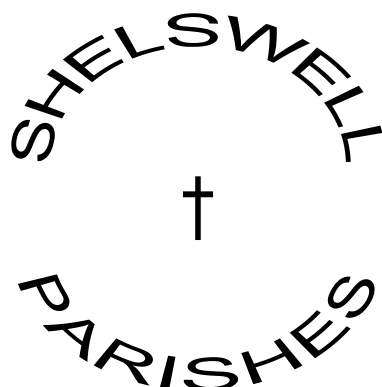


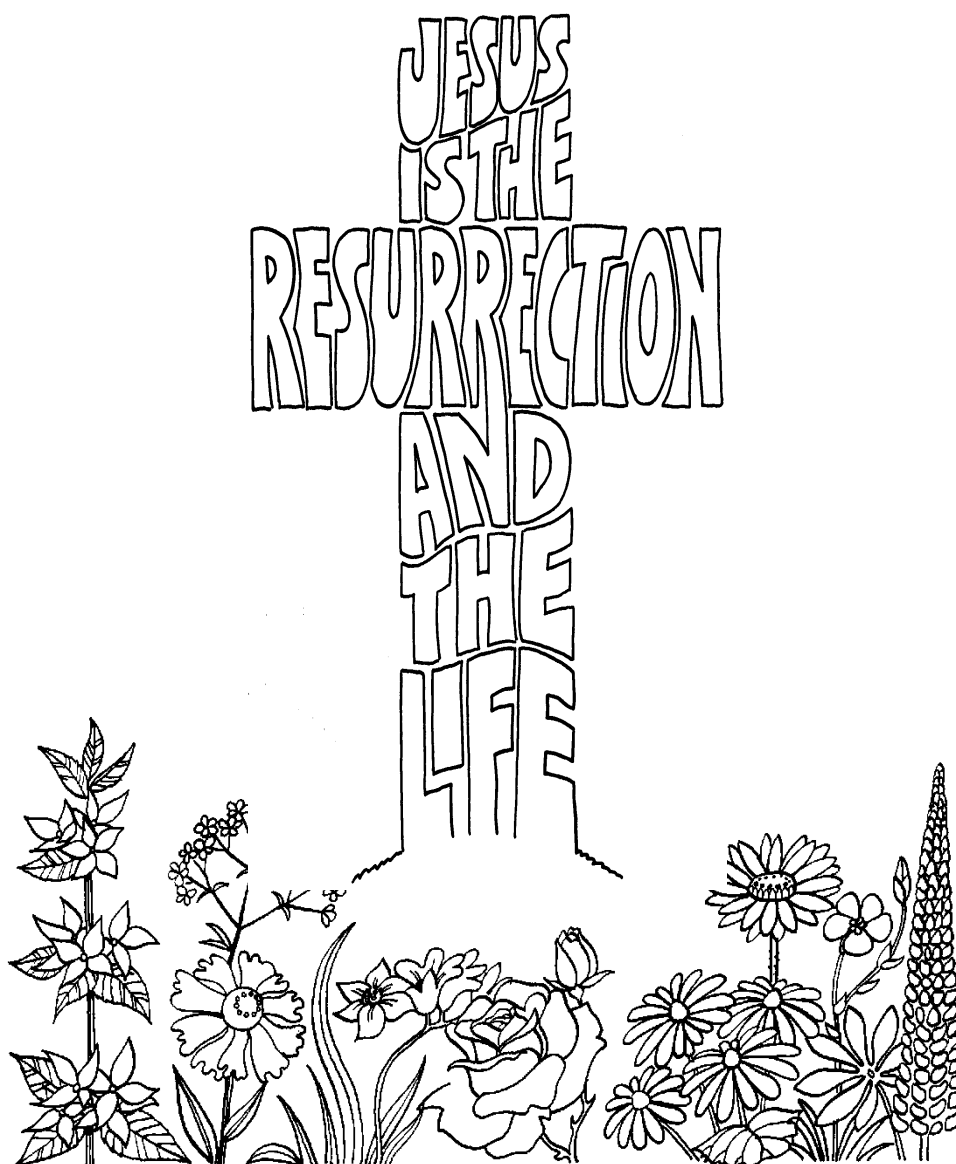
Shelswell News

The magazine of the Shelswell Group of Churches

Cottisford
Fringford
Hardwick
Mixbury
Stoke Lyne



Finnere
Godington
Hethe
Newton Purcell
Stratton Audley



SHELLOWELL BENEFICE MISSION STATEMENT

The Shelswell Family of Churches aims to bring people closer to God and to show the love of Jesus Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit to everyone.

MINISTRY TEAM

RECTOR: The Reverend Alice Goodall, The Rectory, Water Stratford Road, Finmere, Buckingham MK18 4AT
Telephone: 01280 848192 Email rector@shelswellparishes.info **(Normal day off – Friday)**

BENEFICE ADMINISTRATOR: Mrs Becky Adams, c/o The Rectory (as above) Email admin@shelswellparishes.info
Administrator's normal office hours: Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9.00 am – 1.00 pm

CURATE: Revd Yvonne Mullins, 10c St Michael's Close, Fringford, Bicester OX27 8DF
Telephone 01869 278090 Email curate@shelswellparishes.info

ASSOCIATE MINISTER: The Reverend Liz Welters, 19 Scampton Close, Bicester OX26 4FF
Telephone 01869 249481 Email lizwelters@yahoo.co.uk

LICENSED LAY MINISTER: Mrs Penny Wood, 8 Crosslands Fringford, Bicester, Oxon. OX27 8DF
Telephone: 01869 277310 Email penelope.wood@bopenworld.com

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WORKER: Jen Iddon Telephone: 07368 240878 Email: jeniddoncfw@gmail.com

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EPISCOPAL AREA OF THE DIOCESE OF OXFORD**

HOLY TRINITY ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, HETHE,

Mass: 8 am on Sunday. Occasional 12 noon Traditional Latin Mass.

Weekday Mass: 9.30 am Monday and Friday

Priest: Very Rev. Canon John Batthula, Henley House, 12 The Causeway, Bicester, OX26 6AW.

Telephone: 01869 253277

Website: <http://www.holytrinityheth.co.uk/>

SHELLOWELL NEWS

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EDITORIAL ENQUIRIES: Rosemary Farmery, 17 Cavendish Place, Stratton Audley, Bicester OX27 9BN
Telephone: 01869 277402 Email editor@shelswellparishes.info

ADVERTISING ENQUIRIES: Mrs Becky Adams, Benefice Administrator, The Rectory, Water Stratford Road, Finmere, Buckingham MK18 4AT Tel 01280 848192 Email admin@shelswellparishes.info

SHELLOWELL NEWS TREASURER: Phillip Rushforth, 7 Chinalls Close, Finmere, Buckingham, MK18 4BQ
Tel: 01280 848534 Email prfinmere@btinternet.com

Deadlines for the **May 2021** edition of Shelswell News

To Magazine Correspondents **Wednesday 14 April 2021**

Correspondents to Editor: **Thursday 15 April 2021** at editor@shelswellparishes.info

All articles must be submitted in WORD in a format that can be copied and pasted PLEASE

www.shelswellparishes.info

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ShelswellNews/>



MINISTER'S LETTER

Passion Sunday 2021 – I walked across the footpaths to deliver some Fringford Village Voices to the houses by Fringford Mill. There's a point where you reach an opening into a field that curves around towards the stream in the distance that feeds the water mill, and where the field also slopes uphill back toward the village. On the top of the slope there used to be tree, standing quite tall, but leafless and dry. I stopped and looked over the field, and suddenly noticed that the tree wasn't there; it's lying on its side, collapsed. I wondered when it happened. That great tree; when did it finally topple and fall, alone and unseen? In a storm? In the night? How many thousands of people across the world, recently, have slipped away in a similar fashion alone and unseen?

There has been much sorrow in the past year, either because death has hit us personally, or because the sheer scale of the numbers afflicted weighs on us all. The Archbishop of York, talking on the radio this morning said how the story in the gospels of the woman who had suffered with haemorrhages for twelve years had been a source of comfort to him in the pandemic. What struck him in the story is that Jesus, surrounded at the time by "a great crowd that pressed upon him" none the less senses the need of a specific individual who only dares to "touch his cloak", and heals her. We need to know that no person or part of God's creation is of indifference to God rather, as Jesus is reported as saying in Luke's Gospel, "Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten in God's sight". God *sees* us.

God is with each one of us, whether we sense it or not, in life and in death. Today, as we enter Passiontide, we are going to see what that 'being with us' means for God. As he journeys to the cross it means that God in Christ has "born our griefs and carried our sorrows." In session 5 of the 'Inspired by Art' Lent Group we looked at a painting of Christ carrying his cross. It is by an unknown painter, Italian, Venetian, about 1500 [I will try to put it up on the Shelswell Churches website]. Made as a private devotional work, as an aid for prayer and contemplation, this unflinching depiction of Christ's misery is an emotionally powerful image. The viewer is drawn above all to the eyes; they express such sorrow and suffering. This is what it means for God to be with us – a sharing of our humanity, our pains, our deaths. Only by going through this can God bring us to the other side, the empty tomb and the risen Christ. We cannot have Easter without the Crucifixion.

The meaning of the events often become clearer if we can 'experience' them in some way; so, during Holy Week [the first week in April] read the Passion narratives in the Gospels, journey through the week with Christ, contemplate the events, enter into the story as best you can. Then, on reaching Easter Day, rejoice that Christ is risen, and *see* that we are a new creation.

Penny Wood LLM



BIBLE READINGS



Sunday 4 th April	Easter Day		Acts 10 v34-43
		<i>or</i>	Isaiah 25 v6-9
			1 Corinthians 15 v1-11
		<i>or</i>	Acts 10 v34-43
			John 20 v1-18
Sunday 11 th April	2 nd Sunday of Easter	<i>or</i>	Mark 16 v1-8
			Acts 4 v32-35
			1 John 1 v1 – 2 v2
			John 20 v19-end
Sunday 18 th April	3 rd Sunday of Easter		Acts 3 v12-19
			1 John 3 v1-7
			Luke 24 v36b-48
Sunday 25 th April	4 th Sunday of Easter		Acts 4 v5-12
			1 John 3 v16-end
			John 10 v11-18

ANNUAL MEETINGS, ELECTORAL ROLLS AND OTHER EXCITING THINGS!

Why bother with annual meetings?

Like all charities we are required to hold annual meetings to review the previous year and to elect the leadership team for the next year. Our usual annual meetings are actually made up of two separate parts; the “Annual Meeting of Parishioners” and the “Annual Parochial Church Meeting”.

1) At the **Annual Meeting of Parishioners**, residents (church attenders or not) and non-residents who are on the parish electoral roll elect the Church Wardens. Church Wardens are officers of the bishop and their role is to actively represent the congregation and to co-operate with the Rector. They also have specific responsibilities connected to the fabric of the building and its contents but these responsibilities are often shared with the Parochial Church Council (PCC). Those wishing to stand for the role of Church Warden need to be proposed and seconded by other residents or those on the parish electoral roll and the nomination forms need to be with the Rector before the meeting commences. Each parish is entitled to two church wardens – we have empty posts in Finmere, Fringford, Hethe, and Stratton Audley

2) **Annual Parochial Church Meeting** everyone resident in our parishes, or on our electoral rolls, is very welcome to come along to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, although only those on the church electoral roll can vote. **If you would like to come to the APCM but will need transport then please do get in touch and we will see**

Due to the pandemic, the deadline for APCMs has been extended to the end of July, but we will be aiming to hold the meetings in April and May. We hope that all the meetings will be held in person but should the Government’s road map get delayed or there be a local surge in cases, then they would be via Zoom. The dates are::

Cottisford and Hardwick - Tuesday 25th May 7.30 pm
 Finmere – Wednesday 12th May 7.30 pm
 Fringford – Wednesday 19th May 7.30 pm
 Hethe – Monday 24th May 7.30 pm
 Mixbury – Wednesday 2nd June 7.30 pm
 Newton Purcell – Monday 17th May 7.00 pm
 Stratton Audley – Wednesday 23rd June 7.30 pm
 Stoke Lyne – Monday 10th May 7.00 pm

Why sign up for the electoral roll?

The church electoral roll is different from the Government's electoral register. It entitles you to vote at the APCM and to stand for the PCC. But it is also an expression of support for that church.

To be eligible to be on the electoral roll, you need either to be resident in the parish or attend church at least once a month (or would have done if not prevented by the pandemic, illness etc).

If you are not on the church electoral roll, why not sign up to it now!

Why not stand for election for the PCC?

Most of our PCCs would welcome new members. Stratton Audley, in particular, is desperate for some! As a member of the PCC you share in the leadership of the church with the Rector, and being on the PCC provides a good opportunity to help shape the church and its activities. It involves attending 4 -8 meetings a year.

If you have any queries on the above then do not hesitate to contact either myself or Becky Adams on 01280 848192.

Alice Goodall

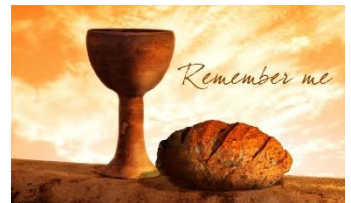
HOLY WEEK AND EASTER



Experience Easter / Easter Trails

On Monday 22nd March for Fringford and Tuesday 23rd March for Finmere, our local primary schools visited their local churchyard for Experience Easter outdoors. There were five 'stations' around the churchyard providing an opportunity to reflect on aspects of the Easter story. We will be leaving the stations up until after Easter, and you are very welcome to go along and follow the trail yourself.

And Muddy Church on 21st March also featured a trail exploring the Easter story from Palm Sunday through to Easter Day. We will leave this one on display in the churchyards at Stoke Lyne and Stratton Audley – you will need your phone to read the QR codes for this one. Again do go along and give it a go.



Palm Sunday 28th March:

We will be delivering a palm cross to everyone on the electoral rolls of our church – if you are not on the roll and would like one, please just let us know. (and think about joining the electoral roll – see page on APCMs!)

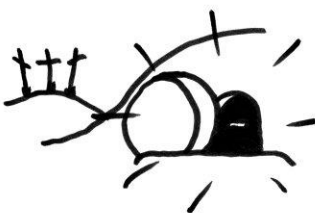


Maundy Thursday 1st April: Online service at 7 pm

Good Friday 2nd April: we will be reposting the Good Friday reflections that Yvonne prepared for us last year – if you saw them last year, you will know that they are very special and deserve a second outing. If not, then this Good Friday is your opportunity. You can watch them at any time on Good Friday, or join with us at 2 pm to follow one or other of them.



Easter Sunday 4th April – we will be back in church for our Easter Communion! Hurray!



9.30 am: Fringford, Hardwick, Mixbury, Newton Purcell, Stoke Lyne

11 am: Cottisford, Finmere (with baptism), Hethe, Godington, Stratton Audley

It would be lovely to see you - you will need to **book your seats** (01280 848192 / admin@shelswellparishes.info) and **wear a face covering**

The 11 am service at Finmere will also be livestreamed onto Facebook (Shelswell News group) and later uploaded to YouTube (Shelswell Parishes channel).

And after Easter...

Sunday 11th April

There will be a service of Morning Prayer at 9.30 am in Fringford. Please book your seats for this service. (01280 848192 / admin@shelswellparishes.info).

And then we embark on a different pattern of services – this will run until the end of September when it will be reviewed. **For services from 18th April, you will no longer need to book your seat**, although we will keep a record of your presence at the service for 'track and trace' purposes.

18th April	8.15 am	BCP Communion	Finmere
	9.30 am	Mixbury 45	Mixbury
	11 am	Holy Communion	Fringford
	3 pm	Muddy Church	Stoke Lyne
25th April	9.30 am	Holy Communion	Stratton Audley
	11 am	Holy Communion	Stoke Lyne
	6 pm	Evensong	Hardwick

Service pattern from 18th April to end September

From 18th April, as we begin to emerge from lockdown and are able to worship once again in our church buildings, we are embarking on a different pattern of services. We will run with this until the end of September.

You will notice that there are fewer services than pre-Covid. That is for three reasons:

- over the last year we have moved back and forth from one service online to two services in church on a Sunday. With the exception of special services and festivals, we have noticed that the more services we have, the fewer people attend each one of them. The total number of people worshipping in the Benefice remains the same!
- we would like to keep a little of the 'benefice feel' that we have had whilst worshipping together through the pandemic, whilst still enabling each village to have services in its church
- we would like a pattern that will be more sustainable (and enjoyable) by the ministry team in the longer term

We are bound to be missing your favourite service. In time, it may be that some churches decide to add in additional services conducted by members of that church so you may yet see it return!

A number of people have told us that they have really valued being able to join the services online. Some of these have very young children. Others wouldn't make it to a service in church because of health or mobility issues, or because of their working hours. So we plan to continue to live stream the 11 am service each week.

From 18th April, you will no longer need to book your place for a service, though requirements for socially distanced seating, face coverings, no hymn singing are likely to continue for some time.

	1 st Sunday	2 nd Sunday	3 rd Sunday	4 th Sunday
8.15 am			BCP Communion Alternating Finmere / Hethe	
9.30 am	Morning prayer Hethe	Holy Communion Newton Purcell	Mixbury 45 Mixbury	Holy Communion Stratton Audley
11 am	Holy Communion Finmere	BCP Communion Cottisford	Holy Communion Fringford	Holy Communion Stoke Lyne
Afternoon / Evening	6 pm Compline Alternating Stratton Audley / Godington	6 pm Evening Communion Alternating Stoke Lyne / Fringford	3 pm Muddy Church Venue will vary	6 pm Evensong Hardwick

When are the churches open for private prayer?

Cottisford	Sundays	10 – 4	From 7 th March 2021
Finmere	daily	10 – 4	After Easter
Fringford	daily	10 – 4	From 7 th March
Godington	Saturdays and Sundays	10 – 4	From 7 th March
Hardwick	daily	10 – 4	From 13 th March
Hethe	Sundays	10 – 4	From Easter
Mixbury			
Newton Purcell	Sundays	10 - 4	From 14 th March
Stoke Lyne	Saturdays and Sunday	10 - 4	From 6 th March
Stratton Audley	daily	10 – 4	From Easter



Advanced Notice!

Come and be part of the best week of the summer holidays!

So due to Covid our launch was postponed by a year but now we are gearing up for our first **LIGHTHOUSE!**

Lighthouse is a Christian holiday club providing a week of fun activities for children. It will run from **Monday 26th July to Friday 30th July**, 10 am to 3.30 pm (timings to be confirmed) at Finmere School.

Open to all children aged 5 to 11.

Registration for children opens on 1st May, but save the date now!

It will be a little different from what we had planned last year:

In order to make it as safe as possible:

- we will have three groups of children (Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 and 10 plus) meeting entirely in their own bubbles. Places will be limited to 15 in each bubble.
- volunteers will be linked to one bubble only. Each bubble will have its own equipment and own area of the school. There will be no interaction between bubbles.
- each bubble will be led by a volunteer who is also a teacher and well used to managing these situations. All volunteers will be asked to carry out a lateral flow test on Sunday and mid week.

We already have a solid core of volunteers but could do with a few more people to help out so that we can ensure the children have an incredible time. Whether you are an adult or a teenager, if you would be up for helping out, do drop me an email or give me a ring.

Alice Goodall

rector@shelswellparishes.info / 01280 848192



REGISTRY

This section will announce any baptisms, marriages and funerals that have recently taken place within the Shelswell benefice

Obituaries

William Joseph 'Frank' O'NEILL

5th November 1951 – 31st January 2021

the Red Lion, and others lined the streets as the cortège made its way around the village. It has to be said that the hearse set a brisk pace for those following, who were probably grateful when it stopped for a short while outside the pub to listen to the gentle sounds of Irish music caressing the air before progressing to the church.

Frank died on 31st January in John Radcliffe hospital, aged 69 years. He succumbed to Covid-19 following a short period in hospital and after battling health problems over the last few years. Unfortunately the Covid travel restrictions meant that his daughters Christine and Caroline had been unable to be with him whilst he was in hospital and were unable to attend the funeral in person. And far from the church being packed, as it would have been under normal circumstances, numbers had to be limited to just under 30 close family and friends. Thankfully the service could be live streamed so that Frank's daughters and many others were able to be there virtually.

Father Paul Martin, who knew Frank well from his days as catholic priest in Bicester, conducted a small requiem mass for Frank in the morning, and was able to play a full part in the funeral service itself, giving the address, leading the prayers and the commendation. There were moving tributes from Frank's brother John and from his friend Roger Mahoney, as well as pre-recorded tributes from his daughters from Ireland. There was music chosen from some of the tracks Caroline and Christine remember singing with their dad in the car – Neil Diamond's 'Hello again', James Taylor's 'Close your eyes' and Kenny Rodgers' 'The Gambler'. And two hymns to listen to: Abide with me and Jerusalem (which although very English Frank loved from his rugby days).

Caroline and Christine write about their Dad:

Many of you may know our Dad Frank as the warm pub landlord or the city broker, the generous host, but Caroline and I are going to tell you a bit about Frank the Dad. Recently our Dad Frank talked a lot about the past, the love he had for our mother Derry and wonderful memories he had spending time with us as children. It was without a doubt the most meaningful period of his life.

Our parents Frank and Derry were married for 30 years, they met at a London Irish rugby match when they were 21 and were married less than a year later. They first lived in Singapore then Hong Kong where Caroline was born New York where I arrived followed by Tunbridge Wells, Kent these were very happy years for Dad and Mum. As a father Dad was a modern man, our Mum always speaks about how lucky she was because Dad loved babies, shopping and cooking, after a busy week working in the city he would come home and take over. Mum would get coffee in bed and Dad would get us up and out doing the supermarket shop. Dad loved the attention he got particularly from the ladies in the supermarket who thought he was wonderful going around with his little girls. He was a man ahead of his time shopping, always cooking dinner at the weekends and spending all his spare time with his girls even bathing us - we loved bath time with Dad as he would make cones out of our hair and make us laugh which I now do with my children today.

He was very hands on and present, took us everywhere with him whether it was a rugby match at London Irish, racing at Sandown or one of our many visits to Uncle John's in Stratton Audley we had the best time driving around with him in our silver coup de ville Cadillac (which they shipped over from New York) singing Kenny Rogers, Neil Diamond and Tammy Wynette. In fact the music we chose for the service are all songs from our childhood including hymns we would have sung with Dad at mass on Sundays.

As children Caroline and I always ended up in our parent's bed and only recently Dad reminded me (when I was complaining about how my daughter insists on sleeping in my bed and waking me up), how I used to sleep on his pillow kicking him in the head while he tried to sleep. I'm sure it wasn't very comfortable but Dad smiled when he told the story and I never got kicked out because he loved the cuddles, he was a big softie if we cried he cried with us if we were upset he would want to know who upset us and track them down, he was very protective and we always knew if we had a problem he would be there for us to help in anyway he could.together Mum and Dad gave us a truly magical childhood and for that we will always feel incredibly lucky and grateful.

Frank was a pillar of the community and often the life and soul of the party, a bit of a legend in the village especially in the Red Lion. Whenever customers ordered good wine in the pub he would insist on joining their party and drinking their wine uninvited. He would also insist on singing Irish songs in the evening. A particular favourite was 'Paddy works on the railway' (In eighteen hundred and forty one I put my corduroy breeches on...) which was played at the end of the service of committal at the crematorium – a sad and solemn moment, but it was difficult not to break into an Irish jig.

Frank was, in the words of his brother John, a 'legend in his own lunchtime' and will be greatly missed by all in Stratton Audley. Our thoughts and prayers are with Caroline and Christine, John and Dilley, and all the family.

Ruth Sarah WEAVING (formerly known as Ruth GOLDTHORP)

11th September 1921 – 19th February 2021

Ruth Weaving lived for most of her life in Newton Purcell. She was in one of the cottages at the Bicester end of the village, with her daughter Joan living next door and her son Ron living opposite the church. She moved to Bicester just shortly before she remarried in 1981. So it was very fitting that she should return to the village to be laid to rest in the churchyard of St Michael and All Angels with husband Frank Weaving, and daughter Joan close by.

Ruth had lived most latterly at Cherwood House where she died. Sadly she did not make it to her 100th birthday, but 99 years is a pretty good age! Her funeral took place on Monday 15th March. In order to limit the risk to those attending, the family opted for a simple graveside funeral for close family. It was dry and not too cold, and the sun made an appearance to bless the service. Ruth's granddaughter Jane asked that the hymn 'Here I am, Lord' be played at the graveside – Ruth had been a church goer, and as she was nearing the end of her life had talked of the comfort she found in God. We listened to the passage from John 14 reminding us that because of Jesus we could be at peace about Ruth's passing, trusting that she had been led by Jesus into life eternal, life lived in the light and love and joy of God's. Jane had also asked that we read the poem 'Do not stand at my grave and weep', reminding us of all the ways that Ruth's memory would live on. The churchyard was full of primroses, and the family had brought some lovely flowers – it seemed a lovely and beautiful place to lay Ruth's body to rest in.

After the service, there was a little socially distanced catching up between family members, before they went on their way. Our thoughts and prayers are with them.

John 14: 27

Jesus said 'Peace I leave with you;
my peace I give to you. Do not let
your hearts be troubled, and do
not let them be afraid'.





God's Little Lambs

"Baby Lambs"



Come and Join Us

We can't wait to see you, although for the moment restrictions limit what we can do. But if you have young children who are not yet mobile, we'd like to invite you to 'Baby Lambs'!

- We need to stay in our own bubbles.
 - Bring our own drinks and snacks.
 - Bring your own baby mat / toys
- Any toys must be kept in our own bubbles.
- We cannot mix (hence babies not toddlers).
- Max 15 people, please book in advance.
 - Story, Chats and Prayers.



Wednesdays 10am – 10.45am
(Term Time)



Starting Wednesday 14th April
Stratton Audley Church

Contact Jen Iddon via jeniddoncfw@gmail.com



Muddy Church

Wondering while Wandering

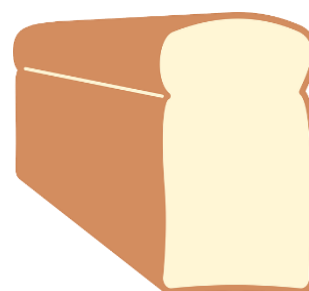
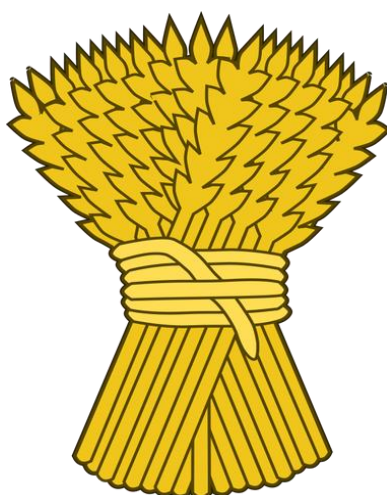
ROGATION

"Reaping what you sow"

Corinthians 9.6

Those who sow bountifully, also reap bountifully.

Come and join our fun with Muddy Church
3pm Sunday 25th April 2021
At St Peters Churchyard, Stoke Lyne.



*Due to ongoing COVID restrictions, we are able to meet in the Churchyard on Sunday 25th April, but we must remain in our household bubbles.
We look forward to welcoming you on Sunday 25th April 2021 at 3pm.

Children and Families

Hello all, Jen here, I hope that you are all beginning to recover now from the cold of winter, and are noticing the wonderful signs of spring all around us. New life and new hope rising up everywhere. Positivity and a way forward for us all.

It has been a more challenging lockdown this time, over the last few months, and as we emerge into life once again, and with Gods love and help, into our new world, let us take the experiences with us. Let us take hope and acceptance that we have made it through this one as well. To all who home-schooled their children during the first part of this year as well as juggling your own workload – you are all amazing!

I do appreciate that we have had a wonderful opportunity to spend time with our babies (of all ages!), and I do thank God for that. How many generations these days have that kind of special time, even with all the challenges that that brought us. I feel blessed to have had that extra time, the precious additional moments with my boys as they hurtle towards tween-age! My twins are 10 now and I still get cuddles and special time watching films together all snuggled up on the sofa, with the not to small dog spread over us too. But where that used to be only occasional, now we get to make time most days after our dinner, relaxing together. I treasure each moment of that, and having faced the school day with them, teaching them whichever subject is on the list for that day, and seeing them grow academically too, it is precious time.

I have to keep the positivity of the situation, God had given us so many opportunities within this pandemic, and I do feel it is very much up to us to seek them out. There is so much heartbreak for those who are battling with Covid, and indeed other illnesses too, and I pray each day for them. I pray for each person who is dealing with loss, sickness or the pain of grief, and I know that God will be with them, in some way.

I hope that you have all been enjoying our Wellies and Wiggles, and we continue with this each term time Wednesday morning on Facebook at 10am, have a look for “Shelswell Wellies & Wiggles”.

We also have our latest MUDDY CHURCH on Sunday 25th April and it’s another very exciting one. I hope you’ll all have a look at the separate advert showing you what will be going on. Rogation is the theme and this is so we can understand a bit more about blessing our crops and reflecting on our own ability to feed ourselves too.

Follow me on Growing with God on YouTube and Facebook – both titled “Growing with God”, a cross between Gardeners World for children and Mr Blooms Nursery. Filmed at my allotment, we have fun activities and stories, Insy the Spider will be helping, she’s so pretty with her stripey leggings! And join me in our Prayer Corner in The Potting Shed for some fun prayers and thoughts. Lets Grow Together.

God bless you all and I look forward to welcoming you all to our fun children and families activities.

To finish up I have a short prayer that we could say with our children;

Once upon a time...

Lord Jesus, you are always ready

to share your story with us.

As we go out into the week ahead,

may we all have ears to hear

so that we might grow.

Amen.

God bless you all, Jen X

April Word Search:

D	F	G	Y	G	O	D	F	H	J
L	I	F	E	E	G	U	R	A	L
O	Y	N	F	F	N	L	I	P	A
V	L	E	F	A	I	T	H	P	U
E	I	E	T	F	R	Y	O	Y	G
W	M	R	J	S	P	Q	P	N	H
A	A	G	E	N	S	U	E	U	O
W	F	L	O	W	E	R	O	S	C

FAITH
SUN
LIFE

LOVE
LAUGH
HAPPY

FAMILY
SPRING
GREEN

GOD
HOPE
FLOWER

Finmere Church of England School

Back to School!

It has been an exciting time for all of us at Finmere School, as we have been looking forward to all being back together for so long.

It has been wonderful to see all our children and families back together, and whilst we still have lots of guidelines to follow, we are really enjoying learning and playing together.

Our topic for the term has been Rumble & Roar, which has meant the children have been learning about the Amazon Rainforest, Dinosaurs and Fossils.

Willow Class enjoyed a super Fossil Hunt during their first week back at school. Who knew we had so many fossils hidden in our school grounds?

Over the next few weeks, we will begin to prepare for Easter and are looking forward to visiting Rev Alice at Church to learn more about the Easter story.





YOUR
SCHOOL
LOTTERY



WE'VE LAUNCHED A LOTTERY

Buy your tickets now to
help our fundraising

- Tickets cost just £1
- All profits go to our school
- Local cash prize every week
- Chance to win the £25,000 jackpot!
- Drawn every Saturday at 8pm First draw Saturday 24th April

To start supporting, visit:

yourschoollottery.co.uk

and search for: **Finnermere Primary**

Supporters must be 16 years of age or older



**Fringford C of E
Primary School**

Open Mornings

If you are considering our school for your child
next September - why not drop in and see us.

Please call or email the school office for more
information and to book your visit.

**Ofsted Good 2017
SIAMS Outstanding 2018**

Small Reception class
Beautiful outside space
Dedicated staff and well behaved pupils
Children welcome from all surrounding areas

01869 277397
office.3083@fringford.oxon.sch.uk
www.fringford.oxon.sch.uk





Nai's House is a unique, volunteer led registered charity in Bicester that provides suicide prevention and mental health support for people in the community aged up to 30. It is a free service and relies on grants from funding bodies and donations from the public in order to stay open and deliver services.

Our holistic approach helps our guests discover individualised skills and methods to better manage their mental health and increase long term emotional wellbeing. For some of our guests that may be through our 1-2-1 Supporters or our Counsellors, but for others it can just be about providing a safe space for creative and physical activities such as meditation; yoga; art; and rage release.

If you are needing help as a young person or parent, or know someone who is struggling, please call or text on 07437 497697 or email on hello@naishouse.org.uk

Nai's House is a charitable incorporated organisation registered with the charity commission on 9th November 2020.

Charity number: 1192238

Operating address: 15-16 Crown Walk, Bicester, Oxfordshire, OX26 6HY

Registered Address: Stable Yard, Vicarage Road, Stony Stratford, Bucks MK11 1BN

CHRISTAN AID

With every gift, we help people like Rose and stop this climate crisis

In Kenya, extreme weather is making it harder and harder to survive. For communities fighting the climate crisis, every last drop matters and every last one of us can help them thrive. The coronavirus pandemic has only increased the urgent need for families to access a reliable source of water.

The devastating climate crisis robs people of the water and food they need to live.

Rose walks for six hours to fetch water for her grandchildren. She tries hard to give them the kind of life she remembers from when she was a girl: when the rivers flowed with water and the crops bore fruit.

Rose and her grandchildren shouldn't have to go hungry. A simple earth dam, built with the help of Christian Aid's partners and your donations, could completely change her life. This Christian Aid Week, you can be one of the hundreds of thousands of our supporters who give, act and pray to stop this climate crisis driving people like Rose to hunger.

From envelope collections to walking 300,000 steps in May, Christian Aid Week brings people together as one community against global poverty and injustice.

This Christian Aid Week (10-16 May), please:

- **Give** generously to help ensure people like Rose fight this climate crisis.
- **Act** as we call on the UK Prime Minister to lead the world with ambitious climate action that will also address inequality (caid.org.uk/climate-justice-petition)
- **Pray** for a radical change of heart for politicians, and that as a global community we will care for our common home and for people living in poverty.

Together we **stop** this climate crisis. Join us at caweek.org

CLUB NEWS

Due to the current Coronavirus protective restrictions many events are cancelled for the time being:

Please watch this space.

KNIT FOR PEACE



The photo shows a very small selection of the items knitted for knit for peace. The charity would like to say a big thank you to everyone who made a contribution. The amount of knitting that Marion passed on was fantastic.

Any further contributions to be left at 2 Church Close, Fringford. Please ring Marion Crowther on 01869 277404 prior to dropping anything off.



SHELSWELL WALKERS

Please take your daily exercise but keep safe and keep recommended distances from others especially on 'busy' footpaths and rights of way.



SHELSWELL GARDEN CLUB

On Tuesday 9th March we held another Zoom meeting. On this occasion we were joined by members from Marsh Gibbon Horticultural Society and Tingewick and Water Stratford Horticultural Society. They were most welcome.

Our speaker was Alan Sargent; a landscape gardener for many years who has also worked at RHS gardens and as an Expert Witness dealing with landscape issues. He gave a talk entitled '**Confessions of a Gardener!**' His stories were mainly from working in large gardens in UK.

Our next Zoom meeting will take place on **Tuesday 13th April at 7.30 pm**. Our speaker will be Adam Pasco with a talk entitled 'Spring into action and get set for summer'. Adam has been a Gardening Consultant and Journalist for over 30 years. Some of you may recognise him from Gardener's World Magazine, where he was editor for 22 years.

An email will be sent out before the meeting to give you the Zoom link, so if you do not receive the club emails, please give Corrine a call on 01869 247411 to be added to the email list.

SHELSWELL POETRY APPRECIATION GROUP

Perhaps one of the best-known poems about April in the English language is Robert Browning's *Home Thoughts from Abroad*, which beautifully captures the glories of the month in England. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem *An April Day* describes an American April. The 14th century poet, Geoffrey Chaucer began his prologue to *The Canterbury Tales* with a vivid evocation of how the coming of April stirs life in humans and animals. W.H.Davies wrote *April's Charms* to express his delight in the month, as did Laurie Lee, author of *Cider with Rosie*, in *April Rise*, Lucy Maud Montgomery in *Spring Song* and William Watson in *April*.

Three poets who look at April in a different and less ecstatic way are Shakespeare in his *Sonnet 98*, Edna St. Vincent Millay in *Spring* and T.S.Eliot in the opening lines of *The Waste Land*. The latter two poems were both written after the 1914-18 war, and convey disillusion and mental turmoil.

A political poem, written to commemorate riots in America is Ai Ogawa's *Riot Act April 29th 1992*.

April 30th is International Jazz Day, and three poems with a jazz theme are *Honky-Tonk in Cleveland, Ohio*, by Carl Sandburg, and *Jazzonia* and *Cabaret*, both by Langston Hughes.

Thank you to all those who sent in suggestions for poems. If you have a favourite poem associated with the month of May, please email me the title at judith.harvey@live.co.uk, or phone me on 01869 811994.

Judith Harvey

SHELSWELL READING GROUP

The book we discussed, via Zoom and email, in March, was *Bel Canto* by Ann Patchett. It is the story of a group of high-ranking internationals held hostage in a South American house by a rag-tag group of anti-government terrorists. Although it has its grim moments, it is a book which embraces comedy and a psychological exploration of 'Stockholm Syndrome', a phenomenon in which captors and their prisoners gradually draw closer to each other, in a variety of ways. It is also about the redemptive and life-enhancing power of music, and the pivotal figure is a world-famous opera singer. Another important character is Gen, a Japanese interpreter with a command of many languages, and through him Patchett explores human communication. The group found a lot to discuss, and found many parallels between the novel and how we have been living during the last year.

The book for April is Anne Bronte's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, an exploration of mid-nineteenth-century women's position in society. The meeting will be on Thursday April 8th, and either on Zoom or out of doors at Jane Birnage's house, depending on lockdown restrictions at the time.

Other Recommended Books:

The Lamplighters	by Emma Stonex (hardback)
Notes from an Exhibition	by Patrick Gale
Our Fathers	by Rebecca Watt
A Change of Climate	by Hilary Mantel
Wide Sargasso Sea	by Jean Rhys
East of Eden	by John Steinbeck
Fathers and Sons	by Ivan Turgenev
The House of Mirth	by Edith Wharton
It Can't Happen Here	by Sinclair Lewis
Anything by Scott Fitzgerald and Henry James	

If you would like to join the group, contact me on 01869 811994 or at judith.harvey@live.co.uk

Judith Harvey



SHELSWELL WI



If you're going to join, then join in - a warm welcome awaits

March 2021's meeting via Zoom was a hands on and get involved art fun event with Oxfordshire WI Board of Trustee and Blewbury WI member Graeme Gettings, who has a passion for crafting, scrap-booking, making cards and producing journals.

Thirty one ladies joined in the evening. As well as Shelswell members, we welcomed guests from Heyford, Steeple Aston, Langford and Weston on the Green WI's and by the end of the evening most had a decent piece of art work to show.

Thursday 1st April, at 8pm will be once more a Zoom meeting. We have a very interesting speaker lined up who is reported to be very entertaining. Pauline Martindale, a former prison officer, who has worked in various roles in the prison service, and at different locations, including Holloway and Wormwood Scrubs. So join us and find out what happens behind locked prison doors.

The theme of the May meeting talk will be GIN; more details to follow !

In the summer months of June and July, depending on Government Guidelines, when hopefully the weather will be kind to us, we plan to have outside meetings.

August will be 'Walk around Fringford Village' and a talk about 'Flora's Fringford' by Shelswell Member Linda Mustill.

The National Federation Women's Institute Annual Meeting due to take place in London this summer was to be face to face will now be a virtual event. The speakers lined up this year are: HRH Sophie, Countess of Wessex, Dame Cressida Dick, Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, and Baroness Brenda Hale, former President of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom.

The benefits of being part of Shelswell WI is to be part of a national membership organisation, receiving the monthly newsletter, the monthly news and views magazine and the bi-monthly WI Life magazine. Also, to attend group meetings, access my WI website, make new friends, gain new knowledge, take part in new activities, take part in campaigning and access to the Shelswell coffee club and Facebook page.

For more information on Shelswell WI, please contact President Elaine Whittaker 07917 453224 or Nicky Lane 07814 796171.

LOCKDOWN PROJECT: FIND A GRAVE

(www.findagrave.com)



Back in the summer lockdown I completed a project started several years ago with a neighbour to photograph the gravestones in the churchyard and to transcribe the memorial inscriptions before they became illegible. I finally uploaded the results to the churchyard's page on the Findagrave website so that they would be available to anyone anywhere who might want to research their family tree now or in the future. Unfortunately I couldn't photograph every gravestone in the churchyard as the ones which have been moved to the sides of the churchyard have become completely engulfed by ivy which will take a massive effort by many hands to uncover.

The photographs and memorial inscriptions can be found at

<https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2447671/st-peters-churchyard>

(If you are reading this article online or have downloaded the PDF, hover the cursor above the link then hold down the CTRL key and click at the same time and wait for the website to open in your browser)

Just clicking in the last name box and pressing the RETURN key will bring up a list of all the memorials so far created for our churchyard. If you know the surname you are looking for, you can of course enter that to narrow down your search. Click on the name or photograph in the resultant list to view the entry.

If anyone spots an error or wants to add additional information such as birth date/extra biographical detail/further photos or missing links to family members, then it's free to register on the website and submit these amendments. You can even leave a virtual flower on a loved one's memorial.

Now that Spring is on the way, perhaps readers from other villages in the Benefice will feel inspired to do the same for their churchyards. Here are the links to all the churchyards in our Benefice. Some have more memorials recorded and photographed than others. I've also included a link to Holy Trinity at Hethe.

Cottisford:

<https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2428543/st-mary's-churchyard>

Finmere :

<https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2454549/st-michael-and-all-angels>

Fringford:

<https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2447886/st-michaels-and-all-angels-churchyard>

NB. There are 575 memorials created for this churchyard but hardly any photographs have been added to these.

Godington:

<https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2402145/holy-trinity>

Hardwick:

<https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2401749/st-mary-the-virgin-churchyard>

Hethe

<https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2428550/st-edmund-and-st-george-churchyard>

and

<https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2401742/holy-trinity-churchyard>

Mixbury:

<https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2703512/mixbury-all-saints-churchyard>

Newton Purcell:

<https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2449167/st-michael-%26-all-angels-churchyard>

Stratton Audley:

<https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2376363/ss-mary-%26-edburga-churchyard>

Brenda Hazel

THE SHELSWELL BENEFICE

The Editor has invited me to write a monthly series on the ten parishes in the Shelswell Benefice. Before starting the series, I thought it would be of interest to recall how the Shelswell Benefice was created. It has to be said that the term 'benefice', which strictly means a 'church living', is a somewhat strange title to denote a group of parishes. In France, as I understand it, the term 'super parish' is used and this, though clumsy, might have been more intelligible.

On 1 March 1983, after some five years of arguments and correspondence, the Shelswell Group Ministry was formally established for religious purposes. At that stage it was divided into the Northern Benefice (Cottisford, Finmere-with-Mixbury, Hardwick-with-Tusmore and Newton Purcell-with-Shelswell) under Ronald Jennison and the Southern Benefice (Fringford, Godington, Hethe, Stoke Lyne and Stratton Audley) under Anthony Hichens. On 1 December 1995 the Benefice of Shelswell was created, with ten parishes under one rector, the Rev'd Warwick (Ricky) Yates. In 2001 there were two formal mergers, between the parishes of Godington and Stratton Audley, and the parishes of Cottisford and Hardwick-with-Tusmore. On 13 August 2009 the Rev'd Christobel Hargraves succeeded Ricky Yates as rector. In January 2016, Alice Goodall in turn succeeded Chris.

At one time each of the ten parishes had their own resident rector, who was often a very powerful individual. The parish too has been a very powerful unit and in many ways still is, in spite of the creation of a group ministry and then a benefice. Before the formation of the Shelswell Group Ministry in 1983, the following parishes had already been united for administrative purposes. No doubt this was partly owing to the decline in church attendance and the shortage of clergy.

c.1840 Tusmore united with Hardwick

1867 Charles Harrison became rector of Hardwick-with-Tusmore and Cottisford.

1924 Archdeacon Whylock Pendarvis became rector of Hethe and Fringford.

1928 Godington united with Stratton Audley.

1932 Shelswell united with Newton Purcell.

1954 John Westlake became rector of Newton Purcell and Fringford.

1968-78 John Sergeant was rector of Newton Purcell, with responsibilities for Cottisford, Fringford, Hardwick-with-Tusmore and Hethe.

1976 Anthony Hichens was appointed priest-in-charge of Finmere-with-Mixbury,

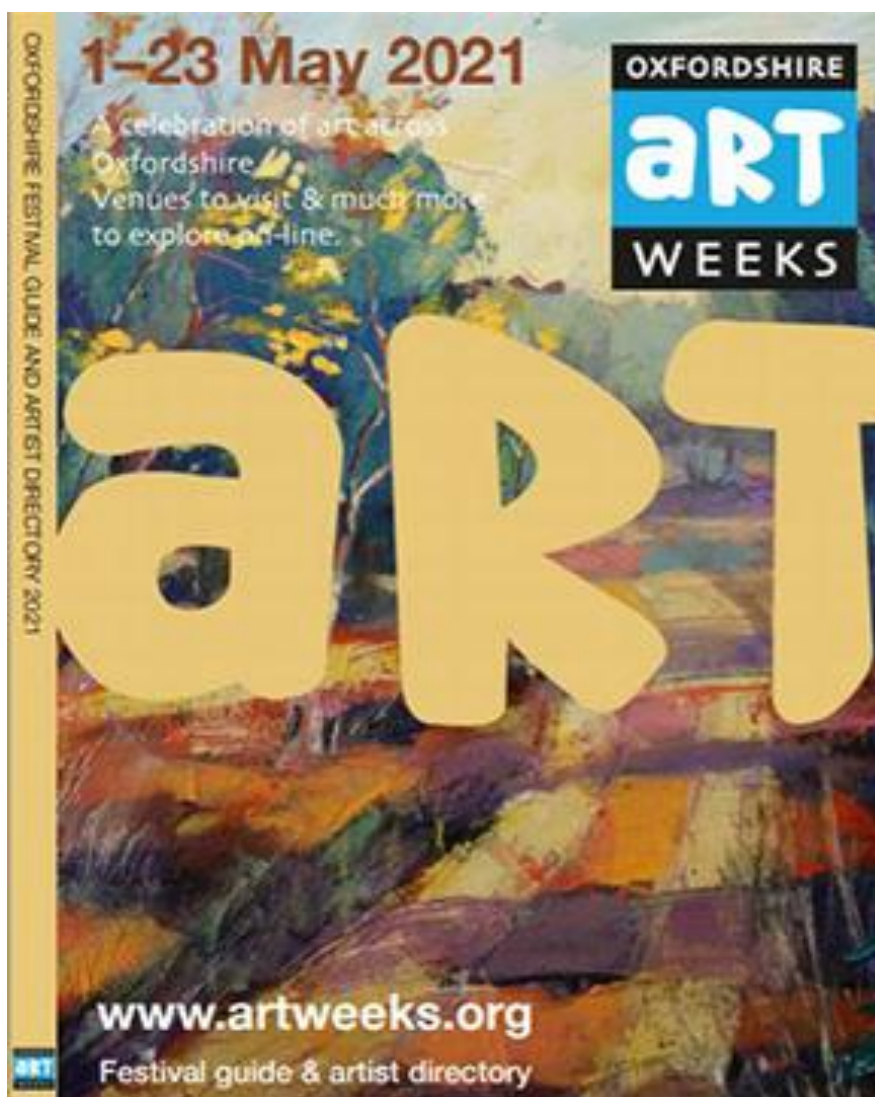
Godington, Stoke Lyne, Stratton Audley and Finmere-with-Mixbury,

1978 Donald Allan, who succeeded John Sergeant, was appointed priest-in-charge of Finmere-with-Mixbury, and together with Anthony Hichens looked after the ten parishes.

1983 Shortly after the Group Ministry was formed, Donald Allan left and was replaced by Ronald Jennison.

I hope that this summary serves to explain how the ten parishes came to be incorporated into the Shelswell Benefice. I look forward to writing brief notes on each of them in the coming months. In advance, I must acknowledge my debt to all those past and present who have written about their own parishes.

Martin Greenwood



REPORTS FROM THE PARISHES

Cottisford and Juniper Hill St Mary the Virgin

CHURCHWARDEN: Charles Jackson, Cottisford House, Cottisford
 TREASURER David Barnes, Honeysuckle Cottage, 11 Hardwick
 PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Meryl Daniel
 MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Judith Harvey, Lark Rise Cottage, Juniper Hill Email: judith.harvey@live.co.uk

Tel 01280 848247

Tel 01869 277690

Easter Day Service at 11am on Sunday 4th April
 (Please book your place on 01280 848192 or admin@shelswellparishes.info)

THE FRIENDS OF COTTISFORD CHURCH

Thank you to all the people who support the work of The Friends. Your continued interest and financial contributions are very much appreciated ..

We welcome new members to our organisation, and if you would like to become a member of The Friends of Cottisford Church, please contact me on 01280 847455 or at janebirnage@icloud.com

COTTISFORD AND JUNIPER HILL SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The bulbs planted by the Committee and residents in Autumn 2020 are flowering now, and augmenting the earlier plantings. We hope that you enjoy the extra colour and uplift they provide as we gradually come out of lockdown.

In March Anita Bowl and Jane Birnage organised the distribution of potted primulas to all the households in Cottisford, Juniper Hill, Hardwick and Tusmore, as a 'spring tonic' and a reminder that life goes on, even in difficult times. The Social Committee provided the funds to buy the plants, whilst other community members provided and printed the labels for the pots and distributed them. Thank you to all who helped with such a worthwhile task.

The notice boards in Cottisford and Juniper Hill are to be decorated for Easter, so if any children would like to contribute Easter-themed pictures, please see Jane Birnage in Cottisford and Eileen Torrance in Juniper Hill. We are hoping to arrange a get-together in the playing field at Juniper Hill in the coming months, with people being asked to bring their own picnic to enjoy in the company of friends and neighbours, and drinks provided by the committee. The state of the pandemic at the time may mean that we have to alter this, but we hope we will be able to put on some sort of community event.

Finnmere St Michael and All Angels

CHURCHWARDEN: Vacancy
 TREASURER: Jacqueline Chelin, 19 Valley Road, Finnmere, Buckingham MK18 4BG
 PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Katherine Grimston
 MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Paul Nash Email: paan63@yahoo.co.uk

Tel 01280 847782

Tel 01280 848268

Easter Day Service with Baptism at 11am on Sunday 4th April
 (Please book your place on 01280 848192 or admin@shelswellparishes.info)

Village Hall

Unfortunately, the Village Hall is now closed for the duration of the lockdown. We hope to be open again in the spring, or when government guidelines allow.



Allotments

Get planning for your new growing season.
The Poor's Plot now has a waiting list for allotment plots in the village.
There is a possibility that a few plots may become available shortly, so any aspiring allotment users should visit
www.myfinmere.com/poorsplot



Need some local help

<http://www.shelswellparishes.info/documents/corona/communitynetworks.pdf>

Village facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/finmereandlittletingewick/>

Shelswell Parishes website at – www.shelswellparishes.info/finmere
Finmere Parish Council website at – www.finmerepc.org
Village hall news at – www.myfinmere.com
Finmere Primary School - www.finmere.oxon.sch.uk

Fringford St Michael and All Angels

CHURCHWARDEN: John Mayo, 10 Church Close, Fringford	Tel 01869 278873
TREASURER: Christina McCullagh, 5 Crosslands, Fringford	Tel 07867 515207
PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Penny Wood as below	
MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Penny Wood, 8 Crosslands, Fringford	Tel 01869 277310
VILLAGE HALL CORRESPONDENT: Christine Underwood	Tel 01869 278949
WEBSITE www.fringford.info	

Services & Events

St Michael and All Angels is now open daily. **Services in the church will resume on Easter Sunday** with a 9.30am Communion by Extension, commencing with the lighting of the Easter Candle. It will be necessary to book a place for Easter Sunday, and for the following Sunday [Morning Prayer at 9.30am].

Thereafter services will be as set out on the back page of this magazine.

Services in Holy Week, which starts on Palm Sunday (27th March) will be online so please check the back of this magazine to find out what's happening and when.

The PCC marked Mothering Sunday (14 March) by preparing gift bags with a card, a bulb and a prayer for children to pick up and give to their mother. We were delighted to have some children come along with their dads on a very windy Saturday morning. It was lovely to see you all.

Muddy Church

For all ages: come and join in the fun at 3.00pm on Sunday 25th April at St Peter's Churchyard, Stoke Lyne. Contact Revd Yvonne Mullins for more information: ring 01869-278090 or email: curate@shelswellparishes.info

ZOOM Socials

Coffee & Chat – Tuesdays at 10.45am

Quiz time - Wednesdays at 1.30pm.

You would be most welcome to join in; to get the 'zoom' details contact the Rector on 01280-848192, or email alicegoodall313@gmail.com

Fund-raising Initiatives

Greetings Cards

Packs of greeting cards (6 cards for £3) available for purchase. They feature 6 photographs of the church both in and outside. Ring Christina McCullagh on 07867 515207.

Open Gardens

Please note that the PCC has decided to hold Open Gardens a little later in the year so that people can feel safer. The new dates are 26 and 27 June. If you'd be willing to open your garden, please contact Penny on 01869-277310 or email: penelope.wood@bopenworld.com

Fringford Church 100 Club

The plan now is for Fringford PCC to go it alone! The school has sadly not had success in recruiting parents and has decided to pull out. So, thank you to the 38 people who have already signed up. We aim to recruit up to 50 people by the beginning of April, and to have the first draw – probably on zoom – by the end of that month. The more that sign up, the better the prize money will be. Do contact Christina McCullagh to register your involvement **ASAP, on 07867 515207.**

Fringford Church Book Exchange

The box for book exchange is in the porch [Leave one, take one, please don't overload!]. But remember the virus can stay on items such as books or games for 72 hours, so please put the book you donate into a plastic bag and write on the bag the date you put it into the box. That way, anyone wanting to read the book knows when the 72 hours is up and the book can be read. Thank you.

Penny Wood

SUPPORT DURING THE TIME OF CORONAVIRUS

On-going support is still available. If you need some help, please don't hesitate to contact **Fringford Friends, Neighbourhood Support Group :**

- Telephone: 07704 756840
- Email neighbourhoodsupport@fringford.info

To join the **What's App Mutual Support Group** ring or email 'Fringford Friends' use the contact details above.

FRINGFORD VILLAGE COFFEE MORNING

Still not able to meet. But meeting in a garden might be possible by May.

Penny Wood

THE BUTCHER'S ARMS

To find out the latest news at the Butcher's Arms contact Simon via email: syeborg2009@yahoo.co.uk or mobile; 07850 415189. Alternatively, contact Stuart on 07952 445468.

Fringford Village Hall

Community First Oxford and ACRE are bodies which offer advice and guidance to community halls and have been a godsend during the pandemic, helping us interpret government guidelines and providing lots of materials and sources of information to make our lives easier.

Both bodies are celebrating their centenary year and have created a Domesday Book for village halls to record a short summary about their hall and plans for 2021. So far 640 halls have participated nationally. If you would like to see the entries, please go to <https://coda.io/@acre/village-halls-doomsday-book-2021> (excuse the spelling!)

We thought you may like to see our entry which starts with a precis of a piece published in the Bicester Advertiser in June 1900.

Our 'new parish room' was built and presented to the village by Mr H.J. Chinnery in June 1900 on land given by the parish squire, Mr E. Slater-Harrison. "It was to be used for many purposes, both religious and social, and also as a cricket pavilion."

The presentation of the parish room was made to over 130 villagers during an 'admirable meat tea'. Mr Chinnery said, "he hoped there never would be any dispute in the room and in it there would be parish meetings, mothers' meetings, guild meetings, concerts and sing-songs, in short, everything that would tend improvement of villagers". It was reported by the local paper, that the parish room has begun its work in fine style, and it has those behind it who will be careful to see that it does not fail in its mission. Later, the Parish Council became the owners of the building and a charity was established to lease and manage the building. It was extended in the 1960s and then completely refurbished in 2015. It continues to be well used with exercise classes, dance classes, Women's Institute, Whist, puppy training, mindfulness, pre-school, coffee mornings, parties and many more diverse activities. Being on the village Green, it is also at the centre of our community fayres and gatherings such as the celebration of The Battles Over in 2018.

The Trustees, with much appreciated support from ACRE and CFO, made the hall COVID secure in 2020. It was used by a small number of allowable classes which could socially distance. We hope to welcome everyone back during the second half of 2021 and continue the traditions and mission set out in 1900.

We are currently developing our plan for reopening the hall fully in the Autumn. If you would like to book the hall from September, you will find all the information you need at www.fringford.info. But for the time being please either email fringford.hall@gmail.com or phone 07936 879175 in case we need to discuss any remaining COVID requirements.

Fringford Village Hall Committee

Hardwick St Mary the Virgin

CHURCHWARDENS: John Curtis, Sycamore House, Hardwick

David Barnes, Honeysuckle Cottage, 11 Hardwick

TREASURER: David Barnes, Honeysuckle Cottage, 11 Hardwick

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Meryl Daniel

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Veronica Barnes, Honeysuckle Cottage, 11 Hardwick

WEBSITE: <http://hardwickvillage.btck.co.uk>

Tel 01869 277984

Tel 01869 277690

Tel 01869 277690

Tel 01869 277690

CORONAVIRUS COMMUNITY SUPPORT FROM ST MARY'S CHURCH, HARDWICK

The Rector, Ministry Team and church members in Hardwick are concerned to offer whatever help and support they can to those facing an anxious and difficult time in the continuing weeks ahead.

We are unable to offer medical advice or come into your home if this involves risk of infection to you or others, but otherwise we will do whatever we can to help.

Please call or email:

David Barnes (Churchwarden) 01869 277690 david.l.barnes@outlook.com

Revd Alice Goodall (Rector) 01280 848192 rector@shelswellparishes.info

St. Mary's Church, Hardwick – Re-opens

Hardwick church is now open again every day 10am to 4pm. Please do go in and use this special space for private prayer, quiet contemplation or to admire its architecture, monuments and stained-glass windows.

EASTER DAY SERVICE

**Easter Day Service in St Mary's, Hardwick at 9.30am on Sunday 4th April
(Please book your place on 01280 848192 or admin@shelswellparishes.info)**

Hardwick Manor House

In this month's article from Hardwick, we switch the attention from the church to the Manor House, a Grade II* listed farmhouse and barn. Other than the church, this is Hardwick's oldest building. It was originally built in the late 16th century, possibly as early as 1580, when Sir Richard Fermor was Lord of the Manor and Elizabeth I was on the throne of England. There have been some later additions and restorations. Viewed from the road, the house makes an imposing sight.



In 1606, Sir Richard Fermor went on to buy the Tusmore Estate, which his family then held until 1857. The Fermor family subsequently moved to Tusmore, leaving Hardwick Manor as a tenanted farm. The Fermors were prominent recusants, holding fast to their faith at a time when Roman Catholics were persecuted, debarred from taking any public office and subject to heavy financial penalties. Services were held in the attic of Hardwick Manor House, which had been converted into a Roman Catholic chapel. The house has a priest's hole to hide a visiting priest if the authorities called. Roman Catholic priests were considered to be enemies of the state, who, if caught were liable to be executed as traitors. Those caught harbouring priests could also be subject to the same grim fate. During such times, the Fermors, not unnaturally, ensured that their tenants were also Roman Catholics. So, Hardwick village became a predominantly Roman Catholic village, with the Manor House being leased to the catholic Day family for most of the eighteenth century. Robert Day (d. 1712) and later Days are buried in the chancel of Hardwick church. In 1793, the tenancy passed to another catholic family, the Collingridges, who remained until 1812. The Collingridge family were amongst those subsequently instrumental in the building of a new Roman Catholic Chapel in Hethe (now Holy Trinity RC church). This was one of the first such chapels to be built after it became legal for Roman Catholics to openly practice their faith again, in the early nineteenth century.

In 1857, the ownership of Tusmore Estate passed to the protestant Earl Howard of Effingham. After which time, the catholic influence in Hardwick began to fade. The Hawkins family are shown as the tenant farmers for Hardwick Manor in the censuses of 1841, 1851 and 1861.

By 1881, the tenancy had passed to the Hiorns family. Thomas Hiorns is listed as Church Warden for Hardwick on the plaque in the church that commemorates the re-ordering completed in 1879. His son, Tom John is shown as the tenant in the 1911 census. The Smith family, who became the Barons Bicester, purchased the Tusmore Estate in 1927. A short time after, the Curtis family took over the tenancy of Hardwick Manor. However, the Bicester family were forced to sell some of its land and properties in the late nineteen seventies, before disposing of all the remainder of the Tusmore Estate in 1981. During this time, the Markham family purchased Hardwick Manor with a substantial amount of land and continued to operate it as a working farm. After John Markham's death, the family decided that Hardwick Manor, with its remaining 30 acres, should be sold.

In the Summer of 2020, Hardwick Manor was purchased by Patrick Burke and Tomas de Vargas Machuca, two long term family friends and business partners at HERO-ERA, a leading Historic Vehicles Event company which supports amongst other things engineering heritage, craftsmanship and motoring traditions. Their headquarters are at Bicester Heritage. Tomas and Patrick with their respective families plan to alternate usage between the two families and will always welcome classic car enthusiasts whatever the car. They are planning to carry out some restoration to the property without changing the charm the Markhams, with whom they enjoy a great relationship, have created in almost 50 years of ownership. Some of the works will include replacing the asbestos roofs of the great barn and outer buildings with period correct tiling. Patrick and Tomas are conservationists and strongly feel that allowing their children to enjoy the privilege of country life is a must in a fast moving world that too often forgets about tradition and traditional values.

Hethe St Edmund and St George

CHURCHWARDEN: Flora Skinner, Fox Hollow, 2 Hardwick Road, Hethe

Tel 01869 277366

TREASURER: Mike Green, Greenhill Cottage, Main Street, Hethe

Tel 01869 278166

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER: Flora Skinner as above

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Mike Green as above

Tel 01869 278166

WEBSITE: www.hethe.org

News from St Edmund & St George Church & Community Activity

If you have any news or a local event to publicise, please send the details to me, where possible with a photo, and if suitable I will add them to next month's news and include them on the village web site. The deadline for this publication is on Page 2. Please note that I have no control over the acceptance or placement of advertisements, please contact the Benefice Administrator for advice.

The village web site contains up to date information affecting the village - planning applications, agreed PCC minutes and notices of meetings, HS2 and other road works, grants and advice on COVID-19 related matters and much more.

Many thanks, Mike.



St Edmund & St George Web Pages:
www.hethe.org/st-edmunds-st-georges-church/

The church is also on the web sites "A Church Near You" and "Explore Churches".

ST EDMUND & ST GEORGE CHURCH



Church Services and Access

At the time of writing this article the plan was to hold an Easter Day Service in the church at 11.00am on Sunday 4th April. Booking is necessary (Please ring 01280 848192 or email admin@shelswellparishes.info)

. The church is due to be open again for private prayer on Sundays from 10.00am to 4.00pm from Easter.

In the revised service pattern due to be effective from 18th April there should be one definite service in our church every month, with a second service alternating between our church and Finmere. The definite service is due to be on the 1st Sunday of every month starting at 9.30am and the alternating service on the 3rd Sunday of every month starting at 8.15am. The first service will be a “Service of the Word” and the second BCP Communion.

For those like me who did not understand what a “Service of the Word” entails:

Preparation

The minister welcomes the people with the Greeting.

Authorized Prayers of Penitence may be used here or in the Prayers.

The Venite, Kyries, Gloria, a hymn, song, or a set of responses may be used.

The Collect is said either here or in the Prayers.

The Liturgy of the Word

This includes

readings (or a reading) from Holy Scripture

a psalm, or, if occasion demands, a scriptural song

a sermon

an authorized Creed, or, if occasion demands, an authorized Affirmation of Faith.

Prayers

These include

intercessions and thanksgivings

the Lord's Prayer

Conclusion

The service concludes with a blessing, dismissal or other liturgical ending.

The PCC are considering the options for providing other opportunities for worship in Hethe. All parishioners are welcome to attend services in other villages (perhaps getting there through car share or rambles) or we could introduce something different in our village such as lay lead services or a contemplation/meditation group. The PCC would welcome your opinion and ideas.

For the latest information about opening and services, please look at the village or Shelswell Benefice web site.

Please read the notices in the church for guidance on how to safely access the building.

Church Repairs & Redecoration

By the time that you read this we should have been informed on whether we have been given a grant for works and redecoration of the church. Please see the village web site for up-to-date information.

You may have noticed that some stone has fallen away from the front and some concrete slabs have slipped off the roof of the porch. The contractor for last year's work has been informed (the concrete slabs were not part of that work).

Church Funds & Regular Giving



You may contribute regularly to general funds by direct debit through the Parish Giving Scheme. Through this scheme the church receives 100% of your gift and you will have options for your contribution to be gift aided and inflation proofed. If you are able to choose either or both options, it will maximise your contribution and allow your PCC to plan more confidently into the future.

You now have the option to set up a contribution on-line. You will find a donation button on our Parish Giving page. You may use the link <https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/>, type in OX27 8ES and then select our church or scan the code below.



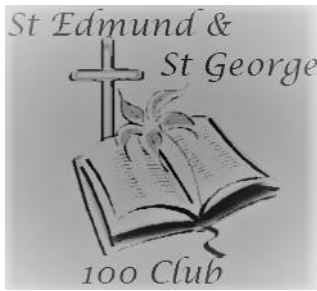
Alternatively, phone 0333 002 1271. This line is open Monday to Friday, between 9.00am and 5.00pm. You will need to have your bank account details, our church/parish name (Hethe St Edmund & St George) and our PGS parish code (270627041) to hand.

For one-off and regular donations without setting up a direct debit we have an on-line giving page which can be accessed by scanning the code below or through our village web site under www.hethe.org/st-edmunds-st-georges-church/fund-raising/. There is no up-front cost for this service, but we pay 1.95% per transaction.



For other ways of contributing to the running costs of the church, please contact hethepccsecretary@outlook.com.

100 Club



Draws are taking during the Shelswell Quiz on the second Wednesday of the month via Zoom. There are still plenty of numbers if you wish to join!

The results of the March draw:

1st Prize No 37 Ben Wood

2nd Prize No 33 Anne Mansfield

3rd Prize No 15 Pauline O'Gorman

Next Draw Wednesday 14th April

Safeguarding

The parish of Hethe is committed to the safeguarding of children, young people and adults. We follow the House of Bishops guidance and policies and have our own Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO), Flora Skinner. The Diocese of Oxford's safeguarding pages contain vital links and information including contacts for the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA) who advises our PSO. If you are concerned that a child or adult has been harmed or may be at risk of harm, please contact the DSA. If you have immediate concerns about the safety of someone, please contact the police and your local authority Children or Adults Services.

Hethe PCC members are receiving basic safeguarding awareness training.

Eco Church



A representative of "Wild Oxfordshire" visited the churchyard last month to advise us on how best to proceed with turning parts of it into "wild" areas.

In the first year the grass in the designated areas will only be cut and then raked off at the end of August. This will encourage native flora and fauna. The PCC will be maintaining a record of flowers, plants, insects, reptiles and animals using the churchyard - so please let us know if you spot anything. The representative of "Wild Oxfordshire" pointed out yellow meadow ants and solitary bees during her visit.

There are other maintenance tasks, so if you would like to be involved in any way please let us know.

Thank you to Peter Allen for continuing to mow the other areas of the churchyard, Pauline O'Gorman for producing a comprehensive list of wildflowers and Flora for the signs.

Our aim is to turn the indicated areas into natural, flowery spaces, to encourage wildlife and make them more attractive and interesting for visitors. Our long-term vision is to preserve the churchyard as a special, sacred place, remembering that if we turn it entirely over to nature, we forget the work of past generations who cared for it and we could impede access to graves and for on-going burials.

Thank you to our Volunteers

Many thanks to the volunteers who work so hard to make our church a special place in the community. They undertake varied roles from helping to maintain the churchyard, to church cleaning, to providing flowers, to being members of the PCC – all are thanked for their contributions.

Penny Jacoby

Villagers were sad to hear the news of the death of Penny who, along with Robin and their sons Jo and Tom, moved to Springhill House in the 1990s.

Penny's ambition was to transform the garden at Spring Hill House into a place of interest and beauty, which she achieved, and it was admired by many visitors.

She took part in countless village fund raising events, offering her garden for village Open Gardens which she helped to organise, and the house for Safari Suppers. She supported the Horticultural Society's Annual Flower Show and Fete. She was a founder member in 1995 of Shelswell Garden Club which was held monthly in the village hall and introduced members to some exceptional speakers. Penny held an Annual Plant Sale and Cake Stall in her garden which always included Penny's home-made bread.

Penny joined Hethe PCC in 1996 and was a Church Warden from 1997 to 2002. She was instrumental in the re-building of the eastern boundary wall. She remained as a valued PCC member up to March 2007 when it was recorded that the PCC "wished to record how grateful they were for Penny's dedication in fund-raising over the years".

She was enormously proud of Robin and their two sons and loved the grandchildren, but aches and pains meant she had to give up walking the dog and strenuous gardening.

Penny will be missed by those who lived around her. She was a "fun person to know".

Thanks to Flora and Pauline for their contributions to the above

HETHE COMMUNITY ACTIVITY

Village Hall

With restrictions changing so often, please contact the booking secretary on fjskinner@hotmail.co.uk for availability. Remember to visit the village web site and Hethe Village Hall Facebook page to see the proposed changes to the hall.



Adventure Playground



The playground on the village playing field off the Hardwick Road was open at the time of writing this article. Please follow the instructions on the gates concerning bringing your own wipes and taking litter home.

Book Share

Following the success of the Cottisford "Bus Stop Book Exchange", some of the books which have not been available in the church during lockdown are to be moved into the bus shelter on the Bainton Road. The idea is that you borrow one or two books and return them when read. All free of charge.

Thanks to Iris Alder for the suggestion.

Recycling

The bottle bank is still open and is being monitored and emptied.

There are three glass recycling banks available for clear, green and brown bottles on the driveway approaching the Village Hall.

Please dispose of your glass responsibly – DO NOT LITTER - take metal/plastic tops and plastic bags/cardboard boxes away with you to dispose of or to recycle at home. Thank you.



Mixbury All Saints

CHURCHWARDENS: Martin Ayres, Northwell Farm, Finmere
Alec Howard, Middlestead, Mixbury

Tel 07899 792552

Tel 01280 848295

TREASURER: David Mitchell. 2 Town Farm, Mixbury

Tel 01280 847769

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Anna Howard

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Sue Goodman pasgoodman551@gmail.com

Tel 01280 848002

Church Services

The Church will re-open for our Easter Sunday Service 4th April 2021: 9.30am
Please book your place on 01280 848192 or admin@shelswellparishes.info



Pop Up Pub Nights in Mixbury

Pop Up Pub Nights are suspended whilst the coronavirus pandemic is ongoing.

All Our YesterdaysBurial through the ages

Although Mixbury has a story dating back to the Iron Age, and Bronze Age barrows from before that, one of the biggest chapters in that story has been written around the Church in Mixbury – so big in fact that we have actually drafted two books about it, one covering the period up to 1900 and a second one (less advanced at this stage) dealing with the 20th and 21st centuries. One reason for this is that there is a wealth of written records about all sorts of different aspects of our churches: the buildings, the clergy, the liturgy etc. Last month's article for the Shelswell News was about the Vestry, the body which governed much of parish life between about 1600 and the second half of the 19th century. This month's article is about burials in Mixbury, both in and outside the churchyard.

Have you ever wondered how many people have been buried in your parish? The answer to this question relating to modern times is fairly easy, because there has been a legal requirement to record burials/deaths since the early 16th century, although this was disregarded in many places until the mid-17th century. Then, in 1644 AD, registers of baptisms, marriages and burials were for the first time regulated by Parliament. By including the need to keep a register in the legislation for "The Directory for the Public Worship of God" (which in 1644 AD was substituted by the Commonwealth for the Book of Common Prayer) the practice received an imperative that it had not previously had. Mixbury's records go back to 1650 AD, and we know the number of burials for every decade up to 1900 AD: a total of 1265. By working from the population numbers in the Domesday book (1086 AD) and national studies of death rates at that time we came up with an estimate for burials in the churchyard between 1300 AD, when All Saints was built, and 1650 AD: some 1400. And then by consulting 20th century records which, of course are heavily affected by the growth in the number of cremations in the first half of the 20th century, we came up with a grand total of about 3,000 deaths/burials since 1300 AD. Most, if not all of the burials would have been in Mixbury churchyard.

But what about times before then? The problem is that because we have no recorded population numbers, estimates become increasingly unreliable. But we do have some information which can help. The first point is the evidence that points to Mixbury being the site of an Iron Age hillfort: if you have not already done so and want to read more about this, log onto the website mixburyhistory.co.uk. The hillfort enterprise would have required a large amount of central direction, and lots of pairs of hands, so there would have been a settlement of some sort here. We also know that in the Iron Age and into Roman Britain there were many cremations. The second point is that we know from the Domesday book that Mixbury had been a Saxon settlement; and from records in Rochester (Mixbury church was managed for a long time for ecclesiastical purposes by Rochester diocese, an arrangement which made the parish a "Peculiar") that at that time there had been a Saxon wooden church: we think the Saxon church may have been in the current churchyard, to the east of All Saints. Christian

churches in England were nearly all introduced after Augustine arrived around 600 AD with a mission from the Pope to convert the country to Christianity, which was then largely achieved by 700 AD. With Christianity came a requirement for inhumation (burying whole bodies.)

So here is where we have to make some “informed” guesses about numbers. Let’s assume that the Saxon church was built around 800 AD, and that the population in the village would have been broadly the same as in 1086 AD. That would suggest about 450 Saxon burials in Mixbury churchyard. Prior to that there are other complications. We have assumed continuous settlement in Mixbury from the Iron age through to Saxon times, but this might not have been the case. Investigations elsewhere have shown that hillforts were frequently abandoned in the late Iron Age, although we think the *raison d’être* for Mixbury being where it is – at the location of a “river crossing” – would have lent it some permanence. But there is no saying whether the overall population in and around Mixbury remained the same or went up or down. The use of cremation through into the early Roman period was largely replaced by inhumation after the Christianisation of Rome, but re-emerged in pagan Saxon period (roughly between 450 AD and 700 AD). The practice varied from one part of the Country to another and we don’t have separate figures for Oxfordshire. And what the death rates would have been is anybody’s guess!

But, assuming that the settlement size was on average smaller in this period, that family sizes remained the same, that there was no mass migration away from Mixbury, that death rates were higher before 800 AD, and that 75% of deaths were dealt with by cremation, about 1000 people would have been inhumed between 300 BC and 800 AD: and a large proportion of the remaining 2200 interred as ashes in burial jars! This is only a paper exercise, but even if the calculation is out by 50% we are still looking at a number not less than 1600! **Where are they all?**

Although before the advent of Christianity in Mixbury there is a certain amount of speculation there are several important messages to take from the analysis above. First, it is amazing how much change has taken place over a couple of thousand or even a few hundred years, and although a churchyard may have even a few hundred graves to which a name can be put now, there are many times that number of “anonymous” souls who rest there. The ravages of time and necessities of more-intrusive agricultural practices will have long disturbed the remains of many people who died before the churchyard became a “safe haven”. But there will be some who will still be hidden out there.

Second, records like the Domesday Book, The Directory for the Public Worship of God, and the arrival of Augustine provide islands in a sea of uncertainty, and they can be used to help piece together our history. Less certain but carefully argued points, such as the thought that a hillfort overlooking a river crossing would have more permanence than free-standing forts which existed mainly because of their topography, can also play their part. Piece it all together and we have a window into our yesterdays, sometimes clearer than others. I come from a school of thought that says of history “always ask the question why”; and when we don’t have a precise answer to that question, “it is better to use what information is available to construct a best-fit hypothesis – acknowledging that it may not be perfect - than to claim ignorance and not think at all.

Third, history has altered many things so that what we see now is not how something started. Ironically, a spaceman visiting England in the Bronze age, and then again in 2020 might observe that we have always used cremation as the main way to dispose of bodies. But that would miss the many changes in practice along the way – inhumation; ashes buried in pottery jars and buried either singly or in communal graves; ashes scattered in grave pits or on open country; graves marked with memorial markers of all shapes and sizes; no grave-marker at all; burials with grave-goods for use in the afterlife; and various other practices. Nearly all are founded in the religious beliefs of the day and so are a testament to how beliefs have changed and shaped society itself.

By Bruce Epps

Mixbury Book Exchange

There is a large plastic box in the bus shelter with books kindly donated by one of Mixbury’s Book Clubs and a few individuals, these are for the villagers to exchange a book with one they have read and replace with one of their own. If you are leaving a book whilst the pandemic is on please wrap it in clear plastic labelled with the date it is placed in the box as after 72 hours any possible germs should have gone. Please only leave books that are in good condition and do not use it to get rid of a large quantity of unwanted books. If all goes well perhaps when the church is re-opened the Mixbury Book Exchange can be transferred there. We could do with some teenager and younger childrens books being donated.

Litter Picking

During half term Nicola, George, Fi, Daisy, Ceilidh, Vicky, George and Amelia organised a litter picking session in the village. They managed to collect about 7 bags full, mainly from the The Old Forge up to the A421. They are hoping to continue with this activity on a regular basis and if anyone would like to help I am sure it would be appreciated. Please contact Nicola Adams or Fi Bairstow for further information. Thank you for your community spirit it's a great idea!

Mark and Jane Barton: Sadly we have to say goodbye to Mark and Jane who have lived in Mixbury for a number of years, they are now off to live in Italy and we will soon be welcoming new owners to No. 37. Good luck Mark and Jane we hope you enjoy your new life in the sun.

Flower Boxes:

Have you noticed the lovely planter boxes that have appeared at the entrances to the village? These have been made by Richard and Henry Adams (materials donated by Mark Bairstow) and I believe they are soon to be planted up – Mixbury is going to look very inviting with all these lovely flora displays.



Dog Thefts

Dog thefts are on the rise in all parts of the country, please be more vigilant about your beloved pet by not letting he/she off the lead to go out of your sight or unattended in the countryside or garden too long. The breeds being targeted are mainly: Staffordshire Bull Terriers, French Bull Dogs, Chihuahua's, Jack Russell Terriers, Pugs and crossbreeds such as: Cockerpoos/labradoodles and puggles. To make things more difficult for the thieves make sure your dog is microchipped and if unfortunately stolen make them too hot to handle by sharing posters on social media including as many photos as possible, report your dog as stolen to the police and provide as much detail as possible. There are some specific web sites for this purpose to help find lost and stolen dogs such as doglost.co.uk.

Update re development works to Mixbury Church (from Mixbury PCC)

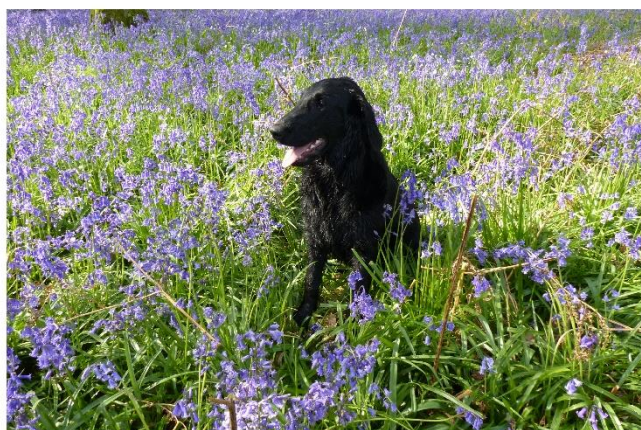
You will have perhaps noticed that the scaffolding has been completely removed from the church and we are very happy to confirm that the planned works to the Chancel and East window are now complete. The stonework around the stained glass has been substantially replaced and the finished result looks fantastic as well as being structurally sound.

The digging of the French drain around the entire perimeter of the building has also been completed and we are already seeing a positive impact on the damp inside the church. This activity was always going to make a bit of a mess of the churchyard and so we have started work to put this right. The large area to the north of the church has already been prepared and seeded and a mixture of more seeding and turfing over the coming weeks should see the whole area of the churchyard recovering by the summer.

We still have some masonry repairs to address on the tower but need to raise additional funding before we can start this work towards the back end of this year or during 2022. In the meantime, we want to focus our efforts on the second phase of the project, which is aimed at improving the facilities to enable wider use of the church by the village. We are looking to employ the services of a new architect to pull all of this together into a deliverable plan and look forward to discussing the options with the wider community in due course. Significant funding is already largely in place for this phase and we would hope to be able to make a start at some time in 2021.

Finally, we are very pleased to be able to re-open the church for a service on Easter Day at 09.30am. We will obviously still be bound by some COVID restrictions but will send out more details in the coming weeks.

Spring Time around Mixbury



Church Yard Tidy Up

A huge thank you to all the villagers who offered to help with the major re-seeding and turfing exercises which have started, but which are also ongoing.

We have also made a call for help to address the dust and grime inside the church so it is ready for Easter re-opening. This is quite a task as a result of both building work and being unused for months. The level of support for both these endeavours is most encouraging.

Volunteering can be a very gratifying exercise and a great way for those new to the village to meet other people – especially during the enforced absence of Wine Club!

Many thanks from Mixbury PCC

Save the date:

Easter Egg Hunt: Sunday 4th April 2021
Mixbury Fete: 4th September 2021
- (Covid restrictions allowing!)

The Serendipity of Magpies - by Rebecca Ayres

One evening, just earlier this month, Martin and I were heading back down the yard towards home, when I glanced across the lambing field. Bathed in the amber evening light, was a large 'tiding' of unruly magpies, hopping and squabbling on the new spring grass. I pointed them out to Martin and, of course, we counted them. Five in total – so we wandered back to the house, happy in the knowledge that silver was on its way.

The following morning, Martin made his way down to the church. The East Window repairs were complete; the mason had left, and the scaffolding had been removed. Mixbury Church was beginning to look like its old self again. Martin had one small job to complete before the architect arrived to sign-off on the repairs. The large boards, that had been protecting the lovely oak panelling behind the altar from potential damage from the masonry work, needed to be removed for the final checks. He set about unscrewing them, slowly revealing the fine dark oak of the panels beneath. He had barely started the job, when his eye was drawn to what appeared to be a small keyhole in one of the newly exposed panels. Putting his screwdriver down, he took a closer look; he tapped gently around the panel and found it was not fixed in its frame. Very carefully, he put his finger in the keyhole and gently pulled. The whole panel opened on small brass hinges, revealing a cavity behind. The base of the cubby hole was stone and tucked away inside was a collection of curious objects. One by one, he carefully removed: two pewter flagons, two pewter communion plates, a silver communion flagon and a brass collection plate. It appeared that a hoard of ancient communion ware had been stashed away, so cunningly that it had been forgotten and lost to even the communicants themselves.

This, in itself, is not an uncommon occurrence. The care and knowledge of the church, and all that it contains, is often passed down from vicar to vicar, and more often, to church wardens, brass cleaners and other church caretakers, and along the way information can get lost. But, through another series of curious coincidences, it became apparent that the circumstances of Mixbury's lost communion ware had a far more intriguing reason for being mislaid for so many years.

One morning, quite recently, Reverend Alice received a call from a retired gentleman, Reverend Donald Allan, who had been the vicar at Mixbury during the 1970's and 80's. He told a peculiar story about a certain lady who refused to inform him of the whereabouts of Mixbury Church's 17th century silver. The lady in question then died, and the vicar had to assume that she had taken the knowledge of the whereabouts of the church valuables with her to the grave. He had almost given up hope entirely when it was brought to his notice that the church was believed to contain a secret cupboard, hidden somewhere in the wooden panelling. With renewed vigour, he embarked upon another thorough search of the church, this time, focussing on tapping every inch of the old oak panelling. He was eventually rewarded with the discovery of a hidden panel behind the altar and inside were, indeed, a silver chalice and a silver paten. Having rediscovered them, the articles were carefully logged and sent away to Christ Church Cathedral for safe keeping. The panel behind the altar was replaced and the knowledge of it was, apparently, all but lost to the collective memory of Mixbury. Forty years and three vicars later, it appears that not only has the secret closet been rediscovered, but yet again it is full of lost treasures. This raises a multitude of questions. Who put them there and where did they originally come from? Were they placed in the closet after the Communion Ware found by Reverend Donald Allan had been taken away? If so, where had they been stored up until that point?

Now, whilst this was a fascinating story, it could not really compete with a global pandemic. Following the conversation between Reverend Alice and Reverend Donald Allan, communication between the PCC and Reverend Alice had become increasingly relegated to zoom meetings and dealt with only the most pressing of issues. Not only was general chit-chat somewhat limited, Reverend Alice was also under the impression that the items found by Reverend Donald Allan had been safely transferred to the cathedral treasury, and that the PCC was already aware of the history of the hidden cupboard. The result of which was that the story of the hidden treasure never got to the ears of either Martin or Alec, the Church Wardens.

And this is why, on the morning that he walked into Mixbury church to remove the boarding, Martin was entirely oblivious to the possibility of hidden treasure. And one must therefore assume that the discovery of Mixbury's lost communion silver, should be accredited entirely to the serendipity of the magpies.

If you have any information relating to the hidden communion ware, I would love to hear from you.

ra.ayres@hotmail.com,

07789 368207

The PCC has removed the items to a secure location and hope to have them valued and dated by specialists in the near future, the results of which will determine how the collection will be permanently housed. The PCC will endeavour to keep the village informed of any further developments and hope to provide everyone with an opportunity to view the items once the church is reopened and the lockdown restrictions have been lifted.



Newton Purcell St Michael and All Angels

CHURCHWARDENS: Ann von Maltzahn, Home Farm Shelswell Park
Sophie Crofton, South Lodge, Shelswell Park

TREASURER: Fai Li, 4 St. Peter's Close, Stoke Lyne, Bicester, OX27 8RB

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Sophie Crofton as above

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Ann von Maltzahn

Tel 01280 848680

Tel 01869 277232

Tel 07725 009838

Tel 01280 84868

Church Open Again -

We are delighted to be able to have the church open again on Sundays from 10.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m. for anyone wishing to visit for private prayer.

On EASTER SUNDAY we will have a service at 9.30 a.m. and we look forward to welcoming all who are able to come but with restrictions still in place PLEASE BOOK YOUR SLOT in advance with the benefice office.

Bonus Ball Lotto -

Recent lucky winners have been Hugo von Maltzahn, Michala Pederson and Louis von Maltzahn

Welcome to Newton Purcell -

We would like to welcome Jodie McKeough who has recently moved in to No 15 Buckingham Road.

Road Closure -

Many of you will know that HS2 had threatened a road closure of the A4421 in mid. February while they demolished the old railway bridge. This was postponed until the 2nd half of April but we still await exact dates. For anyone living along this stretch of road we have been assured you will still have access.

Stoke Lyne St Peter's

CHURCHWARDEN: Christopher Poole CTP@oxford-educational.co.uk

Tel 01869 346020

Ali Miller alisonjanemiller@icloud.com

Tel 07762 719198

TREASURER: Janey Poole janey@oxford-educational.co.uk

Tel 07810 120457

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Emma Brown

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Rena Andrews Email: renacyanlion@btinternet.com

PARISH ROOM BOOKINGS : Kelly and James Holden-White kholdenwhite@aol.com

Tel 01869345211

WEBSITE www.stokelyne.org

St Peter's Church Services

Please see back page for details of services

The Church is open Saturdays and Sundays 10.00 am till 6.00 pm

Easter Day Service at 9.30am (Please book your place on 01280 848192 or admin@shelswellparishes.info)

Mothers' Day

Friday the 12th March, Pam Adams and Rena Andrews made 61 spring posies, one to be delivered to every house in the village, there are people who haven't been able to see families at all during this lockdown and also some who live alone, it was felt that a little spray of flowers would help to bring a little cheerfulness into their lives at this time. Janey, Kelly and Emma delivered the posies on Saturday 13th March.

The amazing response on Face book and emails showed that the flowers received were very much appreciated and thanked all involved in it.

"Stoke Lyne Rocks"

(I can't take the credit for this, the idea seen on another village page)



The bulbs are starting to sprout and some are in flower, the days are beginning to stretch out at last. Hope is on the horizon via the VACCINES but we will all have to be socially distanced.

How about getting your paints out and finding a pebble to paint – they could then be placed around the village for us all to try and spot when we are doing our daily exercise. A great idea for Home Schooling and lessons and also for any of us to spend a while being creative. You could paint anything from – what makes you happy, to what this Pandemic has meant to you, any size pebble will do.

It would be lovely to collect them altogether when we are out of Lockdown and find a suitable place to cement them in as a permanent remembrance of loved ones lost, hardships fought and for the future generations of Stoke Lynians to understand this extraordinary period of history that we are living through.

Selina

SPRING

Spring is on the way, with lots of daffodils and spring flowers, the hedgerows are starting to spring to life with blackthorn, some trees starting to produce the early blossoms like forsythia etc, and the birds are starting to build their nests

Another sign is the new lambs being born, Kenny and Sammie have some not sure how many they have had , James and Kelly had 12 Jacob lambs at the last count but this number changes every day, by the time you receive the magazine I am sure you will see lots of little lambs running about.

Dog walkers please be aware if there are sheep and lambs in the fields where you walk, all dogs must be on a lead, there is also a fox roaming the village that has killed quite a few chickens.

LITTER PICK



A quick note of thanks to the 11 households from Stoke Lyne and Bainton who came along and helped to litter pick around our roadside verges. Thanks too to the others who either did some picking earlier in the week or were on standby to finish off.

The turnout was great and we finished the job – The results are piled up at the end of our garden hedge awaiting collection in the week by CDC.

Many thanks again
Elaine Barnes.

Village playing field and community space

The field was given to the village by the Peyton Family who owned Swift's House estate and also owned lots of property in the village, it was to be held in Trust as a play and recreation area to be enjoyed by the villagers and future generations.

The Parish Council arranged to have a large machine to cut back a lot of the overgrown hedging and trees, Julie Adams with some of her workers cleared a lot of the branches and trees and overgrown ivy to the bottom of the field where it would be burned, Julie asked for some help in clearing a lot of the debris left after the cutting, she had a few helpers but there is still a lot to be done. I must congratulate Julie on how she worked wheeling barrow after barrow to the bottom of the field to be burned this was a mammoth task.

So please if you have any spare time can you help to clear up what is left to do as after all this is your community space as well as a play area

Stoke Lyne W.I.

We have met twice since our last meeting in March 2020, we have kept in touch with each other by telephone cards etc.

We are having a committee meeting on Zoom ready for our Annual meeting, this will be a first for us, as not many of our members have used Zoom before.

Hopefully we will soon be able to meet up again.

Stoke Lyne 100 Club

We are delighted to announce the winners of the Stoke Lyne 100 Club that takes place on the 4th of each month:

1 st Membership No. 4	Pam Adams
2 nd Membership No. 29	Hope Poole
3 rd Membership	Eileen Penhallow

Prize money in April will be in excess of £70. Membership numbers are selling fast. Contact janey@oxford-educational.co.uk 01869 346020 if you would like to join.

Thank you for all those members for your continued support and good luck to all.

Janey Poole
Treasurer, St Peter's Church PCC

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PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Jackie Fox

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Vacant

EASTER DAY SERVICES

The Easter Day services will be at **11am** in both **Stratton Audley** and in **Godington**. We are really looking forward to being back in our churches, but please note that you will need to book your place at the services (either ring 01280 848192 or email admin@shelswellparishes.info) and you will need to wear a mask.

Stratton Audley and Godington PCC If you would like to know more please contact either Alice or Becky.

Magazine Correspondent please contact the Editor direct if you have any news for inclusion.

The Church of St. Mary & St. Edburga



Tiding Up the Churchyard

It is that time of the year when we carry out a clearance of debris and cut back wayward branches from the Churchyard adjacent to the Launton Road

We are planning to carry out the work on **Saturday 17th April 2021 commencing at 10am.**

If you are free we would welcome your help. Please could you let Anthony Flack know that you are coming by emailing him at flack.wine_train@btinternet.com

Dial a Ride Service

Comet operate a dial-a-ride service for those that require transport for medical or essential shopping. There is a cost of 75p per mile which works out at under £5 for a round trip into Bicester, which is cheaper than a taxi both ways. The service operates Monday to Friday between the hours of 10am and 2pm. Should anyone require further information or wish to make a booking please contact the **Comet team** on **01865 323201**.

Litter Picking

It is a great time to get out and do a bit of litter picking on the verges of the roads leading to and from the village. The Parish Council usually undertake a litter pick in the Spring, but with the vegetation suppressed at the moment a lot of discarded cans, paper and cardboard is visible particularly on the Stoke Lyne and Bicester Roads. The Parish Council has some litter picking sticks, large waste bags and even some hi-vis jackets for anyone who fancies breaking into their daily walks. Please let John Honsinger know if you can help and would like some equipment.

The Return of Mitra on Monday Night

Mitra has agreed to return to the village this coming Monday to serve up her delicious Persian food, from a stall located at the corner of Bicester Road and Church Street. She'll be opening earlier because of the dark nights, and serving between 3 & 5.30 pm. Just turn up or text her in advance if you have a large order on 07444 364789. It would be helpful if you bring your own box or pot to save on plastic waste.

Oxcam Expressway Officially Cancelled by Transport Secretary

Another piece of good news for many people is the announcement this week that the much heralded Oxford to Cambridge Express Highway has been officially cancelled, by the Transport Secretary.

East West Rail Local Update

There is also welcome news with regard to changes to the road markings of the Stratton Audley Park Road where it meets the A4421. Residents have continually complained of the dangers presented as a result of the stop lines in the road being set back too far when the junction was redesigned. Work to rectify this is to be carried by the EWR Highways Team in a weeks' time over the weekend of the 27th/28th March, at the same time as they are undertaking other remedial works to that stretch of road. Some disruption can be expected. The full safety audit report is still to be published.

The Bicester Road that leads to Marsh Gibbon from the crossroads at Billy Evans farm remains closed until close of business, next Friday. With this extension in mind, the works on Stratton Audley Road, Poundon have been revised. This closure will now be for Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th March.

Stratton Audley Barn

Stratton Audley Barn is now open for takeaway only, Friday to Sunday 10am-4pm. Grab a cuppa and cake and enjoy a walk, or cycle

Bicester Motion Scramble – Discount Resident Vouchers

The next Scramble is to be held on 5th/6th of June and neighbourhood discounted tickets are still available for Sunday 6th June. When purchasing you will need to put FlyingBrevets into the promo code box which will immediately allocate a 50% discount. You will be required to input your OX27 or OX26 postcode and this will be checked.

<https://bicesterheritage.co.uk/tickets/october-scramble-tickets/>

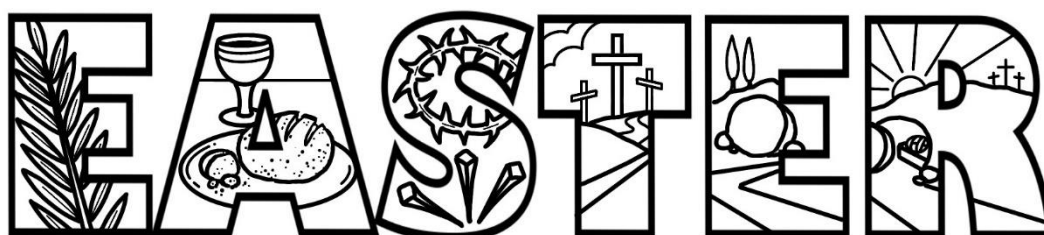
Passes previously purchased for the January and April scrambles are still valid.

Highways/Bicester Motion improvement on the Buckingham Road

For those who have encountered the road works on the Buckingham Road near the roundabout with Skimmingdish Lane and are wondering what's going on, here is a summary.

These works are programmed to take 12 weeks and will bring about the following benefits to the local community once completed;

- New Toucan crossing on Buckingham Rd (close to Skimmingdish Lane turning).
- Resurfaced carriageway either side of toucan crossing (to provide high friction anti-skid surface on crossing approach).
- New uncontrolled road crossing points at the roundabout from Bicester Motion across Buckingham Rd to The Garden Quarter and from Bicester Motion across





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Victoria Online:



@victoriaprentis



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www.victoriaprentis.com

Contact Victoria:

Constituency:

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Orchard House
Hopcraft Lane
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OX15 0TD

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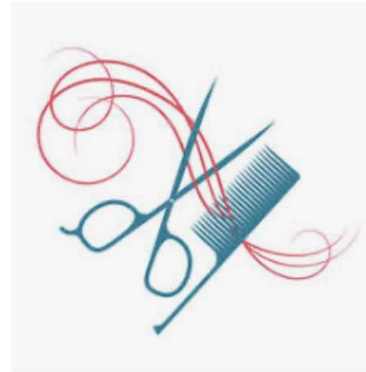
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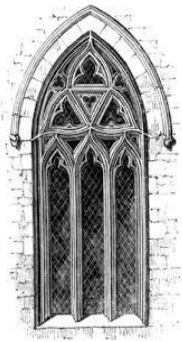
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## HOLY WEEK AND EASTER



### Palm Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March:

We will be delivering a palm cross to everyone on the electoral rolls of our church – if you are not on the roll and would like one, please just let us know.



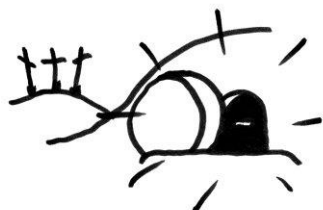
### Maundy Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April: Online service at 7 pm

See Facebook (Shelswell News group) or YouTube (Shelswell Parishes channel).

**Good Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> April:** we will be reposting the Good Friday reflections that Yvonne prepared for us last year – if you saw them last year, you will know that they are very special and deserve a second outing. If not, then this Good Friday is your opportunity. You can watch them at any time on Good Friday, or join with us at 2 pm to follow one or other of them.



**Easter Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> April** – we will be back in church for our Easter Communion! Hurray!



9.30 am: Fringford, Hardwick, Mixbury, Newton Purcell, Stoke Lyne

11 am: Cottisford, Finmere (with baptism), Hethe, Godington, Stratton Audley

It would be lovely to see you - you will need to **book your seats** (01280 848192 / [admin@shelswellparishes.info](mailto:admin@shelswellparishes.info)) and **wear a face covering**

The 11 am service at Finmere will also be livestreamed onto Facebook (Shelswell News group) and later uploaded to YouTube (Shelswell Parishes channel).

## AND AFTER EASTER...

### Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> April

There will be a service of Morning Prayer at 9.30 am in Fringford. Please book your seats for this service. (01280 848192 / [admin@shelswellparishes.info](mailto:admin@shelswellparishes.info)).

And then we embark on a different pattern of services – this will run until the end of September when it will be reviewed. **For services from 18<sup>th</sup> April, you will no longer need to book your seat**, although we will keep a record of your presence at the service for ‘track and trace’ purposes.

|                              |         |                |                 |
|------------------------------|---------|----------------|-----------------|
| <b>18<sup>th</sup> April</b> | 8.15 am | BCP Communion  | Finmere         |
|                              | 9.30 am | Mixbury 45     | Mixbury         |
|                              | 11 am   | Holy Communion | Fringford       |
|                              | 3 pm    | Muddy Church   | Stoke Lyne      |
| <b>25<sup>th</sup> April</b> | 9.30 am | Holy Communion | Stratton Audley |
|                              | 11 am   | Holy Communion | Stoke Lyne      |
|                              | 6 pm    | Evensong       | Hardwick        |