

**March 2015 – forthcoming events**

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	Key to abbreviations LTF= Ladies Thursday F'ship MITM = Men in the morning B&B = Bumps & Babes WLTD= Who let the dads out YE = Younger Elements OE = Older Elements HC = Holy Communion TMS = The Morning Service TES = The Evening Service HotS = Healing on the Street				<b>1</b>
	9am Re:Fresh 9.15am Alpha Seekers 4pm Blend 4.30pm YE 7pm OE					7.45am HC 10.30am HC 6.30pm TES
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
	9am Re:Fresh 9.15am Alpha seekers 4pm Blend 4.30pm YE 7pm OE	Prayer day 10am BB 11am HC	9.45am Toddlers 10am LTF 10am MITM 3pm Blend	10.30am Women's World day of Prayer 8pm Tonbridge prayer initiative	9am Re:Fresh 10am HotS 6.30pm Youth Band	7.45am HC 10.30am TMS 12.30pm Welcome lunch 6.30pm TES
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
	9am Re:Fresh 9.15am Alpha seekers 4pm Blend 4.30pm YE 7pm OE	10am BB 11am HC	9.45am Toddlers 10am MITM 3pm Blend	9am Re:Fresh	8.45am Men's Breakfast 10am HotS 7pm The Mix	7.45am HC 10.30am Bpt 6.30pm HC
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
	9am Re:Fresh 9.15am Alpha seekers 4pm Blend 4.30pm YE 7pm OE	10am BB 11am HC	9.45am Toddlers 10am MITM 3pm Blend	9am Re:Fresh	PCC Away day 9am Re:Fresh 10am HotS 6.30pm YB	7.45am HC 10.30am TMS 2.30pm Afternoon Tea 6.30pm TES
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
	9am Re:Fresh 9.15am Alpha seekers 4pm Blend 4.30pm YE 7pm OE	10am BB 11am HC	9.45am Toddlers 10am MITM 3pm Blend	9am Re:Fresh	9.45am WLTD 10am HotS 7pm The Mix	7.45am HC 10.30am TMS 6.30pm TES

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# ENC COMPASS

THE MONTHLY ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH NEWSLETTER

## Prayer? Really? All day?

March 2015

Oh, you mean I could just come for an hour! Or even less, just pop in as I'm passing... ok then, I'll give it a try.

We used to call them Powerhouse Days because prayer is our source of power. They certainly made a difference. After one of them the funding came in for the re-ordering of the inside of the church, almost all of it on one day. Another was when Mark and Jason were both off sick: within a week Mark was back and soon after Jason was too.

We have a great vision but it won't happen without the power of prayer to inspire and drive us forward. With this in mind we are having prayer days on the first Wednesday of each month. The church will be open from 6am, Holy Communion will be at 11am and Central Gathering (CG) at 8-10pm. In March it will be prayer and worship, 8-8.30pm, instead of CG.

Each month we will have a focus for our prayers that will be in line with the vision or the central gathering talk or the teaching in sermons and connect groups. March will be all about our vision and the way forward for the church. When you come into church you will usually find most of the chairs set out in circles for the evening and some of these circles will be used as prayer stations; otherwise the side aisles will be cleared to make room for prayer stations. Two or three people will be around if you would like someone to point you in the right direction, explain anything or pray for you. On the hour each hour there will be 10 minutes of led or collective prayer from the front that you can gather to join in with, or not, as you like.

One area will be set out with a board for people to add written prayers and prayer requests; another board for answers to prayer. Last time we added sticky dots to prayers as we prayed them and as the day went on some of these were answered – including a prayer for work.

Another area may well help us to pray for ourselves, rather as Suzanne Carlsson was teaching us (January CG, podcast available) and this month we will be using one of the windows to help us. There will always be one prayer station set up for those who pray best through being creative – whether using paint, play dough or some other medium.

Some people find the Bible the greatest source of inspiration for their prayers and others like to use written prayers and liturgies so somewhere in church you will also find these – all with prompts to focus on the theme.

We hope there will be enough prayer stations to appeal to the different ways you may like to pray. It would be easy to take all your available and valuable time wandering around reading... but there is probably more value and prayer in learning how you like to pray and spending time at a relevant prayer station, or none, just doing that.

We do hope you find these days a help; that you find your prayers answered and you see change in St Stephen's Tonbridge and maybe the world as we spend more time in prayer. It would be wonderful if all who consider themselves part of St Stephen's popped in to pray at some point. May we see the power of God released in this place!

Sheila Perkins



## The Fourth Vicar of St Stephen's 1884-1900

Rev George Noel Storrs

George Noel Storrs became vicar of St Stephen's Tonbridge in 1884, the year that Field Marshall Wolseley was sent to Khartoum to relieve General Gordon from the assaults of the Mahdi, C.A. Parsons invented the Steam Turbine, Queen Victoria was in the 47 year of her reign and William Gladstone was still Prime Minister.

The Rev Storrs remained vicar of St Stephen's for 16 years living at 29 Quarry Hill Road, now Bespoke Glass adjacent to the church. It was a time of sadness for Rev Storrs as his wife of 19 years Mary Frances (39) died leaving him to bring up 7 children between the ages of 6 and 18. Her gravestone can be seen by the Lychgate in the churchyard. However, he married a second time three years later in 1892 to Constance Lucy Dobson, the daughter of a wine merchant from Reigate, and they had a daughter Constance Margaret in 1895.

George Noel Storrs was born on the 25<sup>th</sup> December 1843, the son of Robert Storrs, a surgeon, who lived in Doncaster, Yorkshire and his wife Martha Storrs. Robert and Martha had married in London in February 1827 with Martha described as a minor (20), permission granted for the marriage by her father Job Townsend. They had 12 children, 11 lived: five girls and six boys. Five became clergymen and the eldest Robert became a surgeon following in his father's footsteps.

George's father Robert died in 1847, aged 46 of pestilential fever caught in the discharge of his professional duties as a physician, leaving Martha to bring up the 11 children. In 1851 the family was living at 11 Blossom Street, Micklegate, York returning to St Georges, Doncaster by 1861 with Robert, George's brother being head of the household. George aged 17 is described as a scholar. Previously he had attended schools, St Peter's in York and Holbrook, near Ipswich.

In 1862, George was accepted into Caius, Cambridge. He obtained a BA in 1867, becoming a deacon (Canterbury) in 1867, then priest (Winchester) in 1868 while curate at St John's Penge from 1867 -1869. A second curacy followed at St Stephen's, Hull 1869-1871. In 1870 George married Mary Frances Nichols in Bromley, Kent and they began married life together at Sculcoates, Hull where he was a curate. Their first son was born there. His third curacy was at Heworth, Yorkshire 1871-1877. George obtained his MA from Caius, Cambridge in 1877. During this time at Heworth the family expanded with a daughter and two more sons.

From 1877-1881 George was vicar of Thornton-Curtis, Lincolnshire. Two further children were born during this period Hester Mary, 1878 and Caroline Elizabeth 1880. Then in 1881 George became priest in charge of Holy Trinity, Bridlington. The 1881 census has the family living at 6 Sowerby Villas, Bridlington, with six children plus three servants. George remained vicar of Holy Trinity until 1884, during which time another son, Gerald, was born in 1882. Interestingly, *The New York Tribune* 26<sup>th</sup> February 1882 reports 'Rev George Noel Storrs an English Clergyman, recently visited a coal pit in the County of York, England and delivered an address to the miners underground'.

George and Mary moved to Tonbridge in 1884. The 1891 census describes George (47), as a widower, vicar of St Stephen's, Tonbridge who was visiting his sister Frances, her husband Rev Horace Newton in Great Driffield, Yorkshire. George's family, living at 29, Quarry Hill Road included Arthur 20, (a student of Classics), Agnes 19, Herbert 17, Francis 15, and Gerald 8, plus two servants. George's eldest son, Arthur Harold became a clergyman and CMS missionary.

During the Rev Storrs' time at St Stephen's the churchyard was planted with many of the trees seen today, planted by ET Webber, Rodney's great grandfather and electric lighting was introduced into the church.

In 1900 George left St Stephen's, Tonbridge to become a licensed priest, Diocese of Canterbury before taking up his last incumbency as Rector of Kittisford, Somerset in 1906. In the 1901 census he is living in Meyrick Road, Bournemouth, a clerk in Holy Orders, without parish, with his wife Constance 44 and their daughter Constance.

George Noel Storrs of the Rectory, Kittisford near Wellington, Somerset died 15<sup>th</sup> October 1909. His effects totalled £1802 17s which he left to Constance, his widow and the Rev Harold Storrs and Arthur Gerald Nichols (son in law).



## Church of England podcast

The Church of England has a new weekly podcast which is now available to download free of charge. Each new episode comes out on a Thursday afternoon and features a roundup of the week's Church of England news. For example, a recent podcast included interviews on the new rural churches report 'Released for Mission' and an interview with a teacher who talks about the reaction her class had to watching Libby Lane's consecration.

You can find it one of two ways: either via the Church of England's Soundcloud page (you don't need to have an account to access the podcast): <https://soundcloud.com/the-church-of-england/sets/weekly-podcast> or you can subscribe to it via the iTunes store by going to the 'podcast' section and searching for Church of England podcasts. Each new episode will be automatically downloaded to your tablet or smartphone when you subscribe.

Also a reminder that if you're a twitter user, you can follow the dedicated Synod account: @synod to get updates of events during General Synod.

## The Power of Encouragement

One of my favourite characters in the Bible is 'Joseph, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement)' (Acts 4:36). What a wonderful new name and we soon see how he got it. He brings the newly converted, and still feared, Saul to the apostles in Jerusalem (Acts 9:27). When Paul refused to take John Mark along on a new journey (because, in Paul's eyes, John Mark had earlier let them down) it was Barnabas who stepped in and took John Mark to Cyprus (Acts 15:36-41).

Interestingly, the word 'encourage' has the same Greek root as Jesus uses for the Holy Spirit in John 14. Indeed, on several occasions it is said to be the Holy Spirit who does the encouraging. Moreover, in Romans 12:8, encouraging is a gift of the Spirit. It is also the prime purpose of prophecy which we are all to eagerly desire (*cf* 1 Corinthians 14:1,3).

So what is the 'power of encouragement'? Our English word is derived from the old French and literally means 'to put in courage'. So what is courage? A dictionary definition is: *'the ability to do something that frightens one'*. Sounds like Barnabas's first encounter with Saul!

But what about us - today? Many of us have things in our lives which we would love to do - even dream of doing - but are held back by the fear of failure and its consequences. But when someone encourages us 'to go for it' we find that dictionary definition to be true. We live in a society which is increasingly fearful of taking risks, of facing ridicule or even legal action, if it goes wrong. This is not how God made us to be. Encouragement from others can be part of countering that fear.

Then *how* can we encourage others? Actually, it's very simple and very practical. Look for the positive in someone's life and tell them what you see. We are often better practiced at looking for the negative - and speaking it out - but that only **discourages** ('takes courage out'). Perhaps that person has done something that you've observed - for you or for someone else. Thank them; tell them you really appreciate what they did. Even if they 'messed up' or 'could have done better', don't tell them then and there. If appropriate, you can gently bring *correction*, not *criticism*, later. Indeed, correction brought after encouragement and thanks is all the more likely to be received gratefully.

Notice how even Paul's most corrective letters begin with encouraging and thankful words. Indeed, I believe that the two words 'Thank you' can be so encouraging in themselves. Some may think 'why bother when someone has simply done what they are supposed to do?' But I say it's akin to telling your wife you love her (not just on your wedding day!). It means you care, you notice, you want to encourage them.

So let us all be looking out for ways to encourage others.

Keith Foot

## The tale of the Chinese pot

An elderly Chinese woman had two large pots, each hung on the ends of a pole which she carried across her neck. One of the pots had a crack in it while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water. At the end of the long walks from the stream to the house, the cracked pot arrived only half full.

For a full two years this went on daily, with the woman bringing home only one and a half pots of water. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it could only do half of what it had been made to do.

After two years of what it perceived to be bitter failure, it spoke to the woman one day by the stream: 'I am ashamed of myself, because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house.' The old woman smiled, 'Did you notice that there are flowers on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side?'

'That's because I have always known about your flaw, so I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back, you water them. For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house.'

Each of us has our own unique flaw. But it's the cracks and flaws we each have that make our lives together so very interesting and rewarding. You've just got to take each person for what they are and look for the good in them.

So, to all of my cracked pot friends, have a great day and remember to smell the flowers on your side of the path!

Don't forget the Cracked Pot that told you this story!

Story submitted by Mark Barker