That isn't to say there is no enjoyment in earthly things, or satisfaction in a good days work. Rather this teacher who writes up their observations sees that these things are temporary. They are subject to change and can be taken or lost without warning or reason. If we are honest, we know all this to be true. There simply are no hard and fast rules for a healthy, satisfying and successful life. Yet our hearts still yearn for meaning and our mouths cry out for justice and order.

The message of Easter speaks into this quest and desire. At the cross Jesus was reconciling back to God the whole of creation. This means he was defeating chaos, disorder, evil and injustice. By the empty tomb and Jesus' resurrection we have the promise of victory, a life of purpose, comfort and eternity. 2 challenges for this Easter. Take a look around, and look deep to see what is really going on. Take a look again at Jesus and see what you find.

## TRIP TO KAKUNYU SCHOOL IN SOUTHWEST UGANDA - BY RACHEL SKETT

At the end of February, our team of four from St. Luke's visited Kakunyu school in Masaka, southwest Uganda. Kakunyu is an inclusive school which aims to provide an education for children with physical and learning disabilities. They currently have 120 students ranging in age from 3 to 14, a third of whom have a disability of some kind.

Before our trip we raised some money to put towards projects at the school, with the St. Luke's family generously donating both money and practical items for us to deliver. During our time at the school we got involved with teaching (French, PE, crafts and a bit of a ukulele lesson for a couple of the teachers!); painting the physiotherapy block; taking the boarding students to a local lake on a picnic day out, and arranging for the tiling of the physiotherapy block floor.

We had a lot of fun and greatly enjoyed spending time with the children.

The atmosphere of inclusivity at the school





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was incredible and we were touched by the love and care shown to children who might otherwise be shut off from society. We came back excited to share the work of the school and full of ideas for our next visit!

If you would like to know more about the school and the charity supporting it you can visit the friends of Kakunyu school website at [www.friendsofkakunyuschool.co.uk](http://www.friendsofkakunyuschool.co.uk)



P7 class & teachers at Kakunyu School

## NEWS FROM SAINT JOHN'S C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

The start of the spring term is an exciting one at Saint John's. The evenings begin to get lighter and the opportunity for fresh air and enjoyment commence. We have a thriving football team and an enthusiastic netball team that will continue to play inter school matches against local schools. Travelling to events has been made easier as we have a super new school mini bus emblazoned with the name and logo of Saint John's on the side. It has kindly been donated by Cheltenham College with whom we have built up a successful partnership. The mini bus also enables us to take children to the swimming pool at Cheltenham College making it far more affordable for families and a great opportunity for the children.

Staff are enjoying the opportunities that teaching the new Gloucestershire R.E. syllabus presents including the study of Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

We have many things to look forward to including a visit to the Cheltenham Synagogue, Gloucester Mosque and Cambray Baptist Church as well as an Easter workshop at Highbury Church for the whole school. The School Choir will be singing at the Saint John's/St Luke's Easter Service this year on our last day of term 4.

At Saint John's we continue to strive towards our school vision of "Where Children Flourish" just as nature flourishes at this wonderful time of year.



## REACHING OUT THROUGH THE YMCA

BY ST LUKE'S INTERN, NAOMI SHAW

A part of being a community intern at St Luke's church means that I spend some time in outreach settings. On Wednesdays I volunteer at the YMCA with an informal Christian group called the 3rd letter group. The group isn't about ensuring that everyone 'comes to faith' but to encourage them along their journey. We discuss Christian themes, study passages of the Bible – at the moment we're looking at Moses' story in Exodus. One empowering aspect of Moses' story is learning that God uses everybody, even the weakest. Moses had a speech impediment and was lacking in confidence and yet God chose to use him to free his people from Egypt.

I often come across people in the places I work who have suffered from substance abuse and unpleasant past experiences. In the 3rd letter group the leader makes it clear to us all that we don't have to have it all together to have a relationship with Christ because he takes us just as we are. This message, in reference to the Bible, is very powerful for them and for me. It's very exciting seeing people grow and discover new things and I just love the conversations because the people there are honest and I learn a lot too.

## LIFE ON THE FRONTLINE

BY TERRY HOWARD

Between January and February we ran a 4-week course to consider how we as Christians can be best used by God, in our day-to-day lives in our communities, especially from Monday to Saturday. In other words, outside of a worship setting and in our every day weekday lives. The course was based on two firm beliefs:

**First, that God longs for us to grow as followers of Jesus; and Second, that God longs to use us, wherever our everyday lives take us.**

The course helped us to think about the joys and challenges of our lives and be increasingly aware of what God is doing there. In turn, this helped us to understand how God might use us seven days a week.

Overall, we discovered that God had placed each of us in a unique situation, with many opportunities to love those around us and share the joy of knowing Jesus Christ.



## CHURCH HALL OUTREACH TO SENIOR CITIZENS AND THE COMMUNITY

BY SIMON BARTON

Our church hall is at the centre of our parish, and the centre of much of our community outreach.

For the past 20 years St Luke's Church Hall has been home to the Cheltenham Senior Citizens Welfare Committee Lunch Club which, four days a week, provides transport from home and good food, with care and entertainment. Over the same period Cheltenham Open Door have run their wonderful Christmas Shelter, providing hot meals, warmth and entertainment for the homeless and lonely - and even a bed for the night.

The Hall is near the church but tucked away down St Luke's Place, so you might miss it. But more and more people are finding their way there. It is a very busy venue for groups running activities for all ages, ranging from NCT baby massage, through Toddlers Football, dance for children, students and adults (including ballroom and Scottish Country Dancing), LudoSport (Lightsabers), PuppyTime dog training, Daniel McShee's Strength and Balance for the Over 50s and Capoeira. Quieter activities include art classes, AA groups, Scrabble, French Circle, wine

tasting, lip reading classes and recorder playing. It is a very popular venue for children's parties at the weekend - book early via our website, [stlukes-hall.org.uk](http://stlukes-hall.org.uk), where you can also find information about the hall and its users.



## WITNESS FROM A YOUNG MAN

BY SIMON PHILLIPS



Do you ever get that deflated feeling when you finish a series on Netflix, or get to the end of a book and realise, that's it. There's no more mysteries or plot twists. You are no longer part of your favourite characters life. The TV series I'm watching at the moment is Once Upon A Time. I love to see all my favourite fairy-tales and their characters mashed together in the rural town of 'Storybrook'. But I can't help thinking that the show will eventually end, and I'll get that deflated feeling again.

I used to think that the Bible was a bit dull, but when I was seventeen I read it cover to cover—and found the story told in it is alive, exciting, and real. It's the story of a loving God showing himself to the world. No fairy-tale hero can compare to the humility, courage, and self-sacrifice that we see in Jesus, and he invites us to be part of the ongoing story. Jesus' first followers were mostly uneducated young people who the world didn't expect much of, but they went on to change the course of history. It was tough, they gave up everything for Jesus— even their lives. They had found a cause that was worth giving everything for.

I've been a character in this story for quite a few years now, and living as a Christian has been both exciting and challenging. So often I look around and see young people who don't know what the point to their life is, but Jesus calls us to a life that has a purpose, and doesn't leave us deflated.

## JOURNEY KIDS TAKES OFF!!

BY JONATHAN GRIFFITHS



When we moved to Cheltenham, serving with Foursquare Missions International (USA), we had no idea that we would be starting a children's ministry. But when the opportunity presented itself at the beginning of 2017, and as we got connected with the St Luke's family, it was obvious that we needed to launch something at Saint John's Primary School. Journey Kids began with about a half-dozen kids on Sunday afternoons in September 2017.

We have been using the Jesus Storybook Bible Curriculum to teach children how the whole Bible points to Jesus. Along with our puppet friends, Horatio Applesauce and Saul Sage, we've had a wonderful time learning and our little group is slowly growing. At the Christmas Party we threw for Jesus' birthday, we had 14 children helping us celebrate.



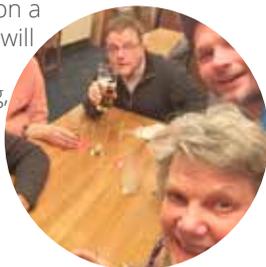
Sessions are filled with story, songs, games, prayer, crafts and all of it points to one person - Jesus! We are so thankful for the team of people who help make this happen, which includes some parents from school, and an amazing group from St Luke's (Chuck & Jenny Sykes, Daniel McShee, Terry & Sarah Howard, and Bryn & Rhiannon Fisher).

Next term we'll be entering the New Testament and looking more closely at Jesus' teaching. Please pray with us for more kids to connect, and for God's plan for the new school year in September.



# PINTS AND PRAYERS AT THE BELL

Any good village has at its heart the church and the pub. The community around St Luke's has something of a village feel. During Lent a group from St Luke's has been connecting the two community institutions. 9pm everyday Tuesday night, Chris the landlord and the regulars at The Bell have welcomed us as we have shared a pint together, read some of the true story of Jesus' journey to his death and prayed for ourselves and the community. Too often we think God is distant from every day life. Or that spiritual things are private and reserved for special days and buildings. Just as everybody is always welcome to join us in worship, prayer and learning together on a Sunday morning, so also we pray everybody will know that God is never far from each of us. Wherever we are and whatever we are doing, we can turn and see him as the one who gives it all to us.



## A CHURCH BUILDING FOR THE COMMUNITY. A CHURCH BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Since 1854 St Luke's Church has stood at the centre of the island of grass on College Road. Its distinctive spire is a landmark of the local area and obviously it is the church building that gives this part of Cheltenham its name. As the church family at St Lukes we are keen that the building maintains its connection with the community as both a pointer to its spiritual heart and a physical facility to serve the wider area. To achieve this, maintenance and modernisation are necessary. Currently we are developing plans to open up the interior of the church to provide a larger performance area for concerts, plays, school performances and other outside users. It will also facilitate the Sunday worship of our growing church family. Our hope is to create a building that is fit to serve and minister to this part of Cheltenham for the next generation.

Alongside this, we have to undertake significant work on the roof. In short, the church building needs a new one. Our dream is to serve our town and environment by making best use of solar technology on the south facing part of the roof. Such a plan is ambitious but we believe part of our responsibility towards the creation God has entrusted to us.

As our plans move forward we will keep everyone informed as much as possible largely through updates on our website. We hope you all feel free to take an interest and offer support. If you would like to know more please do get in touch.

## Our Regular Sunday Programme

At St Luke's you will find traditional and more innovative services, old favourites and modern music, the organ and the drum kit. We're trying to give everybody a chance to worship God in a genuine way. Our normal monthly service pattern is:

8am		Holy Communion
10am	1st Sunday	SundayOne*
	2nd Sunday	Holy Communion
	3rd Sunday	Morning Worship
	4th Sunday	Holy Communion
	5th Sunday	Morning Worship

Children's and youth groups meet during the services every Sunday except the 1st.

\* A less formal service for all ages and those less familiar with church

## EASTER @ ST LUKE'S

Palm Sunday Sunday 25th March	10am	Morning Worship
Maundy Thursday 29th March	6pm	informal worship meal
Good Friday Friday 30th March	10am	Morning Worship
Easter Sunday 1st April	8am 10am	Easter Family Communion



## CONTACT DETAILS

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