



St Mary's Church Wargrave

With Knowl Hill

Our vision is to be a church
at the heart of our community

Parish Magazine

April 2022



St Peter's Church Knowl Hill

With St Paul's Warren Row

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Who's Who: Parish Directory

Vicar	The Revd. John Cook	johnrmcook@btconnect.com	0118 940 2202
Associate Minister	The Revd. Steve Turville	Stephen.turville@ntlworld.com	0118 901 6720
Curate	The Revd. Richard Eves	Richard.m.s.eves@gmail.com	07746 383046
Lay Minister	Andy Ferguson	andyferguson1@btinternet.com	0118 940 2925
PCC Secretary	Sheila Williams	sheilamarywilliams1952@gmail.com	0118 940 3587
PCC Treasurer	Jane Wills	paulandjanewills@btinternet.com	0118 940 2030

Parish Office

Address	St. Mary's Church, Station Road, Wargrave, Berkshire, RG10 8EU		
	The Parish Office is open from 9.30am to 1.30pm on Tuesday & Wednesday and Thursday 2pm - 5pm		
Administration	Lucy Bowley	lucy@wargravechurch.org.uk	
	Katie Blades	katie@wargravechurch.org.uk	0118 940 2300
St Mary's Wargrave			
Churchwardens	Ian Matthews	matthic@talk21.com	0118 940 2049
	Mark Puddy	markpuddy@btinternet.com	
Director of Music	Peter Dart	peter@familydart.com	0118 940 1068
St Peter's Knowl Hill			
Churchwarden	Sandra Baker	sbakerdalc@hotmail.co.uk	01628 822402

Parish Registers: Weddings, Baptisms & Funerals

Funerals, Cremations and Ashes at St Mary's, Wargrave

21st February Iris Trepte, 95 years, Cremation at Easthampstead Park

Lord Remnant

We are very sad to report the passing of Lord Remnant on Friday 4th March. Our sincerest condolences go to Serena and all the family and may he rest in peace, safe in the arms of Jesus. A full tribute to Jimmy will appear in the May Parish Magazine.

Cover Photo

The cross is an enduring symbol of the miracle of Easter, in the life to come.

Copy Date for the May Magazine

Please submit contributions for the May Magazine by
Noon on Wednesday 20th April 2022

Articles of up to 400 words are most welcome for publication in this Magazine and should be sent to the Editor: bobausten@wargravechurch.org.uk

The decision to publish material is at the Editor's discretion. Views expressed in articles included in the Magazine are not necessarily shared by the Editor. The Parish Magazine cannot accept responsibility for any products or services advertised in this Magazine.

Sunday Services for April

This schedule for services is subject to change around Easter. Please check the calendar on the website for the most up to date information.

St Mary's Wargrave

All Sundays in April

8.00am Holy Communion: a said service in traditional language

3rd April 9.45am Family Service: a short all age worship

10th April 9.45am Holy Communion - Palm Sunday

17th April 9.45am Holy Communion - Easter Sunday

24th April 9.45am Short Parish Worship followed by APCM

Normal service pattern to resume for May

St Mary's Wargrave - Easter Special Services

Maundy Thursday 7.30pm Service in the Church Centre

Good Friday 10am Walk of Witness starting at Highfield Park

2pm An Hour at the Cross

Easter Sunday 5.30am Sunrise Service on Mill Green

St Peter's Knowl Hill

Sunday 3rd April 10.30am Holy Communion

Good Friday 10.30am An Hour at the Cross

Sunday 17th April 10.30am Easter Sunday Village Praise

St Paul's Warren Row

Sunday 10th April 9.15am Palm Sunday Holy Communion: traditional language

Butterflies

An update from Camilla Cook

Butterflies continue to meet on Wednesday mornings (1st & 3rd of the month in term times), enjoying a delicious breakfast, chat and parenting discussion time in the church centre. The helpers are looking forward to cooking a Tex-Mex banquet for mums on the 23rd March to celebrate Mother's Day.



Butterflies is held in the Church Centre, 9.30am - 11am.

**Summer Terms Dates : 30th March, 6th April, 4th & 18th May,
1st & 15th June, 6th & 20th July.**

If you are a parent of a baby or toddler, we'd love to meet you! Details can be found on our Facebook page @butterflieswargrave.

Ladies' Breakfast

The next Ladies' Breakfast will be on Saturday 2nd April at 9.30am in the Church Centre.

Open Church

St Mary's Church is open Monday to Saturday 9am to 5pm.

Welcome Café

The café will be open on Tuesdays from 2.30pm—4pm in the Hannen Room.

Ladies' Breakfast Question Time

Saturday 2nd April

We all know about Jonah and the Whale, but what about all the other questions?



Breakfast will be at 9am as usual. Covid regulations have changed but to keep ourselves and each other safe can I ask that you do a lateral flow test (if you can) before you attend. It is still out there!

We are looking forward to meeting you all again.

Please email lesley.turville@gmail.com to confirm attendance.

Supporting Karun School

Trichy, India

The Inner Wheel Club of Reading Maiden Erlegh are holding a Charity Brunch on Saturday 14th May at 10.15am, at Charvil Village Hall in aid of Karun School. The school is our International Charity until June 2022.



St. Andrew's Church has always been great supporters of Karun and we hope we can entice you to a traditional English breakfast cooked and served by our Inner Wheel ladies.

Whilst the school was closed due to Covid, staff and the local administrator have had an opportunity to take stock of what has been achieved and consider the future direction of Karun. All teachers continued to come to school daily. Children who come to Karun are from disadvantaged backgrounds and many do not have facilities to access any available online lessons. During the week teachers travelled to surrounding villages to visit children in their homes for, one to one coaching, on the core subjects. They provided textbooks so that children could continue their work. Thankfully the school has now reopened.

The Trustees continue to work closely with Karun to explore vocational skills programmes that can be taught on the site whilst also supporting individuals on courses. Karun's popular weekend provision of IT and sewing classes for the women in the local community has been well received. Staff have for some time been considering a programme of vocational sewing classes that lead to a recognised certificate for young people.

This would enable them not only to learn valuable skills but also help them to either enter employment or set up a business of their own in a rapidly growing economy. With donations of sewing machines Karun has been able to introduce a programme of 3 classes per week for twelve weeks and sixteen young women have enrolled.

A local bank has been approached to provide advice to the students on how to set up a small business and where to access funding.

Please help us to continue these opportunities
Tickets: £15.00. Please contact 0118 9342883

Concert for Ukraine

SUNDAY APRIL 10th
3.00 – 4.00 PM

St Mary's Church
WARGRAVE

FEATURING

LAURA ANSTEE

Acclaimed 'Cellist from Wargrave, playing in many London orchestras and also with Paul McCartney, Adele and Beyoncé

SALLY PRYCE

Acclaimed Harpist, playing with the BBC Symphony and Concert Orchestras and recently combining with Laura for this Concert

PLUS SONGS from *West Side Story* and *The Sound of Music* sung by Rosie and Katie Dart



TICKETS £10 (you will also be able to give more at the Concert)

Reserve at: tickets@pusuitnha.com

Or CASH ONLY from **H'ARTISAN COFFEE SHOP**

on Wargrave High Street

ALL PROCEEDS TO THE WARGRAVE UKRAINE DEC APPEAL

Young People on Sundays @ 9.45am

by Camilla Cook

We are very excited to be starting this new season of children's work at St Mary's and that many young people come to join us in this new adventure! Join us as we learn about Jesus in the Bible, have fun together and make new friends!

Following our all-age launch service on Mothering Sunday, 27th March, we will start our new pattern from the beginning of April.

There'll be a crèche for under 3s, Sunday Club for 3-11s and Pathfinders for 11-16s. On the 1st & 5th Sundays of the month we will gather for an all-age service with the whole church family.

Crèche (under 3s) & Sunday Club (3-11s): 2nd, 3rd & 4th Sundays.

Pathfinders (11-16s): 2nd & 4th Sundays.

Each group is run by volunteers who are DBS checked.

For details please contact:

Crèche	Camilla Cook	camillacook@btinternet.com
Sunday Club	Annie da Silva	hobden.da.silva@gmail.com
Pathfinders	Marc Uniacke	marcuniacke@gmail.com

Messiah at Royal Albert Hall

Good Friday 15th April

Peter Dart advises that due to insufficient demand there will not be an organised coach from Wargrave to this event. Instead, those that wish to attend this memorable concert should note that there is a very convenient train leaving Wargrave at 12.30pm, connecting at Twyford, and we can go as a group, sharing taxis, or underground, or if a nice day it is a 30-minute walk to Royal Albert Hall from Paddington. Alternatively, people can make their own way there and back. For instance, there is an earlier train from Wargrave at 12 noon. We can eat our sandwiches around noon or bring them on the train!

And some people may wish to stay on in London for a meal etc afterwards.

Don't forget to purchase your tickets from Royal Albert Hall in advance; it is always a very popular concert.

World Class Music in Wargrave

by Peter Dart, Director of Music at St Mary's

Many people will remember the Academy of St Martin in the Fields coming twice to the Wargrave Festival. Originally, I said it was a once-off 'never to be repeated' concert...but you all loved their music so much, here they are again! For the Summer of Love! They truly are world class. Tomo Keller is again their leader (playing The Lark Ascending) and Mark David will be playing Haydn's Trumpet Concerto.

Classical Concert

THE WORLD'S FINEST CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
ACADEMY OF ST MARTIN IN THE FIELDS
LEADER: TOMO KELLER

MONDAY 13 JUNE, 2022

ARRIVE 7:00PM FOR 7:30-10:30PM
ST MARY'S CHURCH, MILL GREEN
STATION ROAD, WARGRAVE, RG10 8EU

TICKETS £25 | £40
VIP TICKETS £100 (INC. DINNER AT THE BULL)
PLUS BEST SEATS

"Music making
of the
highest order"
The Guardian

MUSIC INCLUDES MENDELSSOHN - HEBRIDES OVERTURE,
ELGAR - SERENADE FOR STRINGS, HAYDN - TRUMPET
CONCERTO (SOLOIST MARK DAVID) VAUGHAN WILLIAMS -
THE LARK ASCENDING (SOLOIST TOMO KELLER) AND
MOZART - SYMPHONY NO 40

CONTACT [PETER@FAMILYDART.COM](mailto:peter@familydart.com)

Please come early, from 7pm, to enjoy a drink before the concert, which begins at 7.30pm. There will also be an interval for refreshments, and an expected 10pm finish.

Tickets at £40 & £25 will go on sale on **Festival Ticket Day on Saturday 2nd April**. There are a few £100 sponsorship tickets which include dinner at The Bull and free drinks at the concert. With the considerable cost of bringing around 35 musicians of this calibre to Wargrave, I am also looking for someone to sponsor the Leader, the Solo trumpet, and the individual items in the programme - please contact me if you can help (peter@familydart.com); I would be most grateful.

BUYING TICKETS AFTER TICKET DAY (If they are not already sold out)

Please indicate how many tickets you would like at £25 & £40, and ensure we have your email and mobile contact details. Here's the email address you need: festivalconcert@pursuitnha.com

Annual Parish Church Meeting

Sunday 24th April

by Mark Puddy

After the hiatus of Covid, we held a delayed Annual Parish Church Meeting (APCM) last year. We are going to be having the APCM, at the normal time of year this year, on Sunday 24th April 2022, following a short service at 9.45am in St Mary's Church. We will review the work of the Church in 2021.

This is a good opportunity to find out what we have been able to achieve this year, despite the limitations of Covid, and to hear what the priorities are for the Church moving forwards.

While attending this meeting might not appear to be offering us the same spiritually uplifting celebration as we get each Sunday in Church, it is by getting involved in Church activities, that we can ripen the fruits of the Spirit in each of us.

Do please come along and find out what is going on and may the Holy Spirit guide you as to how you can get involved.



Ramblin' with Bob

Sunday 24th April

by Bob Austen

For our April ramble on Sunday 24th April we shall return to the delightful old village of Holyport for an easy walk through tranquil countryside, ranging from lush meadows to trim polo grounds. It can be muddy after wet weather so do come suitably shod!

We shall meet at 12.30pm at the War Memorial on Holyport Green and return for lunch at The George at 3pm.

If you would like to join us on this walk, please contact Bob Austen by Friday 15th April latest to book your place and advise whether you wish to stay for lunch.

Email: austenrobert@hotmail.com

Phone: 0118 940 3038 or Mobile: 07970 611013



Family Group Social Night: Quiz Night

Saturday 30th April

Why not join us for our amazing 'Alternative Quiz' Night?



An 'Alternative Quiz' Night? What's that, you may ask?

Well, gone are the specialist rounds. If you're hoping for geography questions, sorry! If you're a whizz at history questions, no luck there either! If your knowledge of sport is second to none, that won't be needed!

Our 'Alternative Quiz' aims to examine the knowledge that you have gained from your experience of the world we live in.

If you want to be part of our amazing 'Alternative Quiz', which takes place on Saturday 30th April at 7.15pm (for a 7.30pm start) in St Mary's Church Centre, please email Barbara on bratings44@gmail.com. Numbers are limited, so don't delay, enrol for the 'Alternative Quiz' today!!

School Governors

Could you help to complete the team?

Have you the skills, experience, or enthusiasm to bring to governorship?

Crazies Hill Church of England Primary School is seeking members of the community to become governors. Being a school governor gives you the opportunity to work with the dedicated staff in our school; helping to improve standards and maintain the important link between the school and the community it serves.

The role involves attending termly meetings of the full governing body and smaller committee meetings. You will also visit the school to provide support and challenge in each area. Training and support will be available from the school, our academy trust (The Keys Academy trust) and diocese.

We would love to welcome you to our school. If you would like to know more about this rewarding role, please contact our Chair of governors: Lesley Turville: LTurville@crazieshill.wokingham.sch.uk

Website: www.crazieshill.co.uk/wokingham/primary/crazieshill



We are an equal opportunities employer.

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Any offer of employment voluntary or paid is subject to satisfactory references and an enhanced DBS check.

Living in Love & Faith

by Jane Austen

A fascinating morning was had in the Church Centre on 19 February when Rev Dr Andrew Goddard came along to give a presentation about the Church's project of Living in Love & Faith.

There were about 30 folks in attendance listening to the very comprehensive explanation of the background for this project – 'how do you think the Church of England should stand on the truth of God's word in a rapidly changing society?' – asking us all to think how we can engage and offer the good news of Jesus and respond with Christian love to all the challenges we face as individuals and as a Church.



We watched some powerful videos of individual people sharing their identity, sexuality, relationships and testimonies of life within the Church and the message that God accepts us as who we are.

We were encouraged as individuals and as a Church to listen, learn and give feedback on this very important project so that we can give a sense of direction towards the proposals and decisions to be taken by the General Synod in 2023.

Leading up to this there is a period of Learning & Listening (April – Sept 2022) – Discerning & Deciding (Dec 22 – Feb 23) all leading to decisions later in the year. There are plenty of resources so you can get involved and are encouraged to do so.

Knowl Hill News

Challenges for us all not least to hear what God is saying to the Church today and how He is shaping us.

Well, what to say in these troubled times. Unfortunately, we don't have much encouraging news yet re our St. Peter's project (hopefully to come) and we are all suffering to a greater or lesser extent from rising prices for petrol and household expenses but to quote (can't remember where it comes from) "this doesn't amount to a hill of beans" in the light of the sufferings of the Ukrainian people. I have just been looking at a collection of pictures of Ukrainian cities and countryside and how stunningly beautiful they are/were.

These could be rebuilt unlike the shattered lives of so many. We can only pray for the Ukrainian people and their continuing strength and resolve to fight for their country and that President Putin will call a halt to his murderous campaign in the very near future. I'm sure that the generous people of Knowl Hill will do what they can to help refugees.



The last article I penned for this magazine was in September 2020 when Mandy and I were about to leave Wargrave for a new life in Newport, South Wales. We recognised that we were needed there by her family and had already identified a church we were likely to join, Faith Church in Rogerstone just outside Newport.

I had retired from a banking career 18 months' earlier and no longer needed to be in Station Road for the commute and both of us had concluded that it was the right time to make this move now that I was no longer commuting into London. This was the start of a journey which has changed my life.

Through the summer of 2020 Mandy and I were busy organising the sale of our home in Station Road, which we had lived in for 28 years, and the purchase of a new one in Newport.

Time to move on and start the next chapter. Busy, busy and then the reality, for me, of feeling trapped in a place I didn't want to be. Mandy very happy in a familiar environment, I was spiralling downwards. As my mental health collapsed my physical health also disintegrated. Weight down from almost 13 stone to just over 10. Constipation without pain. I was burning up everything. Couldn't engage with anyone or anything. No escape. Tried medication in January 2021 but not for long. Wasn't well enough to make good decisions.

Mandy, our family and friends, desperate to find a way to help me but how? I was in turmoil and the trauma of these winter months took their toll on both of us. In early March Mandy has severe chest pain and is hospitalised twice. Tragically she then dies in her sleep having been released from hospital only a few hours earlier. It transpires that she had significant plaque in a section of her heart, but I find it very difficult not to link the trauma of those final months with her death.

Already depressed I now have the grief associated with Mandy's death. With a huge amount of help from my sister Mary, the three children and Mandy's family, a wonderful thanksgiving service is conducted at Faith Church. Then busy, busy

dealing with her estate, the sale of the Newport house and the purchase of a new one in Purfield Drive, back in Wargrave... and all of this during the ever-changing Covid lockdowns and restrictions.

Somehow, I find a way to get all this done and am now back in Wargrave. No longer busy I spiral downwards again and despite being in a place where I know a lot of people I'm really struggling. Don't want to engage with anyone or anything. Christmas passes, the winter months again take their toll.

How do I escape from this seemingly permanent dense fog in my mind? Feel useless and hopeless. Lost my wife, my family home, and my career. How do I find a way out of survival mode and start living again? Realise that I don't love myself, that I'm both angry and frustrated with myself. Blame myself for everything which has gone wrong.

My mind is destroying me, the blockage in there has to be removed. Was it a demon I needed to exorcise or just stuff that had accumulated in my mind? In late February I realise that not loving myself was really the problem. Screaming in the car and demanding that, in the name of Jesus, the blockage be cleared. Suddenly the fog has disappeared. I feel alive again.

This 18-month period has been horrendous in so many different ways.

The COVID pandemic has wreaked havoc in so many lives around the world and I think many of us are only now emerging from the wreckage it has left behind. This is at a time when the Ukraine crisis is reminding us how fortunate we have been in this country over the last, almost, 80 years during which peace has reigned.

We take so much for granted in the western world. One of my elderly Jewish clients always used to say to me that real poverty is when you have no food on the table for your family. This view has influenced my approach to life.

My personal wreckage is not unique, and I am definitely now emerging from it and can identify with the wonderful words in Romans 5: 3-4 about perseverance, character and hope.

There were times when I had to dig very deep to find the resilience and determination to keep going and I knew the Lord was supporting me throughout. His timing is a mystery to us all, but He delivered. I have become a much more rounded, open and empathetic person and am definitely the richer for what I have been through. I can now look forward not back, be proactive rather than reactive, and enjoy life again. I now have hope.

I am convinced that Mandy is now where she always wanted to be, albeit rather earlier than she had planned. The final sentence of her book, “Safe Haven”, published in 2018 captures this beautifully:

“When we enter into
eternity with Him may we
be honoured
as His precious bride and
take our place by His side”.



In fact, Mandy was always adamant that she would be on His knee. Who am I to suggest otherwise?!

I now have a considerably better understanding of the mental health issues which can confront us in our lives. Before this journey I have been on, I would always have listened to anyone suffering from a mental health issue but wouldn't have known what to do or say because I couldn't empathise with it.

Now I'd like to reach out and help others where I can. If anyone reading this article would like a confidential chat with me, I'd love to hear from you.



Andrew Imlay

Email: adi_lawnswood@hotmail.com

Mobile: 07788 290800

The War in Ukraine: our response to cries for help

by Mike Buckland

In the first week of March, St Mary's Wargrave joined with others in the community by organising a collection of emergency items for Ukrainians fleeing the war with Russia, or still in Ukraine.



Angie, my wife, took backpacks, sleeping bags, camping mats and duvets donated by church members and their neighbours to the Crazies Hill Ukraine Aid Van on 4th March (see Beccy Robinson's post on Wargrave Community Matters for details).

I took toiletries, first aid kits, wound dressings, men's socks, energy bars, blankets, nappies and baby food to the Reading Ukrainian Community Centre, on 5th March. Both have contacts on the ground (Beccy's partner Mark

has employees in Kiev and Lviv), so we can be sure that the items will reach people who need them.

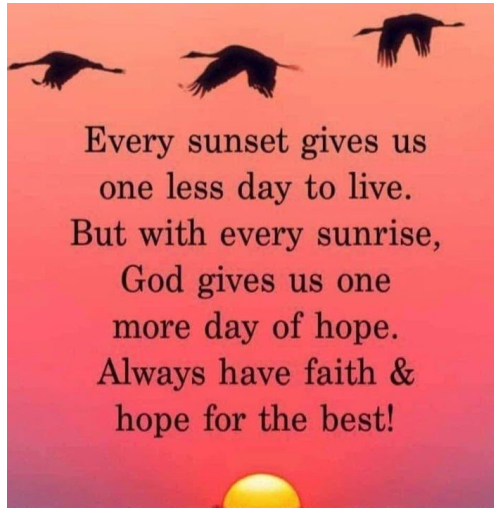
With depots full within just a few days, the call was then for cash donations. The RUCC recommends to hold jumble sales for any items that people still wish to donate, then send the proceeds to a DEC member that has staff on the ground, such as the British Red Cross, who have negotiated discounts with manufacturers that get far more items to those who need them than we could obtain at the same price; www.rucc.uk has further advice.



The Missions committee of the Parish of Wargrave with Knowl Hill is sending cash to USPG (the Archbishop of Canterbury's recommendation) and to DEC via Tearfund.

Women's World Day of Prayer Devotional

A follow up
by Christine Walker



The theme of the day of prayer was based on this bible text:

***For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD,
plans to prosper you and not to harm you, to give you a future and a hope.***

Jeremiah 29:11

Life is like a journey and has its times of progress and times of delay – but gradually we journey on, and eventually get there. We make plans, but sometimes they do not work out. Those of us of Christian faith, pray that God will bless our plans, and make them all come to fruition, and mostly they do – but not always in the way we hoped or intended, or in the timescale that we envisaged. We keep turning to God, but do you find yourself telling God how and when you want things to work out?

Perhaps we need to be reminded that God is not just there as someone to sort out all our wishes, and if he doesn't do what we want, then we won't believe in him. He is the eternal being who created this amazing universe, of which we are just a very, very small part. And yet, He does still care about us, and that's just amazing.

We must live with hope in our heads and our hearts and learn to put our trust in Him, believe that he has plans to prosper us, knows what is best for us and not to rely too much on what we want and when we want it.

We made it! St Mary's Church Weekend Away

by Camilla Cook

Five years on from the last, and three years since the start of planning (thanks to our curate at the time, Hugh Barne), the much-anticipated church weekend away went ahead!

And it didn't disappoint. For many, the past two years have been challenging, especially spiritually. Zoom services, socially distanced services, masks in church and separated congregations have left many feeling dry and weary. So, to be able to gather for a whole weekend, to enjoy fellowship, food, refreshment and teaching, was a joy.

We returned to the venue of five years ago, Denham Grove, which is conveniently only 40 minutes up the road. A St Mary's team was there to welcome and show guests to their rooms.

Over the 3 days John and Richard gave us four talks from Romans 8. Their relaxed, interactive style was appreciated by us all and we were hugely encouraged by the reminder that there is 'no condemnation in Christ Jesus' and that through Christ we can be free from fear, enjoy intimacy with God and have an inheritance ahead. Lis Hobden generously drove over for each session to play the keyboard so that we could sing at each of our meetings.

Ruth Howse had sussed out walks of varying lengths for us to enjoy on the Saturday afternoon, taking in the delights of a local aerodrome. Thanks so much, Ruth. Some of us enjoyed a board game (or two) and discovered the competitive nature of one or two of our church family... no names to disclose here! And Sheila and David Williams put together a highly entertaining quiz for the Saturday evening.

Time before and during mealtimes provided a wonderful opportunity to chat with old friends and to make new friends. Sometimes we can see each other week by week in church but never talk properly so this was a good time to change that.

Many thanks to Jane Austen and Linda Caradine for all their hard work in organising the weekend away. We couldn't have done it without you!



Sunday Afternoons with Ramblin' Bob

by Jane Austen

A lovely Spring Day with the sun shining, what better way to spend a Sunday afternoon than a Ramble with Bob!

This ramble took place on Sunday 27th February and like the old advert, the weather was crisp and dry as we started our walk from the Holyport Green. We passed the Belgian Arms, so named after the Belgian refugees that were given sanctuary in the village during WW1. The walk took us across open fields that were once gravel pits that were filled in and provided wide, open views from the higher ground.



We walked through Fifield, passing the site of a pub called the Hare and Hounds, another casualty of these changed times. It is now some very nice houses. The next interesting place was the house called Deep Meadows which was once the home of the famous hairdresser Mr Peter 'Teasy Weasy' Raymond. The owners now have incorporated a railway track in the garden, and we were amazed to see a steam engine sitting on one of the tracks, albeit in a pretty poor state.

The walk continued across fields and stiles and back to Holyport where we enjoyed a Sunday roast at The George. Another super Ramble with Bob!

Ladies' Breakfast: Saturday 12th March

by Linda Caradine

We gathered as women of God in the church centre. (A week later than our usual first Saturday of the month, due to the fact that several of us were on the church weekend away – but that's another story! Our theme this month was Praising God, inspired by UCB booklets (United Christian Broadcasters).

'Use Your Password'. To enjoy the benefits of a computer, we must have a password. That's what enables us to log on, participate, download, and get the information we need. In a similar vein, The Message paraphrases the psalmist's words, "Blessed are the people who know the passwords of praise". Praise isn't simply a reaction to coming into God's presence; it does much more. It *opens* the door through which God enters our lives and goes to work on our behalf. In other words, praise brings God's presence along with His direct intervention. (2 Chronicles 20: 22-23).

We dedicated our praise that morning to the Ukraine...

Judah's enemies arrayed against them, Jehoshaphat, their king, sent a choir to the front line ahead of the army to sing the praises of God. The bible says, 'as soon as they began singing, the Lord confused the enemy camp...then they turned against each other'. This was our prayer for the Ukraine.

We had been asked to 'bring along' a song that had meaning to us. We sang a great range. Some dating back to school days. There was a variety of reasons of choice. Old and new. We shared our happy/difficult memories for each song.

We said our goodbyes to Nicky Turville, who has been a great part of our group. 17

Skeletons in the Churchyard

by Christine Walker

We tell the children that there are no ghosts in our churchyard but deep down they might feel a bit scared. Could this be because here are links to the past and a reminder of past lives? There are many stories to be told about some of approximately 17,000 skeletons in the churchyard.



We start with Wargrave's greatest benefactor, **Mrs. Harriette Cooke Smith**. She and her husband William are buried almost opposite the south door, about a dozen paces towards the bench alongside the far wall. Harriette was born in 1824, the daughter of the Reverend James Hitchings who was the vicar of Wargrave from 1826-1850. She married a prosperous businessman, William Smith, in her mid-thirties and they remained childless.

After a spell in London, they returned to Wargrave and made their home at Woodclyffe that is on the right hand side of the road towards Henley, just beyond the Willow Lane turning. Her generous bequests all carry that name — the Village Hall, the Hostel now housing the Library, the Almshouses and even the Allotments.

A chapter in the Book of Wargrave (published in 1986 by the Local History Society) tells the full story of her munificence.

Many people know Madame Tussauds as a Waxwork Museum in London, a major tourist attraction displaying the waxworks of famous and historical figures, as well as popular film and television characters. Occasionally we get asked 'Where is **Madame Tussaud's** grave?'. The grave in question can be found close to the south door of the church and beside the weeping cherry tree. Here there is a gravestone with iron supports describing a certain **Elizabeth Tussaud**. Some books say that she is the Madame Tussaud who owned the famous waxworks in London – but that is not true. She was born as Elizabeth Elliott and had married Victor Tussaud, Madame Tussaud's grandson. So, she was the grand-daughter-in-law to the lady of waxworks fame.



Elizabeth's parents William and Amelia Elliott had lived in the village and are buried in the churchyard so when Elizabeth died, she was buried here. Elizabeth Tussaud's name is on the other side of the tombstone for her mother, and her father's is alongside.

A question of Faith

by Christine Walker

Faith is to believe what we do not see

After Jesus' death and burial, he made several resurrection appearances. First, he appeared to the women in the garden outside the tomb in which his body had been placed. They rushed to tell the disciples who believed it was nonsense. Later, Jesus appeared among them and invited them to touch him, to dispel any doubts they may have had. This, his second appearance resonates with our situation today. The disciples were 'locked down', in fear for their lives. Their master had died. Jesus appeared from nowhere, in this locked room, suddenly and unexpected. Is there a message here for us? Christ can enter anywhere – in our homes, in our hearts, even now during our isolation and anxiety. Can we believe in the resurrection without seeing him? Thomas couldn't.

Thomas, one of the twelve disciples, was not with the others when Jesus came and refused to believe in the resurrection until he had proof – hence the expression 'Doubting Thomas'. He wanted to see for himself Jesus' hands with the imprints of the nails, touch them and also put his hands into his side, needing that direct personal experience. It's OK to doubt, to have difficulty in believing all of God's promises when we see the difficulties, tragedies and disappointments that colour our lives.

Doubt is something to struggle with to reach certainty because we cannot just adopt someone else's belief however well respected and authoritative they may be. We need to ask questions, a vital part of learning. We need proof, evidence, not fake news. Our journey of faith is affected by all we see, hear, and read; by the culture we are brought up in; by family, friends, colleagues and even strangers.



It can be exciting to follow the path with its twists in our faith journey, but it can also be challenging. Faith is about hope that nothing can separate us from God's love, that he will reach out to us in grace, mercy and forgiveness.

So, what does convince us? Is it an event? Is it some influence? And has belief changed the way we live our lives? Are we living signs of our faith in our relationships and all that we do? Too many questions but no-one can convince another person that there is a God. You can state the facts and point them to God, but convincing is done by God himself.

Covid & Easter

by Mark Puddy



Two years ago, we were prisoners in our own homes, only able to get out to exercise for an hour a day, and it took that long to reach the front of the queue at Waitrose for socially distanced shopping. And there was rationing of flour and loo rolls.

One year ago, I was enjoying a month off work, having retired as a partner at the surgery. Our plan for a big trip to South Africa went out of the window. Instead, each day over the Easter Weekend, we had progressive visits from members of the family, bubble by bubble, for a chilly lunch outside. Later in the month we set off, listening on the radio to Prince Phillip's funeral, for a self-catering week in Devon, with the feeling that, after another long winter, it was wonderful to have a holiday.

Today, we now look forward to Easter 2022, with a full range of services planned in Church, and, if we are not actually laid low with Covid, we can meet with friends to eat and drink, travel in the UK and abroad, and go all we want to the theatre and football matches.

Even if we are infected with Covid (as I am when writing this) it is a minor cough and inconvenience, rather than a threat to life, if we have been appropriately vaccinated and are fortunate enough to have an immune system which works normally.

We cannot say that another, more serious variant of Covid, with more resistance to vaccination and existing immunity, will not develop. However, with 77% of the UK population fully vaccinated at the time of writing, the Government policy is that we are going to have to live with Covid, rather than lock down society yet again. This seems sensible, as the impact of potentially increased rates of infection will not result in as much harm to the whole population as the effects of a lockdown.

How does this fit with our Christian experience at Eastertime?

At Easter, we remember that Jesus, who took all our sins, was crucified, and then we celebrate his resurrection from the dead. Through this, we can move from the suspended death sentence hanging over all of us sinners, to a new life, a life guided by the Holy Spirit, and, in the future, with God in Heaven. We can have life and have it in abundance.

We have moved from suspended animation two years ago at the height of Covid, to the positivity of the current resumption of full life. While the transformation at Easter, from condemned sinners to everlasting life, is so much greater, we can still feel the joy of liberation from the oppression we have suffered under Covid during these past two years. We pray for those who have been scarred by Covid, that they will be healed and know the fullness of life, both in this world, and, through the miracle of Easter, in the life to come.

One a penny...two a penny... Hot Cross Buns!

Traditionally eaten on Good Friday to mark the end of Lent, a staple at Eastertime.

The Cross was to remind us that Jesus died on a cross for us, so that we will go to heaven at the end of our lives.

The round shape reminds us of the huge stone that was rolled away from the tomb on Easter morning.

The Spices remind us of the spices used to embalm Jesus' body before he was laid in the tomb.

The Yeast used to make the bun mixture rise reminds us that Jesus is risen.

The Currants symbolise the many people who saw Jesus after he had risen.





Eco Church: Remembering Jimmy

by Mike Buckland



It is with sadness that we learned at the weekend of the death of Lord James Remnant, former Patron of St Mary's Wargrave. There will no doubt be many tributes. His impact on aspects of what we now call Eco Church was significant. It is a legacy from which we all in Wargrave benefit but may not all be aware of.

"Jimmy", as those who knew him called him, supported initiatives which encouraged our interaction with nature at the heart of our community. In 2010 and 2011, a series of events coincided which were I believe led by God. This piece will mention just a few of them. The part he played was significant.

In June 2010, a packed St Mary's Wargrave hosted its first ever multi-media presentation. The late Sir John Houghton, a Christian, atmospheric physicist and Chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, spoke on climate change, global warming and biodiversity loss. The evening attracted people from the village and beyond and proved to be the catalyst for the Wargrave Transition Group, a steering group for several volunteer-led projects. Sir John was a key figure in the Transition movement, which encourages local, sustainable projects in communities around the world.

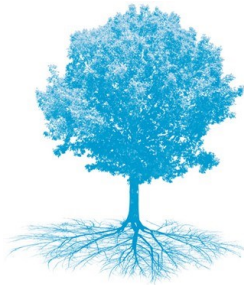
Two of the projects were the communal orchard north of the Recreation Ground, and the Mumbery Hill Nature Reserve in 2011. Lord Remnant sold the land on the understanding that new homes in King's Acre and Harvest Place would be accompanied by natural spaces. The orchard was planted alongside the former, and a nature reserve was established adjacent to the latter. Lord Remnant wanted the Junior and Infants Schools to benefit, so the reserve has an outdoor classroom, and a football pitch which you see on the way in.

Do visit the reserve if you haven't already. It is a real gem, home to a wide variety of species, including several uncommon plants, trees and insects. Volunteers are welcome. Contact me or Helen Perry if you are interested. We meet there once a month on Saturday mornings.

Without Jimmy Remnant's initiatives, we would have neither of these amenities in our village. They are an important part of his legacy. As we pay tribute, let us be thankful.



Penny Miller, who founded the Wargrave Transition Group, is sadly no longer with us either. Her own project was the Chalk Pit nature reserve next to Wargrave Cemetery. Created in her memory in the place she fought for, this too is a jewel of nature. Do visit it and, if you would like to help tend it, I or Tessa Baird can put you in touch with Phil, Penny's husband, or you can of course contact him directly. All of these projects are run by volunteers.



WHY JAPAN?



Why Japan?

by Nicky Turville

Around 20 people braved the rainy weather on February 20th to share our heart for the nation of Japan and to talk a bit about the work we will be a part of there with Youth with a Mission.

For both of us Japan has been a place that had interested us from an early age - Len's mother worked there when he was a child and so he heard a lot through her and for me I took an interest in some social issues that I learnt about in geography at school - but neither of us envisioned at the time that we would be moving there many years later.

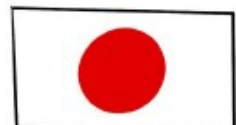
It wasn't until we met and married and began to discuss our future that our shared intrigue came up again and it was in 2016 that we led a team with YWAM to Tokyo and Osaka for the first time. On this trip it became clear that this was more than just a passing fascination and we began to pray about whether God was calling us to Japan longer term. In 2018 after a YWAM leadership conference in Cambodia we took 3 days away to seek God and to pray for our next steps and specifically to ask him about our long-term calling.

It was during this time of prayer that we asked God "are we meant to serve in Japan?" And we both heard a resounding "YES" in response. Since then, we have continued to seek God for more details as to when, where and how as well as finishing out our commitment to our base in Australia and undertaking some study to prepare for Japan. We also expanded our family and welcomed our first child, Jedidiah in November 2020.

Finally, together with God we have come to a point where our vision of moving to Japan is tangibly close! We hope to fly out on April 10th and are VERY excited! We will be joining a small team of staff at YWAM Takatsuki in Osaka to work alongside them in existing ministries as well as plan together to pioneer more works in the community and neighbouring cities.

We are so grateful to all who took the time to come and listen to us speak and to everyone else who has had us for lunch or tea, said hello, asked questions, prayed for us, and generously donated during our time here in England. We truly feel so loved by our church family here in Wargrave and always feel so at home whenever we can visit.

You are all so welcome to visit us in Japan!





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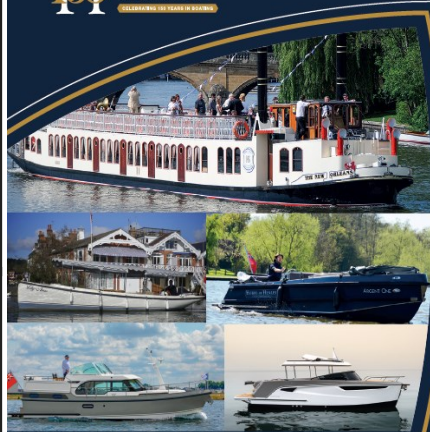
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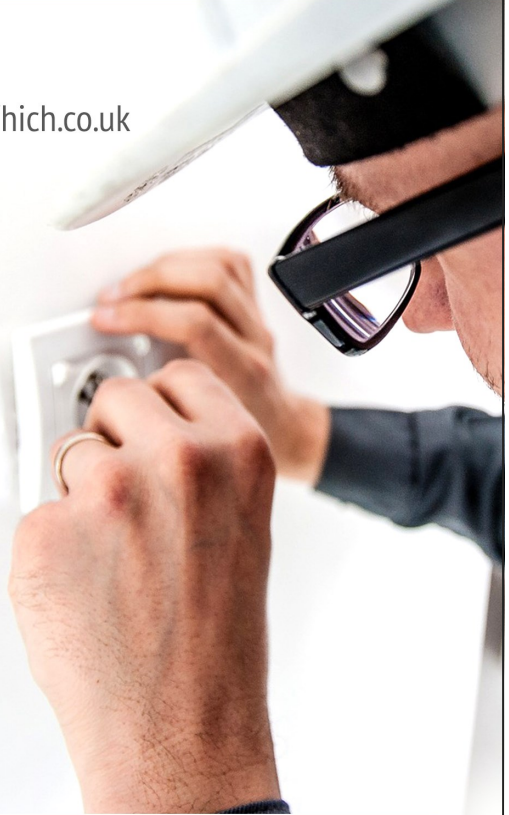
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