



St Mary's Church Wargrave
With Knowl Hill



St Peter's Church Knowl Hill
With St Paul's Warren Row

OUR VISION IS TO BE A CHURCH AT THE HEART OF OUR COMMUNITY

PARISH

MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 2022 / JANUARY 2023



A PARISH CHRISTMAS

Discover what is happening
over December in the Parish

THE BIG SWITCH ON

Wargrave's Christmas Tree

OUR SCHOOLS

Just what have our schools
been doing and how will
they celebrate Christmas?

In other news:
COP27
A Service to Remember
Christingle Making

From the Editor

Welcome to the combined December/January magazine which is packed full of lots of news about Christmas and what we can look forward to!

Of course, it is important that we think about those less fortunate at this time of the year. We should be thinking especially about the poor, the destitute and the lonely; when Charles Dickens wrote 'A Christmas Carol' in 1843 I would doubt he would have imagined that all these scourges would still be haunting us 180 years on. So much for progress.



We also have welcomed a new member to the church family. Sophie Hannah Eves was born on Wednesday 26th October. Congratulations to Richard, Mel and big sister Alice.

On behalf of everyone associated with the Parish Magazine, may I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a healthy 2023!

Bob

BOB AUSTEN | PARISH MAGAZINE EDITOR



WELCOME

The copy date for submissions for the February Magazine is noon on Wednesday 18th January 2023.

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 edit and 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 publication.

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Baptisms at St Mary's, Wargrave

2nd October Joshua Charles Tucker

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

22nd October Rhona Margaret Parsons, 92, Interment of Ashes, St Mary's Churchyard

28th October Christopher Walter Kaye, 93, Burial The New Cemetery

If you are interested in holding your wedding, baptising your child or getting baptised yourself, or need to discuss funeral arrangements, please contact Lucy in the Parish Office or alternatively contact our Vicar, John Cook (see page 2 for details).

SUNDAY SERVICES

December & January



St Mary's Church, Wargrave

8am Holy Communion: a said service in traditional language

9.45am Service reflective below

1st Sunday of the month: **4th December & 1st January**

9.45am All Age Family Worship followed by Brunch (4th Dec - Christingle & Baptism)

2nd Sunday of the month: **11th December & 8th January**

9.45am Holy Communion

3rd Sunday of the month: **18th December & 15th January**

9.45am Morning Worship in modern language with music

4th Sunday of the month: **25th December & 22nd January**

9.45am Holy Communion (25th Dec - All Age Christmas Morning Communion)

5th Sunday of the month: **29th January**

9.45am All Age Holy Communion

SPECIAL SERVICES

Please see page 6 for all of our Christmas Services & Events, including Carol Services, Nativity, Midnight Communion etc...

St Peter's Church, Knowl Hill

1st Sunday of the month 10.30am Holy Communion

3rd Sunday of the month 10.30am Village Praise

Special Service 9.15am 25th Dec - Christmas Morning Holy Communion

St Paul's Church, Warren Row

2nd Sunday of the month 9.15am Holy Communion

Please note, the service on Sunday 11th December will be at the later time of 10.30am which will be a Carol Service.

Our Groups

WELCOME CAFÉ

The Café is open on Tuesdays from 2.30pm - 4pm in the Hannen Room

Next Sessions:
6th & 13th December
10th, 17th, 24th, 31st January

BUTTERFLIES

Babies abounding at Butterflies! We have been thrilled to welcome so many new babies to Butterflies over the past few weeks. As our new members arrive to the Church Centre, there's an elbowing rush from the helpers, arms outstretched, to welcome and cuddle the little ones!

Our last meeting of the term will be on 7th December. Dust off those Christmas jumpers and join us for a Christmas end of term get together.

Details can be found on our Facebook page @[butterflieswargrave](#)

Next Sessions:
7th December, 4th & 18th January



OPEN CHURCH

St Mary's Church is open Monday to Saturday 9am to 4pm.



LADIES' BREAKFAST

Come and join us in the Church Centre at 9am on **Saturday 3rd December** for an extra special seasonal and delicious breakfast.



Mary, did you know? Your baby boy would one day walk on water?

This month, we will be singing God's praises as we lead up to Christmas.

Contact Lesley or Linda for more information.

lesley.turville@gmail.com
lindacaradine9@gmail.com

December Events

Thursday 1st December

Advent Windows Start (St Mary's: 24th December)

Saturday 3rd December

9am - Annual Leaf Clearing on Mill Green

9am - Ladies' Breakfast

2.30pm - St Peter's Church Raffle & Children's Party

4pm - Christmas Decorating & Christingle Making

Sunday 4th December

9.45am - St Mary's Christingle Service followed by Brunch

Saturday 10th December

5pm - Wargrave Christmas Tree Lights Switch On

Sunday 11th December

10.30am - St Paul's Carol Service

3pm - Sing-a-long Carols for under 5's & carers

Thursday 15th December

12 noon - CAMEO Christmas Lunch

More Details

wargravechurch.org.uk/christmas2022

EVENTS CALENDAR

CHRISTMAS SERVICES IN THE PARISH

Friday 16th December 2.30pm Senior Carols followed by Christmas Tea (CC)

Sunday 18th December 3pm Carols by Candlelight at St Peter's
6pm Carol Service at St Mary's

Saturday 24th December 3pm Nativity Service on Mill Green
6pm Family Carols at St Mary's
11.15pm Midnight Communion at St Mary's

Sunday 25th December 8am Holy Communion at St Mary's
9.15am Holy Communion at St Peter's
9.45am All Age Christmas Morning Communion at St Mary's

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WHAT'S ON

To discover all that is taking place in the Parish over December, visit

wargravechurch.org.uk/christmas2022

WARGRAVE GETS ITS CHRISTMAS TREE

This year, for the first time, the Wargrave Christmas tree will be located on Mill Green close to the church.

We all missed a village tree in 2021 so it's great news that this year Wargrave can once more sparkle and shine.

An event to switch on the lights will be held on Saturday 10th December at 5pm on Mill Green. Everyone in the village, young and old, are invited to come along to mark the occasion.

There will be **carol singing around the tree** and Christmas music to get everyone feeling really Christmassy! **Mulled wine with mince pies and soft drinks will be available, for a small donation and hot chocolate will be available** thanks to Daisy Love in the village.

Let's really help Wargrave get into the spirit of Christmas this year by supporting this event.

The tree has been kindly sponsored by local businessman Graham Trolley from ITM Audio Visual.





**CHRISTMAS
FOR
CHILDREN**

CHRISTINGLE



4TH DECEMBER

11TH DECEMBER

**CHILDREN'S
SING-A-LONG
CAROLS**



25TH DECEMBER

**CHRISTMAS
MORNING**



NATIVITY



24TH DECEMBER

WE HOPE TO
CELEBRATE WITH
YOU SOON

CHRISTINGLE

Sunday 4th December

What a delight to have Christingle back in the Church Calendar after a number of years! Christingle is that time of year when we decorate oranges with a ribbon, sticks and sweets, all to celebrate the coming of our Lord. There is that amazing moment when the lights go out in Church, and we try to recreate that occasion, 108 years ago, when the Suffragettes managed to burn down the church. Despite years of practice, this bit of the service has never worked as well as the original, much to the relief of our H&S lead, Nicola. Other parts of the service include trying to drip wax down the collar of the chap in the pew in front, without him noticing, and the first and last prize for the under 5's - that child who can eat all the sweets off his or her Christingle first, even before we have been told what they all mean, and the perfect child who follows the instruction to leave the sweets until after the service (this second prize has never been awarded). To then follow this with a bacon butty in the Church Centre; what better way to round off the morning.

UNDER 5s CAROL SING-A-LONG

Sunday 11th December

Never too Young to Start Carol Singing!

This is a great event for anyone with young children to entertain on 11th December at 3pm. We gather for baby sensory inspired carol singing (all the good old carols you know from your childhood but with bubbles, lights, flags etc... added to keep the children entertained). The carol singing happens in two halves with craft in-between. It all takes place in the church centre so babies and toddlers can make as much noise and mess as they please.

Email Annie (hobden.da.silva@gmail.com) with any questions or song requests.

CHRISTMAS 2022

CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS & CHRISTINGLES



For all ages, we'd love you to join

Saturday 3rd December

4pm

St Mary's Church Centre
(tea & cake on offer too!)

RSVP

camillacook@btconnect.com

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ANNUAL LEAF COLLECTION ON MILL GREEN

Saturday 3rd December

A reminder that everyone is invited to join in our annual leaf collection morning on Saturday 3rd December starting at 9am. Please bring a leaf rake and wear good footwear. Coffee and bacon butties will be served during the morning.

ST MARY'S CAROL SERVICE

Sunday 18th December

Be sure to arrive early to get a good seat for the Annual Carol Service! We can promise a 40 strong choir with organ and Paul Speed on the trumpet. Choir items include O Holy Night, In the Bleak mid Winter and the Nativity Carol. Plus all the most popular carols for the congregation. And if the singing is particularly enthusiastic, there will be mulled wine and the finest mince pies afterwards.

It's on the Sunday before Christmas at 6pm. A great opportunity to invite family and friends. Please be there before 5.45pm to avoid disappointment.

SENIOR CAROLS

Friday 16th December

The Seniors' Carol Service is particularly suited for those members of our community who may prefer not to come out after dark, but everyone is welcome. The 30 minute service will include some favourite carols and Bible readings, followed by a Christmassy afternoon tea party in St Mary's Church Centre finishing at 4pm. If you would like to come, please let the Parish Office know on 0118 940 2300, for catering purposes.

Do you have a relative, friend or neighbour who might appreciate this Service? If you do, it would be wonderful if you could bring them along.

EVENTS CALENDAR

SENIOR CAROLS & CHRISTMAS TEA

Friday 16th December

2.30pm

St Mary's Church



 St Mary's Church Wargrave
With Knowl Hill

FAMILY CAROLS

Christmas Eve
Saturday 24th December
6pm

St Mary's Church

CHRISTMAS 2022



 St Mary's Church Wargrave
With Knowl Hill

CAROL SERVICE

Sunday 18th December
6pm

St Mary's Church

wargravechurch.org.uk/christmas2022

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CHRISTMAS AT OUR SCHOOLS

THE PIGGOTT SCHOOL



Michelle Bird

Christmas at The Piggott School is a wonderful and celebratory time. It offers an opportunity to be reflective and thankful all that we have and an opportunity to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. This year we are absolutely delighted to be holding events in person again.

In recognition of this special time one of the highlights of our school calendar is the Carol Service held at St Mary's Church in Wargrave. We are delighted to be able to celebrate in person once again. The Carol Service involves readings together with performances from our talented musicians.

One of our all-time favourite performances returns, the hand bells. The Carol Concert is a perfect blend of reflection and a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the joys of Christmas together.

Another hugely popular event is the Rock Concert!! This really is all about fun! Our brave and talented performers show case their abilities in front of their peers – expertly run by our 6th form team. This is a lively, humorous and spectacular event, which gets everyone in the Christmas mood.

Our School Christian Vision is rooted in the parable of the Good Samaritan, 'Go and Do Likewise.' This is something that we hold dear to our hearts and as such we hold special events that enable us to live put our Vision into practice. Following on from our impressive food drive for Readifood, we have a Christmas jumper day and use this as an opportunity to raise funds for charity, this year for Save the Children. We are also having a pre-loved Christmas jumper sale in preparation for this day.

Furthermore, we will continue our tradition of sharing Christmas joy by singing Christmas Carols to residents at Bridge House Nursing Home.

Another important way in which we celebrate, as well as raise funds, is through our Christmas Fayre. The staff and children alike have been working super hard to get all their stalls ready for the big night. There will be chocolate stalls, bottle tombola's, mince pies, mulled wine, hot chocolate etc! This year we will be able to hold the event inside, which will be a treat after needing to hold the event outside last year.

Christmas dinner is always a special treat for our pupils. This year we will be serving a sit-down dinner for our students with all the usual festivities. The canteen staff make a fantastic effort to provide a wonderful dinner for students to enjoy.

We will no doubt be participating in our annual mince pie relay too! Many of our students enjoy a run around the fields followed by a mince pie in this very competitive Piggott tradition.

We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and joy to all at this special time of the year.

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OUR SCHOOLS AT CHRISTMAS



ROBERT PIGGOTT C. of E. SCHOOL

Vanessa O'Byrne

With the soft pitter-patter of reindeer hooves, Christmas has arrived nice and early at the Robert Piggott CE Schools. Four gentle reindeers from Riverway's Farm flew down into the playground ready to see all 300 children. The reindeers led by Hail (seen in the picture) settled in the Infant's playground, where their handlers informed the children of hundreds of reindeer facts. Did you know that a male reindeer is called a bull, females are called cows and babies calves?

Next, was the amazing PTA Christmas Fayre back with a blast after two years of disruption with Santa's grotto, tombola, hampers, secret present rooms, raffles and mince pies. It felt like the whole of Wargrave village had descended onto the Junior playground. The parents and teachers of the school managed to smash their target and raised funds to buy books, outdoor bins, sport kit and laptops. Full of mince pies, mulled wine and festive cheer the crowds drift off back home to enjoy the peace and quiet after an exciting, glitter covered afternoon.

Down at St May's Church, the Infants celebrated Christingle with songs, prayers and flaming candles. Revered Eves addressed the children in his usual engaging and entraining style which kept the children enraptured. The older Year 5 and 6 children will also go down to the church in the last week of term to lead parents and children in the annual carol concert to welcome in the Christmas holidays!

For the first time in the lives of some of our children, they will be performing in our nativities plays in front of their parents. Year 3 and 4 will be perform The Shining Star and the Infants will be performing an alternative version of the story that includes the evil villain Sprout who is determined to disrupt Christmas and cause chaos. Christmas is full on a Robert Piggott, what with Christmas trees decorations, inter-house carol competitions, presentations to the Salvation Army, visits to see pantomimes and Christmas lunches. We hope that this year, we will have a magical Christmas blessed with family, fun and fellowship and we wish everyone in the parish a Merry Christmas.

OUR SCHOOLS AT CHRISTMAS



KNOWL HILL CE ACADEMY

Nichole Bourner, Head of School

We have had another exciting term at Knowl Hill CE Academy. Our Christian values this term have been generosity and compassion and we have all been thinking carefully about how we can live out these values in our everyday life, as well as raising money for worthwhile causes such as Jeans for Genes, Macmillan Cancer support and Children in Need. Our Collective Worship council also led a thought-provoking Harvest service and collected many generous donations for Maidenhead Food Share. We have enjoyed being out in the community this term with our School Council having a fantastic afternoon joining the beetle drive with the CAMEO group. Pupils are looking forward to delivering Christmas cards and mince pies to the elderly in the village during December.

We are already feeling festive, and the children are very excited in the build up to Christmas! Our Year 6 class are off the St Marys Church in White Waltham to take part in their exciting "Christmas Unwrapped" workshop at the beginning of December. Following this, our Foundation, Year 1 and Year 2 class will holding their Christmas Nativity play 'A Wiggly Nativity' for all the parents to watch at Cox Green Theatre.

Year 1 & 2 are then holding a Christingle service at St Peters Church on Friday 9th December and our PTA are busy getting ready for our first Christmas Fayre in over two years. Please do come along and join us on Saturday 10th December from 11am until 2pm. There will be fun and exciting stalls with many prizes to win and Father Christmas will even be making an appearance!

During the last week of term, we have our Christmas jumper day to support Save the Children and our whole school Christmas lunch. We also have our Christmas church service led by Year 6 pupils, followed by class parties and of course the fantastic Richard Best will also be visiting us for his annual Christmas assembly! Our choir are also looking forward to joining the congregation of St Peter's Church during their Christmas service this year at the beginning of the Christmas holidays.

On our return in January, we are excited to have a Paralympian visiting our school.

We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

OUR SCHOOLS AT CHRISTMAS



CRAZIES HILL C. E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mrs Shell, Head of School

Crazies Hill Church of England Primary School is a hive of industriousness as the staff and children prepare for Christmas.

Our youngest children in EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 are rehearsing their Nativity production, which this year is called, 'Is There a Baby in There?' Crazies Hill Village Hall provides the perfect space for us to be able to put on our shows for parents and extended family members to enjoy.

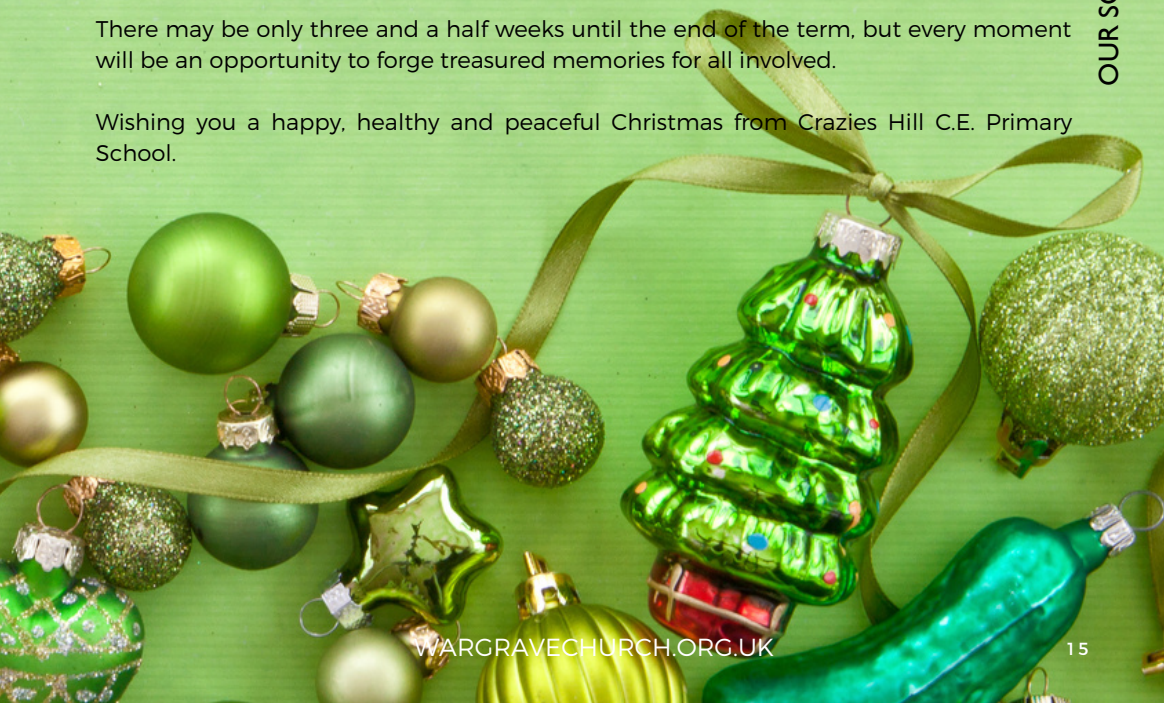
The whole school community will come together for our Annual Carol Service in St Mary's Church, Wargrave, on Wednesday 14th December at 9am. This year's church service will be encouraging us to think about how Christians around the world celebrate Christmas. The children will sing a range of traditional English carols and some carols in other languages that are traditional to their countries of origin.

We are thrilled to be holding a Christmas Fayre in school for the first time in three years. We have a fabulous PTA team who, with the support of a wider parent team, are preparing for this event on Saturday 10th December (12 noon - 2.30pm).

Christmas decorations created by all of the children in school will add a festive feel to the school hall and Christmas tree in preparation for the Christmas parties and lunches that will take place before the end of term. As a very special festive treat, the whole school will visit South Hill Park Theatre to watch the pantomime, Jack and the Beanstalk.

There may be only three and a half weeks until the end of the term, but every moment will be an opportunity to forge treasured memories for all involved.

Wishing you a happy, healthy and peaceful Christmas from Crazies Hill C.E. Primary School.



A CHRISTMAS CAROL HITS THE RIGHT NOTES

Annette Dart (Assistant Producer)

After months of preparation by the all-age, 40-strong cast and crew of A Christmas Carol, the positive and enthusiastic audience reaction declared the opening night a great success! Hurrah!

Producer Steve Turville said, 'We are so grateful to our Director Joe Haynes for putting the script together, putting the team together and holding us all together!' As well as organising all the rehearsals, Steve played the part of Jacob Marley's terrifying ghost, entwined with real chains, and the role of an Undertaker.

Tony Moul's miserable Ebenezer Scrooge transformed before our eyes into a generous and happy man who loves Christmas. The Lady Charity Collector, played with abundant charm by Ann Pearce, witnesses his hard-hearted refusal to help the poor and Scrooge's enthusiastic generosity when he is finally freed from his selfish greed.

A great double-act was formed with Mike Buckland as Scrooge's down-trodden clerk, Bob Cratchit. Emmajane Hughes as Mrs Cratchit, together with her talented children Nancy and Hector Hughes as the Cratchit children and Charles Monte as the child cripple Tiny Tim, provided heart-warming scenes of family love and kindness in the face of crushing poverty. Their expressions of grief at the imagined death of Tiny Tim, as foretold by the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come, brought a tear to many in the audience.

Camilla Cook, so appropriately cast as Scrooge's cook, together with Patsy Roynon as a Charwoman provided a wonderfully comedic scene as they rifle through Scrooge's belongings to assess if they are worth stealing. Extra special thanks go to Graham Howe for stepping in just a few weeks before curtain-up as a wonderfully jolly Fezziwig and the Ghost of Christmas Present.

Mark Puddy performed well in all his various roles; as churchwarden he ensured the broken heating system was fixed just in time for opening night, and on stage he was Scrooge's hospitable nephew Fred and the sinister Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come.

The night however belonged to the amazing and talented young cast members, who stole the show with their acting and singing. Freddie Meader and Erin Bowe were enchanting as the young Scrooge and his sweetheart. Mila Isaacs, at just 6 years-old, sang a beautiful solo and Saffie Hau played multiple roles including the cheeky Butcher's Boy complete with giant Turkey. Hector & Nancy Hughes are incredibly versatile young actors and Charles Monte was a delightful Tiny Tim. Special mention must go to Sophia Monte who performed brilliantly as The Ghost of Christmas Past with a cast on her leg and crutches! and Maria Monte, played Scrooge's sister Fan. What talented families we have in our Parish!

The church music team, led by Rosie Creedon, brought warmth and poignancy to the production with a repertoire of Christmas carols. Special thanks to the musical ensemble of Bob Austen, Joy Potter, Katie & Kathleen Cosnett and Colleen Scott. Peter Dart, Director of Music, accompanied the singing with keyboard and organ. The tremendous backstage crew created the set design and props, lighting and sound effects, costumes and the all-important role of 'prompt.' Thanks to the amazing team of Sheila & David Williams, Christine Walker, Ian French, Doug Clark, Joy Haynes, Helen Perry and Chris Wood. Thanks especially to Wargrave Theatre Workshop for the loan of costumes and all their support.

Mulled wine and mince pies were enjoyed by everyone after the show, prepared by the hospitality team Jane Austen, Li-Yen French, Alex Clark, Liz & Sean Sutcliffe, Karen Lloyd, Sue Witney and Lesley Turville. Grateful thanks to our car park team Susan, Helen and James Puddy for braving the cold and dark to ensure safety for all. We are extremely thankful to the church office and PR team, Lucy Bowley and Rosalyn Lane Heath, for their hard work and constant support and patience. Thanks also to Andy Ferguson and his team at Pursuit for managing the Box Office, ticketing and seating plans. Proceeds after costs will be split between St. Mary's Church and local charities, and we will provide an update on these donations in the next edition.

Sadly, Charles Dickens' story remains as relevant today, almost two hundred years later, where kindness and empathy are in short supply in our turbulent world. We are delighted with the positive reaction to our production and the opportunity to perform this iconic tale of love, compassion and redemption as we prepare for the even greater story of Christmas. It is all summed up so well in Tiny Tim's famous line 'God Bless Us, Every One!'



REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE

I attended this year's Remembrance Day Service in Church for the first time in a number of years. We have generally attended the Service on Mill Green for the 2 minutes silence, but my wife has felt that the loss of life of all those young people in war, sometimes with apparently so little gain from their sacrifice was too distressing.

John's sermon contrasted the bravery, gallantry and sacrifice of those awarded the Victoria Cross with the supreme sacrifice and victory of Jesus on the Cross. Listening to the sermon set me thinking about what we should remember. We should remember that war produces so much pain and suffering on all sides. We should remember that as a country, we should only embark on war as the last course of action when to do nothing would be worse. I also remember those who sacrificed their lives on the losing side. Compared with the white tombstones and tidy cemeteries of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission throughout Europe, seeing the dark and overgrown German cemeteries, and the names of all the dead listed on war memorials in Austrian villages makes me sad to consider all that loss of life in a futile or evil cause.

Leaving the church we walked quietly back along the path to the green through the Lych Gate, decorated movingly with hanging poppies gently twisting in the breeze.

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE



The St Sebastian Wokingham Band led us in a tribute to those of the village who in two World Wars sacrificed their tomorrows for us to live today in peace and freedom. We finished by singing "God Save the King", the first time most of us had sung those words at the War Memorial. It was encouraging to see the younger uniformed groups once again able to gather to pay tribute to those of earlier generations. Let us hope that Wokingham District Council will permit the traditional march to resume through our streets in years to come.

Mark Puddy

FOR RICHER, FOR POORER

Women's Bible Study Book Club

Back in the summer, the Tuesday morning Women's Bible Study group hatched a plan to read a Christian book every two months and to meet to discuss it over supper. A couple of years of social distancing seems to have spurred on a desire amongst us all to meet more often. Our September book was 'Gentle and Lowly' by Dane Ortland.

November's book was 'For richer, for poorer' by Clare Heath-Whyte. This was an interesting dive into the lives of six nineteenth century Christian women. We read about Elizabeth Fry, who transformed prison conditions, particularly for women. Barbara Wilberforce and Minny Shaftesbury supported their husbands behind the scenes as they campaign for the abolition of the slave trade and against the dreadful conditions in British factories and mines. Mary Muller worked alongside her husband in caring for the poor and orphans in Bristol. In each case, we were struck by the industrious, uncomplaining nature of these godly women who worked in gospel partnership with their spouse. In each case the husband and/or wife supported the other sacrificially in a way which enabled the gospel to prosper. Each woman came from a different background and had varying gifts but all were used mightily in the Lord's work.

One of the appealing things about the book is that each chapter is independent of the others, even though there are recurring themes. We agreed that we'd definitely recommend it to others.



ECO CHURCH: COP27

Mike Buckland



*The earth is the Lord's and everything in it; the world, and all who live in it.”
(Psalm 24:1)*

We reproduce, with their permission, a report by Sarah Wiggins of Tearfund on the recent Conference of the Parties on Climate Change, COP27.

Let us remember too the equally important but less well publicised COP on Biodiversity. Reducing warming emissions will only help us if we care for the natural world of which we are part and which God entrusted to our care. This is about loving our Creator God and our neighbour. There is, Christ said, no commandment greater than these
(Mark 12: 30-31).



'I've always talked about hope rather than optimism... Hope grapples with suffering... We don't despise our suffering. Suffering produces perseverance, perseverance character and character hope, and hope doesn't disappoint.' Marvin Rees, Mayor of Bristol and Tearfund Ambassador.

I am home now, from the UN climate talks (COP27) in Sharm El Sheikh, reflecting on what happened. It's quite hard to sum up: there were some positive outcomes, but we need to see more, from all of us.

That's not to say I feel defeated – far from it, actually. There are many reasons to have hope...

- Together, indigenous people, young people, women and representatives from organisations such as Tearfund raised our voices. Anecdotally, many felt we displayed greater strength and unity than at previous COPs. One leader in this space said: 'We're unstoppable.' I believe that, now more than ever.
- I gain energy from an inner assurance that if we hadn't run our petitions and talked to our MPs, and been there in Egypt, the outcomes could have been so much worse. At Tearfund's 'overdue bill' demonstration, one wealthy country negotiator took a photo of our messages and said to me, with real conviction in her eyes: **'This is really important what you're doing, really important.'** We help create space for negotiators to act.
- It can only be because of these united efforts that we saw a symbolic and important win from this COP for climate-vulnerable countries – the establishment of a 'loss and damage' funding facility for climate impacts that have happened or can't be avoided. (Even if there are no significant new pledges of money, this opens up space for progress in 2023.)



However, we needed to see so much more in Egypt on big issues (as well as loss and damage). COP27 did not take us much closer to justice for those suffering the worst effects of the climate crisis:

- On climate finance, COP27 did the very least it could do: recognise the ongoing failure of wealthy nations to deliver the long-overdue \$100 billion promised to climate-vulnerable communities. Worse, it weakened a COP26 commitment to double finance for communities to adapt to this crisis. Wealthy nations have stated that the \$100 billion will finally be reached in 2023. Let's keep praying that they do finally deliver.
- On limiting warming, the trajectory saw no improvement. COP27 ended with the world still on course for around 2.5°C of warming – the same as it was after COP26 in Glasgow – and that's only if countries implement their current plans.
- On phasing out fossil fuels and shifting to renewable energy, the final COP text failed to make this call. Although we heard a lot about the benefits of renewables, the fossil fuel industry was out in force at COP27. This is a colossal failure that lets polluters off the hook.

What's next?

Tackling the climate crisis is never just about negotiations at a two-week conference. The crisis is a daily reality for millions of people living in poverty, and demands a daily response. We need actions that meet the scale of the crisis from governments, large corporations and all of us.

I had the privilege of interviewing Marvin Rees at COP27. He is the Mayor of Bristol and a Tearfund Ambassador. When I asked him about the role of churches in all this, he spoke with passion: 'Churches have a huge role to play... They should be teaching their congregation, their members, that the planet is important.'

And so, **let's not stop raising awareness in our churches, praying, taking action and speaking up**, because poverty is not God's plan – you are. Read our guide to daily choices you can take to tackle climate change on our website www.tearfund.org > Get Involved > Resources .

I saw at COP27 that this makes a big difference. Let's persevere in holding our leaders to account for keeping their promises and stepping up to their responsibilities. Next year, in this decisive decade for climate, we hope for more, much more.

Every blessing,

Sarah Wiggins
Tearfund Action



MARGOT GREEN: CARDS FROM THE KING

Happy 100th Birthday to Margot!

On November 24th, Margot Green of Elizabeth Court celebrated her 100th birthday with a delicious tea party with family and friends from the village, and receiving her special birthday card from King Charles and Queen Consort Camilla.

Since moving to Elizabeth Court during the pandemic, Margot has embraced village life, being a regular member of the Pop In Club, Welcome Café, Luncheon Club and coming to church when she can.

Congratulations Margot!



LIGHT PARTY

As the nights draw in and the world around us started to focus on all things Halloween, it was a joy to be able to offer hope to our young people. Saturday 29th October saw our annual Light party hosted in the Church Centre for our 3-11 year olds and their friends. We celebrated Jesus, the Light of the World in great style!

The children enjoyed a range of games and activities. As well as listening to a short, interactive talk, the children made plenty of 'light' themed crafts. We enjoyed baking stained glass biscuits and making our own pizzas. A massive 'ball pit' game against the adults and apple bobbing were enjoyed by all.

A huge thank you to Katie Cosnett for all her help with the party. Look out for next year's party at the end of October!

CELEBRATIONS



CORONATION CELEBRATION!

On Saturday 6th May, the much anticipated Coronation of King Charles III will take place in Westminster Abbey. To celebrate this event, and also the 150th Anniversary of the Royal Choral Society, we are presenting a Coronation Celebration in the Royal Albert Hall on Sunday 7th May at 2.30pm. See details below or on the RCS or RAH websites. We have block-booked 40 seats in the Rausing Circle which will be available at a discounted price of £25 per person. There will be an opportunity to sing Parry's 'I was Glad' in the audience!

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CORONATION

A coach will leave Mill Green at Noon (bring a packed lunch!) and return afterwards, likely around 7pm and coach seats are £10 per person. This would make a very acceptable Christmas Present for family and friends. We are anticipating a sell-out so please book early to avoid disappointment. You will even have a special holiday on the Monday to recover! Of course, if you want to make your own arrangements or book more expensive tickets, they are already on sale via the RAH website. Please send your order to **peter@familydart.com**. There is no need to send any money - we will just take reservations for now. First come, first served.

SUNDAY AFTERNOONS WITH RAMBLIN' BOB

Jane Austen

A small but select group of 7 ramblers met up on a perfect Autumn day at the Dewdrop Inn in Hurley for a delightful stroll through the woods and fields around Ashley Hill.

The views over the Thames Valley were spectacular as we puffed our way to the summit of Ashley Hill. The old Victorian 'Keeper's Cottage', which Bob remembered as a tumble down building many years ago, is now a huge gated house – a different class of occupier now! Sold for £157,000 in 1987, I wonder what it is worth now? Passing several brightly coloured mushrooms (or were they toadstools?) in the woods leading down from Ashley Hill, we walked through the beautiful fields of the Berkshire College of Agriculture before returning to the Dewdrop for a tasty Sunday roast. A lovely way to spend Sunday afternoon!

This is the last ramble of the 'season' and we shall start up again in the Springtime when there will be new horizons to explore.

RAMBLIN' WITH BOB



If you would like to join us on our walks in the future, please contact Bob Austen to be included in our notices.

Email: austenrobert@hotmail.com

Home: 0118 940 3038 or Mobile: 07970 611013



TEARFUND'S THE BIG QUIZ NIGHT 2022



St Mary's Wargrave Church Centre hosted Tearfund's annual Big Quiz Night again on Saturday 19th November. Five teams competed for a magnificent golden cardboard trophy. There was also a sharable prize, donated by participants, for the team that won each round.

Our local hosts were Mike (organiser & MC) & Angie Buckland (trophy maker and adjudicator), and Ian (audio-visual) & Li-Yen French (catering).

Tearfund ambassadors read six questions & answers for each of the eight rounds online. They included Tamsin Greig the actress, who read Art & Literature, and Billy Vunipola the England Rugby Union player, who of course read the sports questions. Here are three of the questions. Can you answer them?

Current Events Q4: In October 2021, the World Health Organisation endorsed the first vaccine for which disease?

Sport Q3: In what tournament is the Webb Ellis Trophy awarded?

Geography Q3: Which European capital spans across 14 islands?

The winners, by one point, were a team of friends invited by Colleen Scott. Colleen herself nobly fell on her sword by joining the arrogantly and ultimately erroneously named Victory for the Vicarage team.

There were gasps when Tamsin Greig read this missing word question:

Art & Literature Q4: A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens: 'It was the best of times, it was the _____.'

...for this was the name of the Perry-Whiteside team! We assured everyone that they had no inside information: the answers were under wraps even from the organisers!

We were, as usual, competing while the quiz was live on YouTube, so we could call up the Totaliser before the end. This showed that this year, 12,913 people took part across 246 UK churches, making it once again the country's biggest quiz. Some venues were huge: Mike & Angie's daughter Lizzie reported 20 teams of 8 at her parents-in-laws' church in the West Midlands.

At the time of writing, £69,000 had been raised, with the amount climbing. A video showed us how the money rebuilds the lives of families around the world devastated by poverty, drought and floods. Even our modest gathering had donated £265, enough to set 11 families on their feet. A big thank you to everyone!

You can still donate. Please go to [justgiving.com/fundraising/tbqn22](https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/tbqn22) or, if our page has closed, [tearfund.org](https://www.tearfund.org).

Thank you.



THE BIG QUIZ NIGHT

Answers: Malaria, The Rugby Union World Cup, Stockholm, Worst of times

VICAR'S LETTER



Dear *Friends*

Have you noticed that unlike Matthew, John's Gospel does not tell us about the wise men and the star; and unlike Luke, he does not tell us about the angels and shepherds. Indeed, he does not mention the miraculous conception. But he does say that 'the Word became flesh and lived among us'. In saying this he gets to the heart of the Christmas story.

Sadly, time and again people miss out on the heart of the Christmas story. I wonder what the word 'Christmas' conjures up for you? Perhaps parties, nativity plays, Christmas trees with baubles and lights, holly and mistletoe, Christmas cards, stockings, presents, Father Christmas and reindeer, frost and snow, Christmas pudding and mince pies, Christmas lunch with turkey, stuffing, and Brussel sprouts. All of these are but the trimmings.

I wonder if any of you have celebrated Christmas in a different culture? In 1993 I was visiting my brother, an eye doctor, (who was running Kissy Eye Hospital in the capital in Freetown, Sierra Leone) at a time when there was rebel activity and much fighting. The injuries and trauma suffered by so many were terrible. Strange as it may seem, in a country like Sierra Leone, where the Christmas trimmings were not present, Christmas was celebrated with so much more joy and enthusiasm than in the United Kingdom. For Christmas is not about mistletoe, turkeys, and Christmas trees.

It is about, as John's Gospel reminds us, the Word becoming flesh and living among us! But if Christmas is not about the trimmings, nor about the religious 'trimmings', what is it about? It is not about angels appearing to shepherds, nor about wise men following a star. These are pointers. It is about the birth of a baby to a young woman, a virgin. This baby came to bridge the gap between God and man.

Christmas would still be Christmas had there been no shepherds, wise men, or a guiding star. The wonder of Christmas is that God became man, 'the Word became flesh'. Wow! The wonder of the incarnation!

Sadly, the true meaning of Christmas can become lost even to Christian people. A German Lutheran bishop, Hanns Lilje, wrote about how in a Nazi prison in 1944 he celebrated Christmas with two fellow prisoners. In the light of their execution he said, "It is possible for the candles and lights to blind our eyes, so that we can no longer see the essential elements in Christmas, but the people who walk in darkness can see it better than all who see only the lights of the earth."

Stripped of all the 'trimmings', John's account of the incarnation gets to the heart of the Christmas story. In so doing he challenges us to respond in faith. For all who receive the Christ, who believe in his name, he gives the power to become children of God. (John 1:12)

Someone once said that faith is the act of 'grasping reality': and the reality is Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God, the Word made flesh.

Are you willing this Christmas to pierce the fog of illusion and see the true wonder of what Christmas means?

Why not join us at one of our Christmas services and come and discover why the birth of Jesus has shaped the destiny of the world, and our eternal destiny?

Wishing you a joyful Christmas!

John

John R.M. Cook
Vicar of Wargrave with Knowl Hill

PCC REPORT: 14th November

Sheila Williams

The PCC met on 14th November and in addition to the regular business the following topics were discussed:

- **Serving Sunday:** There had been a reasonable response on the day and it is hoped that more folk will come forward over the next weeks and months to help in the life of the Church. Those who responded have all been contacted by the respective COG leader and we are grateful for their interest.
- **Knowl Hill Church:** A generous grant had been received which will help towards the running costs of the Church over the next few years. The Strategy Team will be looking at how best to utilise the funds available and additional expertise would be welcomed.
- **COG Updates:**
 - Stewarding – A grants had been received from the Diocese towards LED lighting and an application had been made towards the new heating panel.
 - Celebrating – A weekend festival of music was being planned for June 2023 which will include a classical concert, a music quiz and a music/picnic event on Mill Green. A meeting was taking place to produce an event plan for 2023.
- **A Christmas Carol:** Rehearsals were going well and everyone is looking forward to a successful event. There will be two performances on Saturday 26th November.
- **A Christmas Tree on Mill Green** was being donated and the PCC expressed its thanks for this generous gift.
- **Christmas Services:** The Vicar and Curates will be formulating plans over the following few days.

CHRISTMAS IN THE SUMMER?

Jubi Filho da Silva



Christmas in South America was a bit different. Let me just say this. I've never been to a Christingle in my life and I couldn't begin to explain what you do and especially why you do what you do to those poor oranges. Why oranges? Also, I can't sing the carols by heart, any Christmas carol. Yes, they are so catchy, so feel-good, but they just aren't sung year after year where I come from, sorry.

They are especially not sung at the door by an enthusiastic yet amateur group of strangers. I've never had that happen to me in my entire life. I may be making some of you sad... or perhaps jealous?

For me, though, growing up in Brazil, Christmas happened in the Summer. Do you know what it's like to do Christmas in a blazing hot December? It's Christmas as you know it – just with no mulled wine, no mince pies, no sitting by a cosy fire enjoying marshmallows on a stick, and especially no hot chocolate, no gingery biscuits, no Christmas jumpers. Still want some mulled wine? Just open a bottle of red, pour it in a mug and leave it outside, on the balcony. It will mull itself. Christmas in Brazil was all about pretty lights adorning shopping malls, shopping lists, shopping, secret santa, fake snow and old men with long beards wearing Santa Clauss snow ledge robes, sweating heavily, of course.

Still I loved Christmas because I love Jesus. Then I married Annie, who also loves Jesus and takes the love of Christmas to a whole new level. Now I am growing my appreciation for proper mulled wine and mince pies and marshmallows although I will never, ever (mark my words people) eat black Christmas pudding again. And I am very much looking forward to experiencing my first Christingle ever on Sunday the 4th, at age 39. I will practise memorising some carols for Sunday the 11th too, at 3pm. And I especially look forward to a repeat of the singing on Christmas Eve at 6pm. Annie and I would love you to join us all and maybe some of you can tell me: why oranges?

CHRISTMAS IN SUMMER



TUESDAY YOUTH GROUP

Richard Eves



Who are you, where are you, and what are you doing?

This month at Tuesday group we've been continuing our investigation of the book of Colossians. Most recently we've been exploring the question of who Christians actually are. And, in common with other areas of life, it turns out that who we are is a result of where we've been.

In Colossians Paul reminds these Christians that they started out in the same place as everyone else in the world. They, just like everyone around them, were ruled by a nature that took them away from God and led them to do all kinds of evil things. And because of those things, the wrath of God was coming. They were headed for judgment and death.

But in his great love, God wouldn't allow that to be the end of the story. He sent a rescuer, Jesus Christ - the Son he loves - into the world to help these doomed people. When Jesus came into the world and died an undeserved death on a cross, He didn't go alone. He, in a spiritually real way, took every Christian to the cross with Him. And so, as He died under a judgment for sin, in a very real way so did they. This is the spiritual reality we are reminded of in baptism, as the believer symbolically drowns in the water.

But Jesus didn't stop there. Because of his own perfect sinlessness, he was vindicated through the judgment of death. He rose to life again, and finally ascended to sit down in the position of all glory and authority at the right hand of God the Father. And again, he didn't go alone. In a spiritual real way, Jesus took every Christian with him to that throne in heaven.

And Jesus won't stop there either. He is coming back to Earth again, in unimaginable glory. And when he does, in a spiritually real way, he will bring every Christian believer back with Him.

So who are Christians? People who have travelled from evil ways and enmity with God, through death on the cross, up to the very right hand of the throne of God in heaven. All because of the unbreakable spiritual connection there is between the believer and Jesus. Anyone who has been on a journey like that is surely going to come back looking just a little different...

A reminder of the contacts to reach out to for all our Young Clubs.

Creché - Camilla Cook camillacook@btconnect.com

Sunday Club - Annie da Silva hobden.da.silva@gmail.com

Pathfinders - Marc Uniacke marcuniacke@gmail.com

Tuesday Youth Group - Richard Eves richard.m.s.eves@gmail.com

QUESTIONING EVANGELISM

Richard Eves

For many of us, the first reaction when someone raises the topic of 'talking with your friends about the Christian faith' is one of guilt. We know that telling the people around us the Good News about Jesus is a part of being a Christian. We know the Gospel is the most important message that a person could ever hear, and we owe it to our friends and neighbours to share it with them. We even know that it is something Jesus explicitly calls on us to do, for example in the Great Commission of Matthew 28, "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."

And yet, despite knowing all of this, many of us find talking to other people about the Christian faith really difficult. And the greatest source of this difficulty is fear. Fear that in moving a conversation in the direction of faith, we will make it awkward or uncomfortable. Fear that talking in such a way might lessen the other person's opinion of us. Fear that once we take the conversation there, we will expose ourselves to all sorts of questions and accusations that we won't know how to respond to.

None of these fears are fanciful. Indeed many of them might be real experiences we have had in the past as we've tried to talk with others about Jesus. There will always be a costliness in sharing the Good News. We can see that for example in the lives of the Apostles, and how they suffered for the work of spreading the Gospel.

But there are things we can do to make it easier. One of those things is learning from Jesus' example, especially from the way He uses questions. Using questions in our conversations about the Christian faith can make the conversation more even, less heated, and much more helpful for the other person as we 'dialogue' the Gospel together.

We are going to be running a session looking at this area of using questions in talking about the christian faith on Saturday 28th January at 10am in St Mary's Church Centre. Do join us if you can.

QUESTIONING EVANGELISM

QUESTIONING

EVANGELISM

SATURDAY 28TH JANUARY

KNOWL HILL NEWS

CAMEO: The November meeting of the Cameo group were joined again by several pupils and teachers from Knowl Hill Academy. After consuming some lovely home made cakes, kindly provided by Caroline Shailes, and squash, everyone settled down to a couple of games of Beetle. It was great to see everyone having such fun. At the end of the afternoon everyone was treated to a bar of chocolate.

Christmas Lunch

Join us on Thursday 15th December for our last meet up for the year. We will be meeting at the earlier time of 12pm for a Christmas Lunch. For more details, please contact Lesley Bell on 07966 178142.



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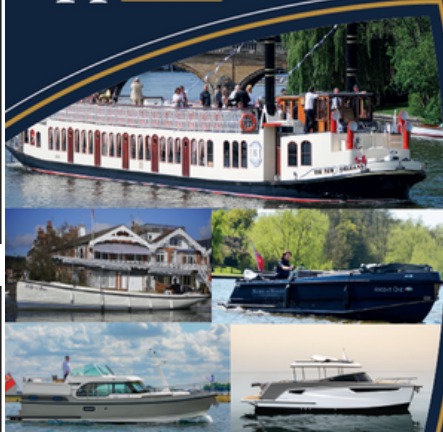
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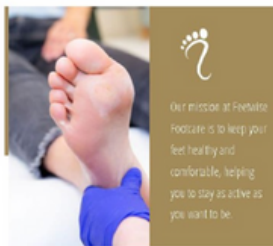
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