

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

PARISH

MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER 2023



REMEMBRANCE IN MUSIC

How music represents and evokes emotion. A closer look at our Remembrance Day Service hymns.

ARCHDEACON'S INSPECTION

An assessment of our Church

CHRISTMAS DATES

What is taking place in December in the Parish. From Wreath Making, the Nativity & Tree Lighting to voting for your favourite Christmas Carol

In other news:
Have you met? - Kay Bruce
Update on All Age Services
Changing Energy Audit into Actions

PICTURE QUIZ NIGHT



SATURDAY 25th NOVEMBER

7PM - 9.30PM



CHURCH CENTRE

TICKETS: £5 PER PERSON

RESERVE YOUR SPACE by 17th NOV

Sign up at back of church, scan QR
or email: suewitney8@gmail.com

.....

On Saturday 25th November, the Celebrating team are holding a very informal picture quiz evening in the Church Centre.

Unusual for a quiz, every round will be focused on examining images, and the topics are rather different from what you might expect! Our themes are centred more on experiences gained from the world we live rather than any specialist subjects.

Sarah, (who tries but fails to ever get any answers right on 'Only Connect'- except the missing verbs round that is! She's good at those!) will be acting as quizmaster for the evening and has selected the categories and organised the questions to provide you with a playful but puzzling night. We hope to see you there.

.....

Refreshments: cheese, crackers and nibbles will be provided

Welcome to bring something more substantial

Drinks: bring your own

Teams: Max. 6 per team arranged beforehand or join a team on the night

From the Editor

With the nights drawing in and the central heating switched on, it is time once again to look forward to evenings sat round the fire and escaping for Autumnal walks in our beautiful local countryside. There are so many things to be thankful for in our village, especially if we think about those less fortunate in other parts of the country where peace and tranquility are at a premium and poverty an ever-present threat.

I was able recently to visit my old stomping grounds in South Wales, and the contrast between the prosperity of Cardiff and the old coal mining and iron and steel valleys of the Rhondda and Rhymney could not be more stark. It is quite shocking in this day and age to see such a huge gap between the haves and the have nots, within a relatively small geographical area.

I am looking forward to seeing a genuine move to levelling up for these post-industrial communities across the country.

Bob

BOB AUSTEN | PARISH MAGAZINE EDITOR



WELCOME

The copy date for submissions for the December magazine is noon on Wednesday 15th November 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.

WHO'S WHO

Vicar	The Revd. Canon 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 383 046
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
Administration	Lucy Bowley	lucy@wargravechurch.org.uk	0118 940 2300
	Rosalyn Lane Heath	rosalyn@wargravechurch.org.uk	0118 940 2300
St Mary's, Wargrave			
Churchwardens	Mark Puddy	markpuddy@btinternet.com	0118 940 2028
	Sue Witney	suewitney8@gmail.com	0118 940 4173
Director of Music	Peter Dart	peter@familydart.com	0118 940 1068
St Peter's, Knowl Hill			
Acting	Lesley Bell	elbcarillon@gmail.com	01628 822 500
Churchwardens	Karen Larkin	karenlarkins@hotmail.com	07507 333 789

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PARISH REGISTERS : WEDDINGS, BAPTISMS & FUNERALS

Baptisms at St Mary's, Wargrave

3rd September Olivia Bobbie Rose Croft
10th September Tallulah Louisa Margaret Mann
17th September Rufus James Batting
17th September Poppy Isabella Batting
24th September Arlo Marvin Grant
24th September Azydee Susan Janet Grant

Funerals at St Mary's, Wargrave

18th September Peter Sydney Ward, 97, Cremation at Easthampstead Park
25th September Peter Sydney Ward, 97, Interment of Ashes

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 3).

SUNDAY SERVICES

November

St Mary's Church, Wargrave

8am Holy Communion: a said service in traditional language every Sunday
9.45am Service reflective below

1st Sunday of the month: **5th November**

9.45am All Age Family Worship

2nd Sunday of the month: **12th November: Remembrance Sunday**

9.45am Remembrance Sunday Service

3rd Sunday of the month: **19th November**

9.45am Morning Worship in modern language with music
Junior Church & Crèche

4th Sunday of the month: **26th November**

9.45am Holy Communion
Junior Church & Crèche



Special Service: Remembrance Sunday

10.40am British Legion Remembrance Service on Mill Green

St Peter's Church, Knowl Hill

1st Sunday of the month	10.30am	Holy Communion
Special Service - 12th November	10.45am	Remembrance Service
3rd Sunday of the month	10.30am	Village Praise

St Paul's Church, Warren Row


There will be no 2nd Sunday service this month due to Remembrance Services

WARGRAVECHURCH.ORG.UK

Parish Activities

November

Saturday 4th	9am	Ladies' Breakfast
Sunday 5th	9.45am	Fairtrade Christmas Stalls (19th & 26th)
	3pm	Bereavement Service, Wargrave
Saturday 11th	4pm	Junior Church: Family Dinner
Sunday 12th	9.45am	Remembrance Sunday, Wargrave
	10.40am	British Legion Remembrance, Mill Green
	10.45am	Remembrance Sunday, Knowl Hill
Thursday 16th	2.30pm	CAMEO: Beetle Drive
Saturday 18th	9.30am	CCT Seminar: Angels & Demons
	7pm	Annual Concert
Saturday 25th	7pm	Picture Quiz

 St Mary's Church Wargrave
With Knowl Hill

LAST CHANCE TICKETS

Annual Concert

The Wargrave Community Choir • Laura Anstee, Cello
Liz Drew, Clarinet • Paul Speed, Trumpet
Richard Pearce of the RCS, Organ • VOCES8 Scholars

SATURDAY 18TH NOVEMBER

7PM

ST MARY'S CHURCH

TICKETS

£10

INC. GLASS OF FREE WINE

Tickets available after each
Sunday 9.45am service
or by emailing tickets@pursuitnha.com

WARGRAVECHURCH.ORG.UK

Our Groups

WELCOME CAFÉ

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



Next Sessions:
7th, 14th, 21st & 28th
November

OPEN CHURCH

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

BUTTERFLIES

Butterflies returns to meet on 1st & 3rd Wednesday of the month (during term time) in the morning, where you can, enjoy a delicious breakfast, chat and parenting discussion time in the Church Centre.

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

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

November: 1st, 15th & 29th

December: 6th

LADIES' BREAKFAST

Join us on **Saturday 4th November** in the Church Centre at 9am where we discover if you are a lark, an owl or both? What are the advantages and disadvantages of being what you are? Have you ever changed from one to the other? We shall consider these 2 characters and what we can learn from them.



Please let Linda or Lesley know if you are planning to attend.

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

OUR GROUPS

There are a number of groups that meet regularly throughout the year. Not all are every week, so please check with the group leader for more details.

More information found online at wargravechurch.org.uk/groups

Tuesdays	Ladies' Bible Study Ephesians 1:17	9.30am 7pm
Wednesdays	Monthly Prayer (1st) Pints of View	11.45am 7.30pm
Thursdays	Seeking Wisdom Braybrooke Gardens Young Families	2.30pm 7.30pm 8pm
Saturdays	Ladies' Breakfast (1st)	9am



MUSIC FOR REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Peter Dart, Director of Music

For many in our congregation singing the hymns and songs provides an opportunity to express emotions in our hearts that are hard to articulate. Our best hymns do that. For this year's Remembrance Service at St Mary's, our music will be reflective, expressive and stirring as we remember and honour the sacrifice of our Armed forces and emergency services who gave their lives for the peace of our nation. We will also pray for peace amidst the ongoing trauma of war raging in Ukraine and now the Middle East. Here is a summary and background for the hymns we will sing, with the first verse or refrain of each.

Lift high the cross by George Kitchin

*Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim,
Till all the world adore His sacred name.*

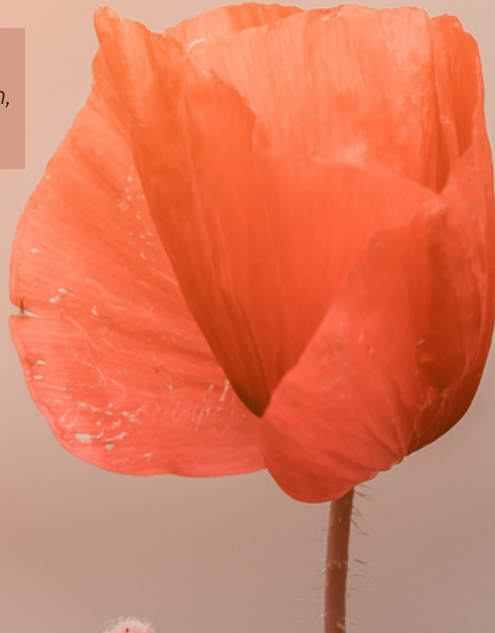
MUSIC FOR REMEMBRANCE

This hymn was published in 1887 with words by George Kitchin when he was Dean of Winchester and set to the melody of 'Crucifer' by Sydney Nicholson. It is based on the biblical text of Matthew 16 v 24 and powerfully expresses the cross as a symbol of God's love and the resurrection of Jesus. It is often sung during Lent and Holy Week but is a fitting choice for Remembrance Sunday with its references to the battle of Christ's triumph over death 'Come, Christians, follow where thy Captain trod, Our king victorious, Christ, the Son of God'.

One of Charles Wesley's most widely sung hymns and a wonderful example of his sublime spiritual poetry. It first appeared in 1747 and is based on the theme of God's perfect love and was sung at the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II last year. The hymn was inspired by a poem by John Dryden and set to music by Henry Purcell. It is set around a progression of thoughts, from our prayers for the Holy Spirit through to praying for the second coming of Our Lord and finally prayers for his new creation. Wesley was reputed to write ten lines of verse every day for 50 years and some while riding on horseback to his evangelical meetings! What a wonderful legacy of congregational songs he created.

Love divine by Charles Wesley

*Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of Heav'n to earth come down,
Fix us in Thy humble dwelling;
All thy faithful Mercies crown.
Jesus, thou art all compassion
Pure, unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation
Enter every trembling heart.*



Lord of all Hopefulness was written in 1931 by Joyce Torrens under the name of Jan Struther. It is set to the melody of an Irish folk tune called 'Slane', named after the hill of Slane in Ireland. Joyce is best known for her character 'Mrs Miniver', created for her column in The Times newspaper and the subsequent novel, consisting of sketches of family life before World War II. The film version was a blockbuster, winning six academy awards in 1942. Joyce had a difficult life and suffered from deep depressions for which she was hospitalised. This beautifully simple hymn describes an ordinary day of trusting Jesus and asking him to be with us from our waking to our sleeping, and at the end of our days.

Lord of all hopefulness by Jan Struther

*Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever child-like, no cares could destroy,
Be there at our waking, and give us we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.*

Lord, for the years is such a wonderful hymn by the skillful and prolific hymn writer Timothy Dudley-Smith who is now 96 years old, set to music by Michael Baughen. It has been acclaimed as one of the 20th century's finest hymns with its timeless quality and strong sense of the Holy Spirit moving in our lives and looking to the future. It has beautiful vibrant phrasing such as his description of the word of God that 'speaks to our hearts and sets our souls ablaze'.

Dudley-Smith was ordained in 1950 and wrote much comic verse while a student at Cambridge and started to write hymns later in life in the 1960's, but he is also well known for editing the Christian magazine 'Crusade' which was founded after Billy Graham's 1955 London crusade.

Lord, for the years by Timothy Dudley-Smith

*Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided,
Urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way,
Sought us and saved us, pardoned and provided;
Lord of the years, we bring our thanks today.*

REMEMBRANCE SERVICES

Sunday 12th November

9.45am Remembrance Service at St Mary's Church, Wargrave
with guest speaker Major General Rob Thomson CBE DSO

10.40am British Legion Remembrance Service on Mill Green, Wargrave

10.45am Remembrance Service at St Peter's Church, Knowl Hill



VICAR'S LETTER

Dear *Parish Family*



John has asked me to write this months' letter, and as we are currently in the throes of preparation for Remembrance Sunday, I wanted to reflect a little on why we do this, every year. Who is the remembrance season for?

Most of us mark this time of year in one way or another. We buy a poppy and wear it. Perhaps we keep the two minutes' silence, if we're not traveling and remember the time. We might attend a Remembrance Sunday service or an act of remembrance at the local war memorial. Maybe we even march in a parade, uniformed and dignified.

But the question remains - who do we do all of these things for? Who is the intended beneficiary of all of this remembering? In some cases the answer is obvious; we buy poppies, for example, to help care for serving and ex-serving men and women, and their families. And quite right too. The Lord instructs us to have special concern for the care of 'widows and orphans', and so such giving is an integral and joyous part of our Christian discipleship.

However, for much else of our remembering the answer is not so obvious. Who benefits from the moment of silence, the reading of the names, the solemnity and reverence?

For a long time I thought that the beneficiaries were those we were remembering. As if by keeping their names spoken, if only briefly, we were in some small way repaying them for their sacrifice. Making sure that they get the honour they deserve for the sacrifices they made. There is a sense of reciprocity in our remembrance.

And yet, as Christians we know that the reciprocity of praise and honour from other human beings is of relatively little value. Jesus teaches in Matthew 6: 1-4 that if a person 'receives their reward in full' in the praises and honour of other human beings, they have missed out on the much greater reward that God offers to those who give of themselves to protect and provide for others.

So we oughtn't to think of our remembrance as reward or recompense for the fallen. The Lord is the one who honours and rewards those whose love and courage leads them to lay down their bodies and lives. And nothing that we can offer is worth comparing with His approval and commendation. For those remembered, our acts of remembrance are a light thing when compared with the way in which the Lord remembers and esteems their sacrifice.

Remembrance then, is not for the benefit of the remembered, but for the benefit of us who remember. As Christians we are a people who remember. And we remember because we are a people of gratitude.

“ *The Lord has done great things for us and we are glad* ”

Again and again in the Bible, the Lord's people are reminded not to be forgetful of all the great things that the Lord has done for them, but rather to call them to mind, daily. And throughout the Bible, the remembrance of those who have been used by the Lord in doing those great things, from the greatest to the least, is a source of yet more gratitude. We are grateful to them, for their courage and service and love on our behalf, and grateful to the Lord, who was the source of that courage and service and love.

In remembering with gratitude the great things that have been done for us, our affections are sharpened towards the good, the noble and the honourable. In remembering those who laid down their lives for the love of others, our hearts come to prize such love, and rejoice in such sacrifice. We delight in the good that has been done to us, and in turn become more the kind of people who will do that good to others. The Lord uses our remembrance to make us a more fitting people for Him who is greatest among all those who have, for love, laid down their life for their friends.

This remembrance season, let's remember, with gratitude, for our own sakes.

Richard

Richard Eves
Curate of Wargrave with Knowl Hill

JUST FOR FUN...DELIGHTFUL DILEMMAS

Your challenge this month is to unscramble some anagrams.

Each of these anagrams is the name of a book found in the bible, either in the Old or New Testament. Some you will manage with ease; others are a little more difficult. None have a capital letter to indicate the beginning of the word - that would be too easy!



How many of the 12 scrambled book names you can identify?

1. benmusr
2. tuhr
3. asheo
4. socosaslin
5. scta
6. nohaj
7. monereduoyt
8. mornas
9. sengise
10. snatlaiga
11. eletaronvi
12. keezeli

Answers on page 27

MAJOR GENERAL ROB THOMSON CBE DSO

On Sunday 12th November we will be joined by Major General Rob Thomson as our guest speaker during our 9.45am Remembrance Service at St Mary's.



Rob joined the Royal Green Jackets in 1989 after graduating with an Upper Second in History from Magdalene College, Cambridge. He has a Master's degree with distinction from King's College, London.

With his regiment he served in the UK, Germany, Norway, Canada, Bosnia, Northern Ireland, Kosovo and Afghanistan, soldiering in armoured, mechanised, arctic and light role battalions.

Outside the Regiment, he has instructed Officer Cadets at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and worked in the outer office for the 2* Chief of Staff in the main Army Headquarters in Wilton. In 2005 he spent six months working for the US in the Iraqi MOD in Baghdad and was then a staff officer in the UK's standby military headquarters where, amongst other things, he helped to evacuate UK citizens from Beirut to Cyprus in 2006.

He commanded 2 RIFLES, an infantry Battalion based in Northern Ireland, deploying to Kosovo in 2008 to support a French brigade based near Pristina, and then to Afghanistan in 2009 where he commanded a Battle Group of 1100 soldiers in Sangin in Helmand Province.

On the back of Afghanistan, he commanded the UK's Operational Training and Advisory Group, responsible for training those preparing for operations overseas. He then commanded 38 (Irish) Brigade in Northern Ireland before being the Deputy Commander of Regional Command (South West), deploying for a year to Helmand Province, Afghanistan in February 2014 as part of a US Headquarters, transitioning security responsibilities to the Afghan National Security Forces in October 2014.

On his return in 2015, he led a project directed by the head of the British Army to enhance the General Staff (all officers of the rank of Colonel and above), specifically to create a professional body of valued senior leaders and staff officers bound together by a common ethos and loyalty to the Army as a whole, with intellectual rigour being at the very heart of what it does.

In 2016 - 2017, he attended the Centre des Hautes Etudes and the Institut des Hautes Etudes de la Défense Nationale at the Ecole Militaire in Paris before becoming the Defence Attaché in the UK's Embassy in Paris in September 2017 for two years, working as a soldier-diplomat. He has a good proficiency in French.

He became Administrator of the Sovereign Base Areas on the island of Cyprus (1 of the UK's 14 Overseas Territories and the only one administered through our MOD) and Commander British Forces Cyprus on 25 September 2019 and left the Army in January 2023.

He is now CEO of AGL Communication, a London based company which helps people to communicate at their best.

He is married to Hils and they have 5 children. He loves cricket, his new road-bike, history especially lesser known military biographies, good food and exploring new places.

POETRY PIECES

POETRY UP CLOSE



JOHN McCRAE (1872-1918)

John McCrae was a Canadian Lieutenant-Colonel serving as a soldier and doctor during World War I. He worked as a surgeon during the Second Battle of Ypres in Belgium, writing this composition there. He is particularly remembered for this poem, 'In Flanders Fields', published in 'Punch' magazine in December 1915.

Transferring from the trenches in 1915, McCrae tended the wounded at a dressing station in Ypres whilst battles continued. Sadly, his best friend, 22-year-old Alexis Helmer, was killed. It is thought that McCrae wrote this poem whilst gazing at where his friend was buried, with many others: in makeshift graves, marked only by wooden crosses, sited in a field adorned with wild poppies gently blowing in the breeze. It was the image of bright red blooms growing through the ravaged ground surrounding the crosses that inspired McCrae to write the poem.

'In Flanders Fields' sums up the harsh realities faced by all who were fighting at the Western Front, whilst the final verse contains a call to arms for those at home. Though many died, the speaker calls on the reader to 'take up our quarrel'. In that way those who had sacrificed their lives could 'sleep' in peace.

In Flanders Fields (1915)

In Flanders' fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place: and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders' fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe;
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high,
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders' Fields.



McCrae soon transferred to a French hospital but by was now disillusioned by the war. His health began to fail and he died of pneumonia in 1918, just months before the war ended.

'In Flanders Fields' led to the adoption of the poppy as the flower of Remembrance, still worn every year across the world on November 11th. It not only reminds us of those who have fought and died in all wars, sacrificing their lives for their country, but it also represents hope for a positive future and a world at peace.

Poppies no longer grow in Flanders Field. The area now sites WWI memorials and museums. The grave of Alexis Helmer has unfortunately been lost.

Sources: GreatWar.co.uk, history.com, poemanalysis.com

POETRY PIECES



Do you have a favourite poem you would like to share? Do you have any poems that you have written yourself? If you would like to be involved in

Poetry Pieces in the future, please send your contributions to :

sarahwhiteside@btinternet.com

FROM ENERGY AUDIT TO ACTION

Mike Buckland



Around 60 people from 30 local churches attended St John's & St Stephen's Church in Reading for a morning of talks, group work and panel discussion on how to implement a church energy audit.

In our Parish, St Mary's & St Peter's churches were audited in 2010 and 2020. (Electronic copies are available by email on request)

The event was chaired and introduced by Hannah Mann, the Oxford Diocese's Environment Officer. Matt Fulford, our 2020 auditor, explained the Church of England's ambitious strategy to get its assets to net zero carbon by 2030. Over 7% of churches are already net zero, with 100% electricity the norm. The key first step, he said, is to know the real use of a building: heating solutions vary accordingly. All week? Weekends only? For what?

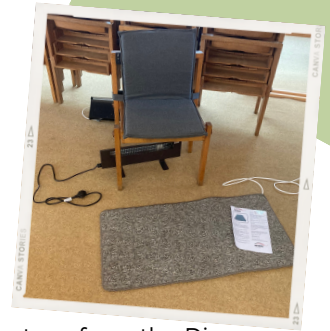
Churches and church schools are asked to implement energy audit recommendations and plan for boiler end of life. July 2022 faculty rule changes have made it easier to obtain permission e.g. under pew heating. Each church uses an Energy Footprint Tool to calculate its carbon footprint according to nationally agreed criteria.

The Oxford Diocese, which includes Berkshire, is seeing an overall drop in church energy use. Hannah explained its audit update process to move churches on from audits of a few years ago.

For the panel Q&A, the speakers were joined by Hannah Robertson from the Diocesan Advisory Committee. The DAC's role is partly similar to conservation officers in planning applications, whilst offering support on insulation, draught proofing, guttering, broken windows, floors, heating, solar pv and electric charging points. Heating, she said, accounts for around 70% of church energy use. A guiding principle is that church buildings must aid mission. Heatable cushions and mats, movable radiators and under pew heating solutions were on display (see photo).

The morning ended with questions from the floor on underfloor heating, biomass, batteries, solar pv and vicarages, for which the Diocese appointed a Property Director on 1st August.

For more details of what we are doing visit wargravechurch.org.uk/ecochurch



OUR CHANGING CLIMATE

OUR CHANGING CLIMATE: PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

Join Chris Merchant, Prof. of Meteorology at Reading University who is an authority on marine climate, earth temperatures and climate data records

Thursday 23rd November

7pm at All Saints Church, Wokingham

Tickets: sonningdeanery.com/the-walter-lectures

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ARCHDEACON'S INSPECTION VISIT

Mark Puddy

Just like CQC inspect healthcare institutions and OFSTED call on schools, the Church of England has a process for checking that Churchwardens work hard to ensure the smooth running of the Church & Buildings. This is the very important Archdeacon's Inspection Visit. In the old days, all Churches would be visited once a year. Bob Austen says they visited every year for 18 years when he was churchwarden. They never found anything wrong. I think that they must have had their suspicions to keep coming back.



Even before Covid, the visits had become less frequent but it couldn't last and inevitably this summer St Mary's, Wargrave received its inspection call up. We were sent a list of questions and Sue and I worked hard to amass all the required information. We were very grateful for the organisation of the Parish Office, and for information provided by our two wise advisors Peter Mayes and Christine Walker. 3 weeks before the visit, we were sent another completely different and much longer questionnaire, so heads down, we worked through this. We sent back a lot of information electronically, and produced impressive folders with all the other information, ready for the big day.

Our assessors, Revd. Jane Kraft and John Sutton, the Lay Chair of the Sonning Deanery, arrived on time. Fortified by strong coffee and Waitrose's finest biscuits, together we walked around the church and churchyard, and clipboards in hand, looked at the many church processes and policies, the safe storage of valuables and countless other checks, undoubtedly impressing them with our newly acquired detailed knowledge

Two and a half hours later, it was over! As Sue and I are relatively new to the job it was useful to be made to look through various areas and we do feel that we now have a better grasp on things. Jane and John are yet to visit St Peter's and St Paul's, after which they will compile their report on the Parish and we will relax until the next time.

PCC REPORT

Sheila Williams

19 members attended the meeting with 5 apologies for absence.

The following points were highlighted:

- Improved internet connectivity is progressing
- The website has been updated with new safeguarding policies
- It is expected that stewardship will be down £5K-£10K in 2023 compared to 2022. There is a plan to encourage giving amongst the congregation
- New charges for the hire of the Church Centre & Hannen Room were approved
- Plans for the installation of toilets at Knowl Hill Church are progressing
- Advent devotionals are on sale at £6 in the Church
- RE Inspired Programme for Schools was proposed and greeted with enthusiasm
- The draft Job Description for the Youth Worker shared. PCC to comment ASAP
- Proposal for special 'celebratory services' in place of 1st Sunday All Age Service was discussed, target date January 2024
- A new welcome campaign will be organised, under the direction of Richard Eves
- The Annual Parish Church Meeting will be held on Sunday 14th April 2024

HAVE YOU MET?

Kay Bruce



Kay has lived locally all her life and is settled in Knowl Hill Common. She has been a regular member of St. Peter's since 2016, serving as one of the catering team, a reader and a recently-appointed sidesperson.

Kay works full time for the N.H.S., recently celebrating her 46 years with the institution! Her current role, a security specialist, is demanding and includes advising on a wide range of security issues and investigating reports of assault or theft. Despite the pressures the work can bring, Kay loves her work and can't imagine doing anything else.

Looking back, Kay remembers attending Sunday School in Twyford and, when the family moved to Knowl Hill, she joined the Girl Guides, automatically becoming involved in the church by attending specific festivals. Kay was confirmed at the age of 17, although, on reflection, she feels that she was too young to fully understand the implications of this and underneath remained unsure of what it actually meant. As a result, she doesn't feel she was committed to the Lord at this stage.

Time moved on and Kay married Jim in 2005. As he attended St Andrew's UR Church, Kay naturally accompanied him, still feeling like a 'fair-weather' Christian, attending mostly on special occasions e.g. Easter and Christmas.

In 2012, Kay's mum, living alone since Kay's dad's death, was admitted to hospital following a fall. Leaving Jim in Wokingham, where they were living, Kay returned 'home' to look after the dogs and prepare for her mum's return. Unfortunately, Kay's mum died in hospital and didn't return home.

Following discussions, Kay and Jim moved into the 'family' house. Needing modernisation, they began planning changes

to update their new home.

Within a year, however, Jim was diagnosed with lung cancer and plans were delayed somewhat. Nevertheless, alterations were eventually completed, and Kay is grateful for the time they had in their newly refurbished home before Jim died in 2016. She treasures the memory of how Jim loved living in the home he had helped create and is also comforted by reminiscences of her parents there.

Following Jim's death, Kay felt blessed to have friends around her, but always rejected invitations to become involved in activities. Realising that she was becoming isolated, Kay took the plunge and began to say 'yes'. She was introduced to Lesley Bell, a member of St Peter's, and before long, Lesley had involved Kay in many things, including an event at church.

Being back in St Peter's felt natural to Kay. With time, she found her faith growing; something that had always been present but dormant was released and strengthened. She gradually committed her whole life to the Lord and is now thrilled that her faith is so important to her.

Sarah Whiteside

OCTOBER RAMBLE: Sunday 29th October

Jane Austen

A small but perfectly formed group of 8 met in Wokingham on Sunday 24th September for a delightful ramble through open countryside, so close to the town centre.

The weather was lovely as we set forth to our first interesting location which was Lucas Hospital, a beautiful building that was built in 1665 and is the only Grade 1 listed building in Wokingham. We then passed close by Ludgrove School, a preparatory school whose 'old boys' included the royals William and Harry.

Further along, the route took us through Garrick Plantation and it was easy to visualise the once tree-less heath that existed here before the land was enclosed in 1817. It is now managed by the Forestry Commission.

On the return leg we passed the fruit growing fields at Grays Farm along a footpath known as Luckley Path, which has existed for over 500 years. We crossed a small bridge over the diminutive Emm Brook, a reminder of the many tanneries which stood on its banks when leather was a major industry in the town.

Returning to the town centre, we enjoyed a tasty lunch at the Lord Raglan and all agreed it had been another lovely Ramble with Bob!



RAMBLE WITH BOB

RAMBLES IN 2024

Bob Austen

If you would like to join us in 2024 on one of our walks we would be delighted to welcome you to the Ramblin' Group. Please contact Bob Austen for more information.



Future ramble dates for your Diaries

March 31st
April 28th
May 26th
June 23rd
July 28th
August 31st



Email: austenrobert@hotmail.com
Phone: 0118 940 3038 or Mobile: 07970 611013

HARVEST FESTIVAL SERVICE & SUPPER at St Mary's

Mark Puddy & Annette Dart

On a sunny Sunday morning in early October, we walked into St Mary's to be dazzled by the autumnal golds, russets and scarlets of the floral Harvest Festival decorations, including potatoes, masterfully overseen and arranged by Sheila Williams.



The Music Group were in good voice, inspiring the congregation with rousing hymns fondly remembered from childhood. The fields were ploughed, the seed was scattered, the rain refreshed all to an amazing audiovisual production with delightful images for every line of the hymn provided by Lis Hobden and the Office.

The Bible reading, about Paul and Barnabas being mistaken for gods in Lystra, was used by Camilla as an example in her talk on recognition, telling us a great story of a vicar who always welcomed the down and outs with a sandwich and a drink on a bench, which was how a rather bedraggled bishop was greeted by the vicar's young daughter when he came to visit her father.

As we are now in the season of 'Strictly', it was most appropriate that the last song was the Harvest Samba, which encourages us to eat our greens. accompanied by Lis with gusto, and some indeterminate samba-lite jigging around in the pews, for which Craig would have given at most, 1 point. What's more is, through remarkable generosity, there were wonderful food donations to Yeldall and Reading FAITH Foodbank. Hurrah!!



HARVEST IN THE PARISH

Harvest Supper

To celebrate this harvest-time thirty eager and chatty members of Wargrave church gathered together to enjoy a wonderful, shared supper in the Church Centre on Saturday 7th October.

Camilla Cook and Steve Witney produced delicious meat and vegetarian chillis with baked potatoes, and these were accompanied by many and varied amounts of donated tasty colourful salads bursting with all things good, and fresh from many Wargrave gardens and allotments.



The dessert table was worthy of a Great British Bake Off final! Apple cake, trifle, lemon mousse, summer pudding, fresh fruit salad, rhubarb and apple crumbles with custard and cream to name but a few of the options. For those who preferred a nibble of cheese to something sweet there was a full cheese board selection and biscuits.

The evening ran smoothly and serenely as the happy group chatted and laughed and enjoyed each other's company and shared all types of fruit cordials, wine and even Champagne! It was a lovely occasion with delicious food for which we are all so grateful, and it was wonderful to share precious time and fellowship in our church family.

Special thanks to the excellent event team of Camilla Cook, Sue and Steve Witney, Barbara Ratings, Helen Gradon and Annette Dart for setting up, serving, clearing up and a spot of cooking too!



HARVEST FESTIVAL SERVICE & LUNCH at St Peter's

Lesley Bell

After the lovely Harvest festival service taken by Revd. Steve, on Sunday 1st October, we all met in the village hall for a wonderful bring and share lunch. The food contributions were absolutely delicious. A big thank you to all who attended and contributed.

The food donations were taken to Foodshare in Maidenhead who were overwhelmed with the generosity of the folks in Knowl Hill.



JUNIOR CHURCH: Nativity & Tree Lighting

Annie Hobden da Silva

This year, we'll watch the Nativity and we'll light the Christmas tree all on the same day. A real community event.

Two years ago my baby girl Arabella played the role of baby Jesus in our Nativity. She was very convincing. She looked at Mary, played by another Arabella, and gave her a rather stern look, like she was on a very serious and urgent mission.

Thankfully, I had just changed her nappy. So it must have just been the sheer weight of the role upon her. There was so much more as well; the children sharing the mic, the mandatory singing of Away in a Manger, the rain! That was Nativity.

I also remember the big moment when we lit the Christmas tree for the first time on Mill Green! It was dark and it was cold, perhaps drizzling as well, but gradually a crowd emerged from everywhere. John shared a quick word. We sang a few Christmas carols, sipping some mulled wine. A lovely addition to the Christmas calendar.

These were two different events on different days. But this year that is changing. Both events will take place on Saturday 9th December starting at 4pm with the open-air Nativity.

Are you interested in helping us? Would you like your child to have a role in the Nativity? Email Annie at annie@wargravechurch.org.uk and let's see what we can do together.

And if you are wondering what you will do on Christmas Eve, don't worry. The Nativity is being replaced with a Crib Service in the church so there will still be a chance to hear the Christmas Story and sing carols on Christmas Eve.

All Age Services Update

Over the past year, the weekly pattern of Sunday services at St Marys has included an All Age service at 9.45am on the first Sunday of each month, when the Junior Church children remain in church to worship alongside the adult congregation. The aim has always been to make this service short and with content suitable for all ages. However, as we reviewed the services, we realised that in 2023 over half these first Sundays fell during school holidays, when families with school-age youngsters are often away on holiday or visiting family. Therefore, the decision has been made to plan in slightly fewer All Age services throughout 2024, placing them on Sundays which fall within term-time, choosing special themes for these services, and publicising them well, especially amongst younger families in our community. The plan for now is to have All Age services at 9.45am on the following Sundays:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| January 7th - New beginnings for a new year | September 15th - Harvest |
| May 19th - Pentecost - the Church's birthday | December 15th - Christingle |
| June 16th - Father's Day | |
| July 7th - Summer holidays are coming/moving on | |





EVENTS

2023

NOVEMBER

Dinner & Crafts
Saturday 11th at 5pm

DECEMBER

Christingle Making
Saturday 2nd at 4pm

Christingle Service & Brunch
Sunday 3rd at 9.45am

The Nativity on Mill Green
Saturday 9th at 4pm
followed by turning on of the
Wargrave Christmas Tree lights

Sing-a-Long Carols for under 5s
Sunday 10th at 3pm

Crib Service
Sunday 24th at 4pm

Family Carols
Sunday 24th at 6pm

FUN, FAITH & FRIENDSHIP

December in the Parish

Friday 1st	All Day	Advent Windows (until 24th Dec)
Saturday 2nd	9am	Mill Green Leaf Clearing
	9am	Christmas Ladies' Breakfast
	2pm	Annual Christmas Raffle: Knowl Hill VH
Sunday 3rd	4pm	Christingle Making
	9.45am	Advent Sunday - Christingle: St Mary's followed by Christmas Brunch
Thursday 7th	10.30am	Holy Communion: St Peter's
	7pm	Christmas Wreath Making
Saturday 9th	4pm	The Nativity & Christmas Tree Lighting on Mill Green
Sunday 10th	9.15am	Holy Communion: St Paul's
	9.45am	Advent 2: Holy Communion: St Mary's
	3pm	Sing-a-Long Carols for under 5s
Thursday 14th	12 noon	CAMEO: Christmas Lunch
Saturday 16th	9am	St Mary's Christmas Decorating

Christmas Week

Sunday 17th	9.45am	Advent 3: Morning Worship: St Mary's
	3pm	Carol Service: St Peter's
	6pm	Carol Service: St Mary's
Tuesday 19th	2pm	Senior Carols & Afternoon Tea
Sunday 24th	9.45am	Advent 4: Holy Communion: St Mary's
	3pm	Carol Service: St Paul's
	4pm	Crib Service: St Mary's
	6pm	Family Carols: St Mary's
	11.15pm	Midnight Communion: St Mary's
Monday 25th	8am	Holy Communion: St Mary's
	9.15am	Village Praise: St Peter's
	9.45am	Parish Holy Communion: St Mary's

ADVENT WINDOWS

Patricia Vella



Although it feels too early to start planning for Christmas it is time to start putting together the list of people doing Advent Windows so that it can be published for the start of December. Over the years we have had many wonderful creative windows and garden displays with both religious and secular themes.

The Advent windows are an opportunity to remind our neighbours of the true meaning of Christmas. A couple of years ago St Mary's and Our Lady of Peace parishioners contributed many lovely religious themed windows reminding everyone of the importance of the Christmas story.

This year Camp Mohawk will be providing the display for the 1st December and we are hoping sales of the map will generate funds for this local charity.

If you are interested please email patricia_vella@hotmail.com, who can talk through ideas and help you put a suitable window together if you would like some help (emailing to express interest does not commit you).



Eoin Sharkey's Window illustrating the Annunciation


CHRISTMAS IS COMING

A promotional graphic for a survey. The background is a vibrant green, decorated with pine branches, red berries, and a red Christmas ball. On the left side, there is a white sheet of music with a treble clef and some notes. The text is centered and reads: "What's your favourite CHRISTMAS CAROL?" in large white letters. Below this, it says "COMPLETE THE SURVEY to enter to win x2 tickets to The Annual Concert" in red and white. A QR code is located in the bottom right corner. At the bottom, it provides the deadline and date for the survey and concert, along with the website URL.

What's your favourite

CHRISTMAS CAROL?

COMPLETE THE SURVEY
to enter to win x2 tickets to
The Annual Concert



Responses by 10th November 2023. T&Cs apply.
Annual Concert is Saturday 18th November
wargravechurch.org.uk/carols
WARGRAVECHURCH.ORG.UK

CHURCHYARD & MILL GREEN LEAF COLLECTION

Bob Austen

Everyone is invited to join in our annual leaf collection morning on **Saturday 2nd December**. Our good friends at Beechwood Tree Care will be joining us to gather the leaves on the Mill Green, and we shall need a goodly number of volunteers to attend to the Churchyard and the borders of Mill Green. Please bring a leaf rake and wear good footwear as the ground will probably be soft and damp.

Meet at 9am at the Lych Gate. Coffee and bacon butties will be served during the morning, what more could we possibly want? Yes I know, decent weather!

THE ADVENT OF GLORY: ON SALE NOW

Annette Dart

Slow down and appreciate the wonder of Christmas with this beautiful book of daily Advent devotions and prayers.

Packed with biblical wisdom, truths and encouragement. Sarah Whiteside has reviewed a preview copy, and is very happy to recommend. Sarah ordered in bulk which means the price is only £6 per copy!

Annette Dart will have copies for sale after each 9.45am Sunday service at St Mary's. Please contact her on annette@familydart.com to reserve your copy. There is also a sign-up sheet on the table at the back of St Mary's should you find this the easiest way to register your interest.



DECEMBER EVENTS



St Mary's Church Wargrave
With Knowl Hill

CHRISTMAS WREATH MAKING

Thursday 7th December
7.30 pm

An evening of Christmas preparation
Wreath making, a talk and festive canapés
Tickets £30

Tickets from Lucinda Bryers
lucinda_ross@hotmail.com

SKITTLES EVENING

Karen Larkins

On 23rd September St Peter's in Knowl Hill held a fundraising event of Skittles in the village hall.

Eight teams pitted themselves against each other in a good humoured contest. Strikes were attained by all teams and by competitors of all ages receiving applause and deserved pats on the back.

Narrow victors on the night were the team of yellow dots, closely followed by the blue dots who took the title in 2022. The individual winner of the killer round was the young Tom who has been unbeaten for the last two years - go Tom!

As always, there was quite a team of quiet helpers. A special thanks to David who was our master of ceremonies for the evening and to Lesley who organised our entertainment and food. To those who manned the entry desk, served at the bar, managed the raffle, helped serve food and clear up afterwards, thank you. Your efforts are essential and appreciated.

Thank you to all who came in support and we hope you enjoyed your evening. The money raised will help go towards the running and improvement of our church.

Hope to see you next year.



JOB OPPORTUNITY AT KNOWL HILL VILLAGE HALL

Knowl Hill Village Hall

Knowl Hill Village Hall is a registered charity and is situated in a semi rural location in Berkshire and is looking for a live in caretaking couple to help clean, maintain and be the keyholders for the Hall.

The charity runs a thriving Village Hall for the community and a wide range of hirers. The Hall is used for community events, various regular classes and private functions.

The charity is looking for a live-in couple to maintain and deliver high quality, clean facilities for the Hall's users. Duties include, but are not limited to:

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- preparing the Hall for use and supervising users, where necessary



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Full job description, more information and to apply, please send your CV to chairkhvh@gmail.com. References and DBS check required.

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Smokeless Fuels	At least once a year
Wood	Quarterly when in use
Coal	Quarterly when in use
Oil & Gas	Once a year

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