Bollington Church News

The magazine of Bollington Parish Church, St Oswald's

PENJECOSJ

May 2024

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Who's who at St Oswald's

7 Bollington Rd, Bollington, Macclesfield SK10 5EG

Vicar	Revd Nancy Goodrich	07895 363038
Curata	revnancygoodrich@gmail.com	
Curate	Jenny Eades	
	jennyfoxeades@gmail.com	
Reader	Anne Coomes	01625 571144
	anne@parishpump.co.uk	
Churchwarden	Christine Osbaldiston	01625 575589
	christine.osbaldiston@yahoo.co.uk	
Churchwarden	Jackie Pengelly	07887 987082
	jackie.pengelly@hotmail.co.uk	
PCC Secretary	currently vacant	
PCC Treasurer	Richard Raymond	01625 612025
	richard.raymond109@gmail.com	
Electoral Roll	Jackie Pengelly	01625 572645
Officer	jackie.pengelly@hotmail.co.uk	
Parish Giving	Chris Ward	01625 573892
Officer	c.j.w@ntlworld.com	
St John's CE	Head: Melanie Walker	01625 572025
School	head@stjohnsboll.cheshire.sch.uk	
Bollington	Head: Yenson Donbavand	01625 572138
Cross CE	admin@bollingtoncross.cheshire.sch.uk	[
School	-	

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Letter from Nancy

Dear All,

40 days after Easter comes Ascension Day. (This year, on 9th May.) These are the 40 days during which the Risen Christ appeared again and again to His disciples, following His death and resurrection. (*Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; and John 20.*)



The Gospels give us little of Christ's teachings and deeds during those 40 days. Jesus was seen by numerous of His disciples: on the road to Emmaus, by the Sea of Galilee, in houses, etc. He strengthened and encouraged His disciples, and at last opened their eyes to all that the Scriptures had promised about the Messiah. Jesus also told them that as the Father had sent Him, He was now going to send them - to all corners of the earth, as His witnesses.

Surely the most tender, moving 'farewell' in history took place on Ascension Day. Luke records the story with great poignancy: 'When Jesus had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, He lifted up His hands - and blessed them.'

As Christmas began the story of Jesus' life on earth, so Ascension Day completes it, with His return to His Father in heaven. Jesus' last act on earth was to bless His disciples. He and they had a bond as close as could be: they had just lived through three tumultuous years of public ministry and miracles – persecution and death – and resurrection! Just as we part from our nearest and dearest by still looking at them with love and memories in our eyes, so exactly did Jesus: 'While He was blessing them, He left them and was taken up into heaven.' (Luke 24:50-1) He was not forsaking them, but merely going on ahead to a kingdom which would also be theirs one day: 'I am ascending to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God...' (John 20:17)

The disciples were surely the most favoured folk in history. Imagine being one of the last few people on earth to be face to face with Jesus, and to have Him look on you with love. No wonder then that Luke goes on: 'they worshipped

Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.' (Luke 24:52,53)

No wonder they praised God! They knew they would see Jesus again one day! 'I am going to prepare a place for you... I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.' (John 14:2,3) In the meantime, Jesus had work for them to do: to take the Gospel to every nation on earth.

Love Nancy

** **

The High Days of May

Brian Reader comments on the front cover



Have you ever wondered why we call it 'The Merry Month of May'? It could be because it marks the annual excuse for us to celebrate in the sunshine with not one but two bank holidays. We had always enjoyed a Whitsun Bank Holiday, but in 1971 this movable holiday was replaced by the late Spring Holiday on the last Monday of May. Later, Michael Foot, the Labour M.P. added the May public holiday in 1978.

The origins of May Day had more joyful beginnings,

and I can remember dancing round a Maypole as a school boy and getting the ribbons crossed the wrong way, much to the concern of our teacher!

Pentecost is one of the great festivals of the Church. It marks the coming of the Holy Spirit on the disciples, and their transformation from frightened and



confused people to men who would face martyrdom. St Luke writing in Acts, tells us that disciples of Jesus "were all together in one place" on the "day of Pentecost". A violent wind filled the house: (breath or wind is a symbol of the Spirit of God) and tongues of fire separate and came to rest on each of them.

This brings us back to Ann's cover, which shows the flames and a dove. In Christian tradition, the dove is

closely linked to the Holy Spirit, as seen in the baptism of Jesus, where the Spirit descended like a dove. The dove's gentle

nature and graceful flight serve as metaphors for the peaceful and comforting presence of the Holy Spirit in the lives of all Christians.

We also have other feast days in May, Ascension Day, Trinity Sunday, and Corpus Christi, a day of thanksgiving for Holy Communion.

Christian Aid Week - 12th to 18th May

Christian Aid is urging its supporters to 'push back against poverty this Christian Aid Week, by bearing in mind the coming General Election.

The charity says that people hoping to represent us in the next UK Parliament will soon be on our doorsteps, vying for our vote.

Christian Aid says that these wouldbe MPs will: "be in listening mode, keen to hear what makes the voters in their community tick." And so, urges the charity, Christians can use this opportunity to "show them that your church cares about poverty, and tell them that you expect them to act on poverty too, if they are elected."

This year the charity has launched the '70K Challenge for May', encouraging its supporters to do a



sponsored "Move 70km during May. Walk, run, cycle, however you move is up to you." Details at: <u>https://fundraise.christianaid.org.uk</u>

See the back page of this magazine for what WE are doing for Christian Aid this year!

Hello from the New Curate of Bollington!

St Oswald's hasn't had a curate for many years so it is a joy and a privilege for me to assume that role. I am delighted to have joined St Oswald's and to be working alongside Nancy Goodrich and the whole congregation to be a visible Christian presence in Bollington.

My name is Jenny Eades and I have lived in Macclesfield since 1986. I am married with three grown up children and a Staffordshire bull terrier called Evie.

Having worked in and around education for many years, first as a special needs teacher and then as a writer and researcher running well-being projects with schools, I came to the conclusion that spiritual well-being is at the very heart of what it means to be human, well.



So I changed path and was ordained into the Church of England in July 2023. Working with children and teachers and parents remains dear to my heart so I looked for a church that had schools in its parish – and here I am, in Bollington.

So, if you have children or grandchildren, you may come across me through assemblies or the children's visits to St Oswald's. Alternatively you may meet me out and about or spot me on my elderly bike as I cycle along the canal path between Macclesfield and Bollington.

I am a part-time curate – in my other life I continue to be involved in education as a teacher of the Alexander technique, a body based mindfulness practice. I also continue to write and blog occasionally at <u>www.jennyfoxeades.com</u>. And whatever your beliefs, whatever your spiritual pathway, I look forward to meeting you and getting to know you. I shall use these pages in future to share some thoughts and some spiritual practices and ideas you might want to try out for yourself. In the meantime, God bless, and I hope we meet soon.

** **

19th May - Day of Pentecost, Whit Sunday

Pentecost took place on the well-established Jewish festival of First Fruits, which was observed at the beginning of the wheat harvest. It was seven weeks after Easter, or 50 days including Easter.



A feast day to celebrate the country's wheat harvest does not sound exactly world-changing, but that year, it became one of the most important days in world history. For Pentecost was the day that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit - the day the Church was born.

Jesus had told His disciples that something big was going to happen, and that they were to wait for it in Jerusalem, instead of returning to Galilee. Jesus had plans for His disciples, but He knew they could not do the work themselves. They would need His help.

And so, they waited in Jerusalem, praying together with His other followers, for many days. And then on that

fateful morning there was suddenly the sound as of a mighty rushing wind. Tongues of flame flickered on their heads, and they began to praise God in many tongues, to the astonishment of those who heard them. The curse of Babel (Genesis 11: 1- 9) was dramatically reversed that morning.

That morning the Holy Spirit came to indwell the disciples and followers of Jesus. The Church was born. The Christians were suddenly full of life and power, utterly different from their former fearful selves.

Peter gave the first ever sermon of the Christian Church that morning, proclaiming Jesus was the Messiah. His boldness in the face of possible death

was in marked contrast to the man who had denied Jesus 50 days before. And 3,000 people responded, were converted, and were baptised. How's that for fast church growth!

Of course, Pentecost was not the first time the Holy Spirit had acted in this world. All through the Old Testament there are accounts of how God's Spirit guided people and strengthened them. But now, because of Christ's death and resurrection, He could INDWELL them. From now on, every Christian could have the confidence that Jesus was with them constantly, through the indwelling of His Holy Spirit.

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Smile Lines...

Welcome?

Several years ago, on the gates of the Winnipeg Anglican Cathedral in Canada, which is situated in a cemetery, two notices were seen beside each other: THE ANGLICAN CHURCH WELCOMES YOU.

WARNING: THESE PREMISES ARE PROTECTED BY GUARD DOGS.

Lots of seats

Seen in a church magazine: The church hall is available for hire for groups and parties. There is a well-equipped kitchen and disabled toilet facilities, with the capacity to seat up to 80 people.

Share

There are only two things a child will share willingly – a communicable disease and his mother's age.

Taking Jesus

A Sunday School teacher asked her class why Joseph and Mary took Jesus with them to Jerusalem. A small child replied: "They couldn't get a babysitter."

Adam and Eve

Adam and Eve had an ideal marriage. He didn't have to hear about all the men she could have married, and she didn't have to hear how his mother cooked.

Why your television is like the Trinity

26th May is Trinity Sunday. Many people, when they think about it all, struggle to understand the concept of a God that is Three in One...

So, here is a trick question: How many colours does your television set use?

Answer: Just three: red, green and blue. And in that order, just like a rainbow (where reds are at one side, blues at the opposite side, green in the middle). This is known as "RGB".

These are TV's three primary colours which, when their luminescence is fired at your eyes, give all the colours of the visible spectrum. These are all 'additive' colours. In fact, mix these three together in different proportions, and your screen can offer you 16 million colours.

You thought the sequence was red/yellow/blue? No, that's for painted or printed colours. A TV set positively gives out light in three different colours, whereas paint daubed on paper absorbs and removes some colours, to reflect back merely a small part of the light falling on it the colour that you see.

You'll soon call out the repair man if your television loses one of its three colours and all the presenters look as though they came from Mars. But change the intensity of any one colour (red, green or blue) even slightly and you change the overall colour.

Switch them all off, and you are left with black. Let all three of them shine at full brightness, at the same point – and then as if by magic you have a totally different colour: WHITE!

It's a parable which illustrates the Holy Trinity. Three completely distinct persons (Father, Son and Holy Spirit), just as your TV set has three quite separate colours: red, green, blue. Take away any One member of the Trinity, and you slip into theological error; take away any one of the three colours, and you call out the TV repair engineer!

31st May - Mary, Blessed Virgin, visits Elizabeth

Mary – the virgin mother of Jesus. For centuries, the eastern and western churches have considered her pre-eminent among all the saints.

In the gospels, Mary makes her first appearance as a teenager. Nothing is known of her childhood, and what we do know of her is found mostly in Matthew 1-2 and in Luke 1-2.

If you read both accounts, you'll notice that Luke's account seems to give the story from Mary's standpoint, whereas Matthew concentrates more on Joseph's side of things. In both accounts the virginal conception of Christ is clearly stated. Mary's quiet devotion to God and her total acceptance of His will shine forth.

Her visit to Elizabeth, when both were pregnant, is a moving and poignant account of two humble, ordinary women, suddenly caught up in a great event that would shape world history. Their trusting faith in God and acceptance of His will, shine through.

After Jesus is born, Mary fades into the background, and makes few appearances: when the family visits Jerusalem and she loses her son on the way home; when she urges Him to help the wedding party in Cana with its wine problem; and when Jesus gives her into the keeping of the beloved disciple when He is dying on the cross. Mary's last appearance is in Acts chapter one, just before Pentecost.

Mary obviously joined the early Church, but her role was never one of teaching and preaching, and indeed she remained so much in the background that nothing more about her is known for certain. Both Ephesus and Jerusalem have claimed to be the place of her death.

Mary, chosen to be the mother of Jesus Christ, one who is both God and Man, holds a unique place in the history of mankind. Down the centuries that have followed, the Church has paid special honour to Mary – and well deserved it is. "All generations shall call me blessed..."

What's the Big Idea? An Introduction to the Bible: Judges

Following Joshua's death, a generation grew up who didn't know God (Judges 2:11) and 'every man did what was right in his own eyes' (17:6, 21:25). The book of Judges is a study in God's response to a permissive society.

The book takes its name from the *deliverers* that God raised up during this time. God empowered both men and women with His Spirit to rule and deliver the people. They included Ehud, Deborah, Gideon and his son Abimelech, Jephthah and Samson. The judges operated in the 350 years (from 1050 BC) between Joshua's death and the monarchy.



We see a recurring cycle of apostasy, oppression, penitence and deliverance played out. When the people fell into sin, God sent an enemy nation to oppress them. As a result, they cried to God for help, and He responded by raising up a deliverer to free them.

The saddest words in Judges are those applied to Samson, 'He did not know that the LORD had left him' (16:20). Rejecting God in our lives can begin with

tolerating those things that are not in harmony with His will for our lives. The people's toleration of the beliefs of their pagan neighbours led to a conformity in life and worship with them. Yet God waited for His people to return to Him, when He responded with grace to deliver them.

Gideon stands out as somebody who was unwilling to compromise with the surrounding culture. Despite his weaknesses, God used him to deliver Israel from the Midianite invaders. We read: *'the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon'*, lit: *'the Spirit clothed Himself with Gideon'* (6:34). God's grace and faithfulness is at work in those who are prepared to trust Him.

SAINT OF THE MONTH – 8th May Julian of Norwich, voice from a distant cell

Julian of Norwich was born in 1342 and wrote at the end of the 14th century, when our modern English language was slowly emerging from its origins in Anglo-Saxon and Middle English.

We know little about Julian's early life, but when she was 30, she fell ill and was near death when suddenly her pain left her, and she received 16 visitations. Julian wrote these down, in what became known as the 'short



text'. 20 years later she extended this to *Credit:rocketjohn, viaWikimedia Commons* become her 'long text'.

She was an anchoress – someone who had committed herself to a life of solitude, giving herself to prayer and fasting. St Julian's, Norwich was the church where she had her little 'cell'.

Julian taught that all things depend upon the love of God for their being. Her spirituality was focussed on the cross, and she wanted to share the sufferings of Christ. She believed that humanity is separated from God by sin, but redeemed through Christ, who reunites us with God. Julian also emphasised Christ as mother, but within a clear Trinitarian understanding of the godhead.

Her masterpiece, *Revelations of Divine Love*, reveals a mystic of such depth and insight that it is still read by many thousands of Christians today. One of the notable features is that her theology determined her experience, rather than the other way round.

She is honoured this month in the Lutheran and Anglican Churches, but although she is held in high regard by many Roman Catholics, her own Church has never felt able to recognise her as a 'saint'. This is probably because she spoke of God as embracing both male and female qualities. *Revelations* is an account of the visions she received in her tiny room, which thousands of pilgrims visit every year.

Her most famous saying, quoted by T S Eliot in one of his poems, is 'All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.' These words have brought comfort and strength to many a soul in distress.

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Derek Gascoigne reports from CHUB

We held our annual meeting to organise the programme for 2024 in February. It was decided that as we had surplus funds of £120, we would donate £25 to the Macclesfield Christie, £25 to the East Cheshire Hospice and £50 to St. Oswald's organ fund.

This season we hope to visit St Mary's at Nether Alderley on 7^{th} May, St. Mary's Church Astbury on 2^{nd} July and Church of Charles, King and Martyr at Peak Forest on September 3^{rd} . The friendship lunch is on October 29^{th} .

Still no change to subscriptions: £5 per year. And it would be a nice gesture if passengers on the day could donate £2 to the drivers to cover the cost of petrol.

We hope you have good memories of last year's visits, and we hope to see you all again at this year's outings.

Good to think about

To spend an hour worrying on our knees is not prayer. Indeed, there are times when it is our duty, having committed a problem to God in prayer, to stop praying and to trust and to do the necessary work to arrive at a solution. - *Oliver Barclay*

All in the month of May ...

It was:

200 years ago, on 7th May 1824 that the first performance of Ludwig van Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 took place in Vienna. It is regarded as Beethoven's greatest work and is one of the most-performed symphonies in the world.

150 years ago, on 9th May 1874 that Howard Carter, British archaeologist and Egyptologist, was born. He discovered the tomb of the Pharaoh Tutankhamun in 1922.

Also 150 years ago, on 29th May 1874 that the British writer G. K. Chesterton was born. A novelist, short story writer, philosopher and critic, he was best known for his Father Brown stories.

100 years ago, on 4th May 1924 that the British children's writer E. Nesbit (Edith Nesbit) died. Best known for *The Railway Children*.

90 years ago, on 25th May 1934 that the British composer, Gustav Holst, died. Best known for *The Planets*.

Also 90 years ago, on 28th May 1934 that the first Glyndebourne opera festival was held, in East Sussex.

75 years ago, on 12th May 1949 that the Soviet Union lifted its blockade of Berlin. The blockade had led to the Berlin Airlift, in which British and American planes had delivered millions of tons of food, coal and medical supplies to the isolated people of West Berlin.

70 years ago, on 6th May 1954 that Roger Bannister became the first person to run a mile in under four minutes (3 minutes, 59.4 seconds), in Oxford.

Also 70 years ago, on 20th May 1954 that Bill Haley & His Comets released the song *Rock Around the Clock*. It brought rock and roll into the mainstream and is regarded as one of the most important records in music history.

Also 70 years ago, on 29th May 1954 that Diane Leather became the first woman to run a mile in under five minutes (4 minutes, 59.6 seconds), in Birmingham.

60 years ago, on 2nd May 1964 that Nancy Astor, American-born British politician died. She was the first female Member of Parliament (MP) to take her seat in the House of Commons.

50 years ago, on 24th May 1974 that Duke Ellington, American jazz pianist, composer, and big-band leader, died. Regarded as the greatest jazz composer of the 20th century.

40 years ago, on 17th May 1984 that Prince Charles described a proposed extension to the National Gallery in London as a 'monstrous carbuncle on the face of a much-loved and elegant friend'. (The design was scrapped, but his comment sparked controversy over the Royal Family's role.).

Also 40 years ago, on 19th May 1984 that John Betjeman, British poet, writer, and broadcaster died. He was Poet Laureate 1972-1984.

30 years ago, on 6th May 1994 that the Channel Tunnel linking England and France was officially opened.

Also 30 years ago, on 10th May 1994 that Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as South Africa's first black president, after more than 300 years of white rule.

25 years ago, on 1st May 1999 that the body of mountaineer George Mallory was found on Mount Everest. He had been missing since 1924.

Also 25 years ago, on 6th May 1999, that the first general elections for the Scottish Parliament and the National Assembly for Wales, took place. Donald Dewar became First Minister for Scotland and Alun Michael became First Secretary for Wales.

20 years ago, on 19th May 2004 that the world's first stem cell bank opened at the National Institute for Biological Standards and Control in Potter's Bar, Hertfordshire.

Book of Remembrance for May

1st May - Elsie Johnson 3rd May - Alfred Cantrell 7th May - Alice Edna Hooley 7th May - Raymond Foster 7th May - Dan Woolley 9th May - Barbara Collings 11th May - Revd Michael Whetter (Vicar of this parish 1991-2000) 12th May - John Williams 13th May - Paul Withington 18th May - Kenneth George Wilcox 18th May - Oliver Heathcote 19th May - Maggie Chadwick 22nd May - Dennis R Bennett 22nd May - Jessie Brocklehurst 22nd May - Lily Gaskell 24th May - Jack Lloyd 25th May - Richard Owen Ridley 28th May - William Henry Stanesby 29th May - Bertram Wardle 29th May - Frank Spooner

30th May - Francis Owen Wharton Wilkinson

AND TON PROPERTY OF

Would you like to include the name of a departed loved one? An entry costs £10. Please contact Ann Stringer on 01625 574325

From the Registers

Baptism	21 st April - Bracken Rose Lomas
Wedding	5 th April - William Andrew Clark & Charlie Jessica Bowers
Funeral	26 th April - Brian Morris

Story behind the Hymn – 'Praise my Soul the King of Heaven'

We continue our occasional series looking at the stories BEHIND some of our favourite hymns. Here are just the two opening verses of this hymn...

Praise my soul the King of heaven, To His feet thy tribute bring; Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven, Evermore his praises sing. Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise the everlasting King.

Praise Him for His grace and favour To our fathers in distress; Praise Him, still the same as ever, Slow to chide and swift to bless. Alleluia! Alleluia! Glorious in His faithfulness.

Fatherlike, He tends and spares us; Well our feeble frame He knows; In His hands He gently bears us, Rescues us from all our foes. Alleluia! Alleluia! Widely yet His mercy flows.

Angels in the height, adore Him, Ye behold Him face to face; Sun and moon bow down before Him, Dwellers all in time and space; Praise Him! Praise him! Praise with us the God of grace! By Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1847)

This stately poetic paraphrase of Psalm 103 has been included in probably more solemn ceremonies than any other hymn in the English language. It was even chosen by Queen Elizabeth for her wedding to the Duke of Edinburgh in 1947.

Henry Lyte had been a brilliant theological student at university in Dublin, with a gift for versifying. After graduation he moved to a tiny and remote parish in County Wexford to serve his curacy. It was here, when he was about 25, that Henry had a religious experience which would transform his life.

A close friend of his, another clergyman, had fallen ill, and was clearly dying. Henry went to visit him. The friend was not as distressed as Henry had imagined he would be. Instead, the friend confessed that he had been rereading the New Testament, with an eye on eternity, and had made a great discovery. There was no need to rely on religious duties and formalities and good deeds to gain peace with God. Instead, we can trust completely in the mercy of Christ and His saving power.

Henry was sophisticated and had been very formal in his ministry. But this encounter with his friend's faith at death's very door, made him reconsider his faith. He wrote later that his dear friend 'who died happy in the thought that there was One who would atone for his delinquencies' made him 'study my Bible and preach in another manner than I had previously done'. And soon after this hymn appeared, in 1834.

Lyte rejoices in the majesty and wonder of the living God, who in turn loves us. He captures the measure of the Psalm in enduring lyrics, which combine time, eternity, God and man all swept up into one embrace. Its last verse summons all the created order to join in a great act of joyous praise – surely a preview of eternity!

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Quotes (With the coming General Election in mind...)

There are two sorts of problems in my life. The political ones are insoluble, and the economic ones are incomprehensible. - *Sir Alec Douglas-Home, former Prime Minister.*

As I interpret the President, we're now at the end of the beginning of the upturn of the downturn. - John F Kennedy when Senator

Politicians are not people who seek power in order to implement policies they think necessary. They are people who seek policies in order to attain power. - *Evelyn Waugh*

I claim not to have controlled events but confess plainly that events have controlled me. - Abraham Lincoln

The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing. - Anon

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Get the magazine: please ring Ann Stringer on 01625 574325. **Deadline:** Material for the July/August issue to reach Anne by 20th May.

Giving to St Oswald's:

Our bank account name is '**The Anglican Parish of Bollington PCC**'. Our account number is **39536416** and the sort code is **01-05-41**. Or talk to Richard Raymond, our treasurer, on 01625 612025.

Worship in May - all welcome!

- Sunday 5th 9.15am Holy Communion 10.30am All Age Worship
- Sunday 12th 10.30am Parish Communion
- Sunday 19th 10.30am Parish Communion
- Sunday 26th Please Note No Service at St Oswald's 9.00am Bollington Festival Service of Community Thanksgiving on the Recreation Ground

Regular midweek activities

Every Tuesday during term time, 9.30-11.00am, Little Owls. Every Thursday at 10.30am, Holy Communion.

Thursday 16th May Coffee Morning - proceeds to Christian Aid At 11.30am, after Communion service

This year, in place of our usual house-to-house collection, we have decided to hold a coffee morning to raise money for this worthwhile cause.

There will also be a Raffle and cake stall.

Come and join us!

