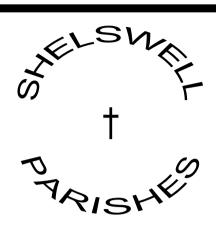
Shelswell News

The magazine of the Shelswell Group of Churches

Cottisford Fringford Hardwick Mixbury Stoke Lyne



Finmere Godington Hethe Newton Purcell Stratton Audley



All Saints Church, Mixbury

March 2024 £1

SHELSWELL 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

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THE PARISHES ARE PART OF THE DEANERY OF BICESTER AND ISLIP AND THE DORCHESTER EPISCOPAL AREA OF THE DIOCESE OF OXFORD

HOLY TRINITY ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, HETHE,

Mass: 4pm Saturday.

Weekday Mass: 9.30am Monday

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

Telephone: 01869 253277

Website: http://www.holytrinityhethe.co.uk/

SHELSWELL NEWS

Published monthly. To subscribe, contact Mrs Becky Adams, Benefice Administrator, The Rectory, Water Stratford Road, Finmere, Buckingham MK18 4AT Tel 01280 848192 Email admin@shelswellparishes.info

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Deadlines for the April 2024 edition of Shelswell News

To Magazine Correspondents: Friday 15th March

Correspondents to Editor: Sunday 17th March at editor@shelswellparishes.info

All articles must be submitted in WORD or LIBRE OFFICE in a format that can be COPIED AND PASTED PLEASE - Many thanks for your cooperation.

www.shelswellparishes.info

SHELSWELL NEWS ARCHIVE. to look up previous issues of the Shelswell News. Please go to the Benefice website and look at the Archive. If the issue you want to refer to is not there please contact the Benefice office.

Minister's Letter

You are delightful!

I wonder how you have been encouraged over the years? Who has encouraged you? What did they do that encouraged you?

As I reflect on this, I am aware that some of the people who have encouraged me probably never knew they were doing it. They were just doing a job well and with kindness. They were just smiling as they walked by. They just said a cheery word. Other people didn't do anything particularly extraordinary – just a word of appreciation or a thoughtful act. But these things matter, don't they!

And of course it works the other way round too. Within the space of two hours I have heard about two people left thinking they were rubbish through the hurtfulness and thoughtlessness of others. I doubt that the people who caused the hurt were even aware of it. In one of the situations, I suspect they even thought that they were being helpful and encouraging. In the other, they just weren't thinking – and that was the problem, and they weren't thinking



about the impact that their sloppiness was having on the other person. And we've all been there, haven't we – you stand in a long queue in the bank or shop, and when you finally get to the front, the tone of voice of the person serving you leaves you feeling like something unpleasant stuck to the bottom of their shoe. Or someone is so busy trying to tell you what you ought to do, what they would do, indeed what they did do, that you end up feeling truly inept and stupid.

Most of us, however we appear on the outside, have fairly fragile insides. Even if some of the time we feel confident and assured, our image of ourselves is easily knocked and we are left feeling rubbish, that we are incapable and have nothing to offer, and that, in contrast to everyone else, we are no good. And somehow, the memory of those hurtful words and actions can persist and persist.



The truth is that each of us is a unique and precious individual, dearly loved by God. The Bible tells us that God delights in us and even though he knows our weaknesses, he sees our strengths, our gifts, our talents, and knows the ways that we, and only we, can bless other people, make the world a better place. God never thinks we are rubbish, because he knows we are not! And of course, on Good Friday, we remember that God thought we were so precious, so worth bothering with, that he was prepared to give up everything for us.

Our true value is our worth in God's eyes – and in God's eyes we are infinitely precious. We need to remember this for ourselves. And we also need to remember it about others. That's why we need to treat each other with care and respect. That's why we need to do the tasks of the day to the best of our ability. That's why we need to encourage one another. Because a simple word or act of encouragement can make all the difference in the world.

Alice

The LORD your God is with you;
his power gives you victory.
The LORD will take delight in you,
and in his love he will give you new life.
He will sing and be joyful over you,

Zephaniah 3: 17

GS

BIBLE READINGS

Sunday 3rd March 3rd Sunday of Lent Exodus 20 v1-17

1 Corinthians 1 v18-25

John 2 v13-22

Sunday 10th March 4th Sunday of Lent/ Numbers 21 v4-9

Mothering Sunday Ephesians 2 v1-10

John 3 v14-21

(Alternative readings may be used for Mothering Sunday)

Sunday 17th March 5th Sunday of Lent Jeremiah 31 v31-34

Hebrews 5 v5-10 John 12 v20-33

Sunday 24th March Palm Sunday Isaiah 50 v4-9a

Philippians 2 v5-11 Mark 11 v1-11 or John 12 v12-16

Sunday 31st March Easter Day Acts 10 v34-43

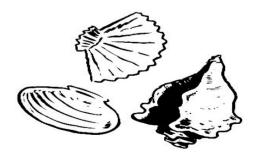
or Isaiah 25 v6-9

1 Corinthians 15 v1-11

or Acts 10 v34-43 John 20 v1-18 or Mark 16 v1-8

Shelswell By The Sea

A break from routine run by the Shelswell Group of Churches



4 & 5 March 2024 in Finmere Village Hall, from 10.30am to 3.30pm. Cost: £7.00 a day (includes all meals)

Get a Booking Form from Penny Wood, 8 Crosslands, Fringford, BICESTER OX27 8DF [01869-277310] penelope.wood@btopenworld.com

MIDWEEK HOLY COMMUNION AND SOUP LUNCH

Thursday 7th March 12 noon Stoke Lyne Church

If you would like a lift then please contact Alice on 01280 848192 or rector@shelswellparishes.info



Fun @ Four

Sunday 17th March 2024 4 – 5.30 pm Stoke Lyne Church

Moses

Craft and activities, prayer and praise, sandwiches and cake.

All welcome!





mosmisumosit

(There is no charge for this event but donations to cover costs are always welcome)

Lent Lectures 2024

Following Jesus faithfully in troubled times

Where: Stoke Lyne church OX27 8RU (except for the talk on 14th March which will be at Hall Farm, Main Street, Fringford, Bicester, England, OX27 8DP)

When: Thursday evenings – meet at 7 pm to share a light supper, followed at 7.30 pm by a talk.

Booking: No need to book – just turn up.

Cost: There is no charge for these sessions, though donations to that evening's chosen charity are welcome.

Thursday 7th March Simon Thomas from Open Doors



Simon Thomas is a writer and staff speaker at Open Doors, a charity that supports persecuted Christians. Founded in 1955 when Brother

Andrew smuggled Bibles into Communist Eastern Europe, Open Doors now supports persecuted Christians in more than 70 countries by supplying Bibles, providing emergency relief and helping persecuted believers stand strong for the long-term. Simon Thomas will share inspiring stories of courageous faith, and how we can stand with our global church family in prayer.

Lent Lectures, continued



Thursday 14th March Joel Davids-Austin from Metalshak

Joel will talk about why hardship is an essential part of our Christian walk, drawing on his experience of forging.

Joel is a blacksmith by trade. His vision is to use his trade to serve people in countries where they are suffering hardships.

He has recently returned from working in Brazil and parts of the Middle East.

Joel is based in Fringford

This talk will be based in Joel's workshop at Hall Farm, Fringford

Everyone is welcome



LENT IN THE SHELSWELL BENEFICE – Personal Reflections

What does Lent mean to you?

Spiritual spring-cleaning. A break from my usual habits, to simplify my life and get back on track.

How are you marking Lent this year?

Giving up chocolate and posting on social media. Inspired by Alice (see below!) I've signed up for Come and See

Sylvia (Magazine Editor)

What does Lent mean to you?

I see Lent as a time for clearing out the rubbish that gets in the way and refocussing on God's presence in our lives, hopefully leaving us in a better place to really hear the amazing news of Easter.

How are you marking Lent this year?

- Will I give up something? Probably maybe cake and alcohol (except on Sundays and Feast Days!). But I am never sure how helpful this is to me. Once I get in the swing of it, I don't find it particularly challenging And there is a great danger of me becoming just becoming smug and self-satisfied, which isn't particularly helpful to my spiritual state!
- I will be going to the Lent Lecture series, and not just because I'm the vicar. I find them interesting and challenging, and they help me to reflect on different aspects of my Christian life. I am particularly looking forward to this year's talks, based on the theme 'Following Jesus faithfully in troubled times' which I think could be quite inspirational.
- I have signed up to the Diocese of Oxford's Come and See reflections these are very short and arrive in your email each day. This year they are focussing on 'The Way of Love how each of us is called into a deep relationship of love with God, and what it means to love others well. It is not too late to join in go to oxford.anglican.org/come-and-see
- I don't have much option now, but even before I was a vicar, I have found it very helpful to join in the special services held during Lent and Holy Week. I like to start Lent by going to an Ash Wednesday service, and during Holy Week, to a service on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. I find it helps me to reconnect with Jesus's journey towards the cross and to the glories of Easter Day.

The most helpful thing for me, but the one I will struggle most to do even in part, would be to find 20 minutes each day just to sit in God's presence. No words. Just the stillness. So valuable. Who would think that finding that time could be so challenging? We will have to see how that one goes.

What does Lent mean to you?

Easter is when Jesus died on the cross and rose again, which is a message that good will triumph over evil. I see Lent as preparing to receive that message. Also, spring is when everything begins to grow and flower, and Lent lets me pause and organise myself before the new growth starts.

How are you marking Lent this year?

Giving up meat and wine

Name Withheld



JOINT APCM

The parishes of the Shelswell Benefice will be holding one joint Annual Meeting again this year on Monday 22nd April in Stoke Lyne Parish Church starting at 7.30pm. Anyone from across our parishes is welcome to attend this meeting, but those on church electoral rolls are particularly encouraged to come along to hear about the work of the church over the last year and support the church officers. Only those on church electoral rolls are eligible to vote at the meeting. If you are not already on the electoral roll of your local church and would like to join then please contact Becky at The Rectory on 01280 848192 or email admin@shelswellparishes.info Applications will need to be made by Tuesday 2nd April so that the revised rolls can be published for the required period ahead of the meeting.

There will be other meetings locally to appoint Churchwardens. These 'Annual Meetings of Parishioners' or 'Vestry Meetings' will take place are as follows:

Cottisford and Hardwick Sunday 21st April (following 9.15am service at Cottisford)

Finmere Sunday 21st April (following the 9.15am service)

Fringford Sunday 17th March (following the 10.45am service)

Hethe Sunday 14th April (following the 9.15am service)

Mixbury Sunday 10th March (following the 9.15am service)

Newton Purcell Sunday 3rd March (following the 9.15am service)

Stoke Lyne Sunday 24th March (following the 10.45am service)

Stratton Audley and Godington Sunday 24th March (following the 9.15am service)

All meetings will be duly advertised via notices in church porches.

HOLY WEEK

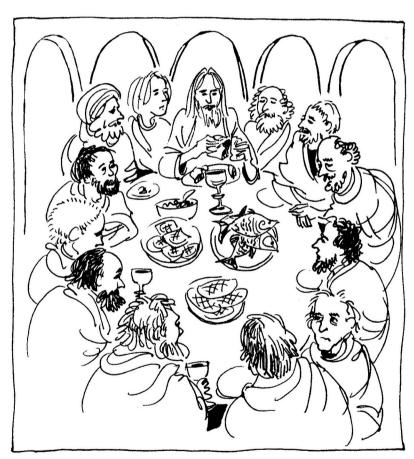
PALM SUNDAY

Palm Sunday services in Hethe, Finmere, Stratton Audley, Stoke Lyne and Hardwick are advertised in the village sections and in the service plan on the back page.



MAUNDY THURSDAY

Stoke Lyne Church Thursday 28th March (Maundy Thursday) 12 noon **Holy Communion**

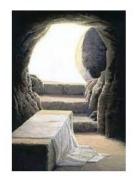


The Last Supper

Finmere Church
Thursday 28th March (Maundy Thursday)
7.30 pm
Holy Communion



Fringford Village Hall Friday 29_{th} March 10 – 12 am



GOOD FRIDAY WORKSHOP

followed by an All Age Service for Good Friday at 12.15 pm in Fringford Church

Come and explore the events of Holy Week and Easter

Craft, story and refreshments

Everyone welcome!

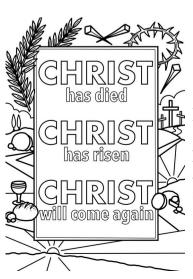


OTHER GOOD FRIDAY SERVICES

- Open to all -

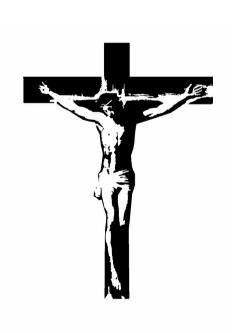
St Edmund & St George Church, Hethe Friday 29th March, 2.00 pm Last Hour on the Cross

Stratton Audley Church Friday 29th March, 6.00 pm Devotional Service



EASTER SUNDAY

Please see individual village entries and the back page for Easter Sunday services.



Stoke Lyne Craft Fair

St Peter's Church, Stoke Lyne, OX27 8RU

Saturday 20 April 12-4pm

Locally made arts and crafts, refreshments, raffle and tombola



If you are interested in a stall contact
Ali - alisonjanemiller@icloud.com/07762 719198 or
Anoushka - noosh105@gmail.com/07753 225279

Save the date! Shelswell Benefice Away Day Part of God's family

Sunday 12th May 10.45 am – 3 pm Church Farm, Stoke Lyne

(With grateful thanks to Caroline and Harriet)



We are all part of God's family – those of us who only ever worship at an 8 am Book of Common Prayer service, those of us who love making crafts at Fun @ Four, those of us whose favourite service is Food for Thought, those of us who really value the weekly communion service, and those of us who just enjoy Lighthouse or Shelswell by the Sea.

We are all part of God's family – but we don't really know each other very well!

Our Away Day in May will be facilitated by Yvonne Morris, Discipleship Enabler (Dorchester & Oxford Areas) and Children's and Family Ministry specialist. She will be using some of the 'Space makers' Contemplative Toolkit to help us connect with God and with each other.

Everyone, young and old, is invited to come along for what promises to be an enjoyable and enriching day – there will be lots of refreshments available, and lunch will be provided!

Transport can be provided on request. Get it in your diary now!!

Alice



CANTORES CONSORT IN CONCERT

After their successful concert last year, *Cantores Consort* will return to perform at Hardwick church on Saturday 11th May 2024 at 7:30pm. This highly entertaining *a cappella* vocal music group will present an eclectic programme of music both sacred and profane, old and new, polyphony, folksong and jazz. Refreshments available. Entry £10 per person, pay on the door. All proceeds in aid of church funds.

Lighthouse Shelswell 2024 Call for volunteers!



Save the date!

Holiday Club for 4 - 11s

Monday 29th July - Friday 2nd August 2024 10 am - 3.30 pm

Finmere CE Primary School, Mere Road, Finmere, MK18 4AR

A Christian based holiday club welcoming children of all faiths and none.

Craft

Performing arts

music

for more info check out www.lighthousecentral.org

Recommended donation of £10 per day. Bursaries available.

Would you like to join our excellent team of volunteers for part or all of Lighthouse this year? We would welcome a few extra bodies – adults or teenagers – you could help in the children's groups, or with drama, craft or sport, with registration or with making drinks for the helpers!

Volunteers' registration opens on 1st March – go to https://signmeup.org.uk/

(PS this is a new system – I am told it is much easier than the last one, but I am guessing there may be some teething problems! If so, please be patient and persist!!)

For further information, please do get in touch. Alice

Alicegoodall313@gmail.com / 01280 848192

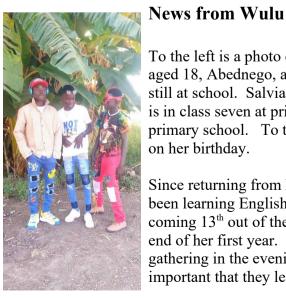




To the left is a photo of Bishop Zechariah's three sons: Salvia, aged 18, Abednego, aged 13 and Daniel aged 11. They are all still at school. Salvia is in class three of the seniors, Abednego is in class seven at primary school and Daniel is in class four at primary school. To the right is a picture of his granddaughter on her birthday.

Since returning from her visit to the UK, Mama Monica has been learning English in the Adults School. She is doing well, coming 13th out of the 34 people taking the final exam at the

end of her first year. She and Zechariah talk with the children in English when they are gathering in the evening at home. English is the official language of South Sudan, so it is important that they learn it.



Bishop Zechariah has been going to lots of conferences recently. In November he went to the Houe of Bishops meeting in Juba. It had been hard for him to go to the meeting because Monica's brother had died five days earlier following a snake bite. However Monica had insisted he went, and that she would be alright staying with her father.





In early January he held a meeting of all the pastors from the Diocese of Wulu – given that transport is difficult, they do not get together very often but it is an important occasion to share news from the five archdeaconaries within the Wulu Diocese.

In mid January Bishop Zechariah held a community conference for the Beli people in Wulu – it was very hot. They ended the conference with singing – the Bishop sent me a video of a renowned hunter singing about all the animals he has killed, ending up with mention of a hyena, which leaves everyone in fits of laughter. I am guessing that the hyena is not seen as a prize trophy in Wulu hunting circles.





In late January a number of the pastors met together for two weeks for their 'Common Prayer Book' training. They have translated the prayer book into their mother tongue – the Beli language – which is an amazing achievement and will be greatly appreciated by the Christians in Wulu.



And then in February Bishop Zechariah attends the conference held in nearby Cueibet Diocese with visitors from the Chalke Deanary near Salisbury. Folk may remember Geoff coming to speak to us a few years ago about their link with Cueibet. Visiting South Sudan is an amazing experience – it would be wonderful if a couple of people from the Shelswell patch wanted to go and bring us back a first hand report on Wulu and the projects we have supported! And I know that Bishop Zechariah would make them very welcome. Let me know if you would be up for it.

Alice

Club News



SHELSWELL WI



Our February meeting saw us welcome Jane Abbott and her talk 'Alpacas and Their Fabulous Fluff'. It was great to hear about the history of the alpaca, different breeds and the uses for their Fluff. Apparently birds love to line their nests with it.

In March we are holding our AGM, and also the North Ploughley Group Meeting later on in March. In April we have Jane Finnerty talking on 'When Revolution Was The Only Solution'.

If you would like to join us we meet on the first Thursday of the month at 7.30 in Fringford Village Hall. For more details contact Lesley Beagent 07729 605670







SHELSWELL GARDEN CLUB

Our February meeting has not taken place before the March edition. A report about Don Witton talk on Eurphorbias will be in the April edition of the magazine.

In March (12th) we return to Hethe village hall (7.30) for a talk from Lucy Hartley entitled **Climate Change** and how it affects our gardens.

Club membership fee is now £15 per year. This covers all speakers, zoom meetings in January and February as well as entry to the evening garden visits. The visitor fee will now be £5, which will be refunded if the visitor decides to join the Club that evening. Swallows Nursery in Mixbury has kindly offered a discount to our members when you show your membership card.

We welcome visitors to our club that normally meets at Hethe Village Hall at 7.30 pm on the second Tuesday of the month (apart from August), or by Zoom in the winter months. Meetings and outings are open to members and visitors, friends and relatives. Plants are for sale at most meetings.

For further information, call Sally Drummond Hay on 01280 848591 or Corrine Mitchell on 01869 247411 or email shelswellgardenclub@gmail.com

SHELSWELL READING GROUP

Our January meeting discussed 'Lessons in Chemistry' by Bonnie Garnus. This book provided plenty of discussion – although the book was not universally liked! Elizabeth was irritating to some, and yet somewhat inspirational to others. Lots of discussions about what it was like to be a women in the 50's and parallels with today. We all felt it was written with a view to a TV / film adaptation, as many books seem to be today.

The book for the February meeting was The Marriage Portrait by Maggie O'Farrell. The next meeting will be Wednesday 21 March, 7.30 pm – at West Cottage, Cottisford. The book will be Tomorrow, Tomorrow by Gabrielle Zevin. The April meeting will be held on Wednesday 24 April, 7.30 pm – at 1/2 Hethe Cottages – book yet to be confirmed.

Other books discussed were:

Prayers for the Stolen – Jennifer Clement (Gun Love Author)

All the Broken Places – John Boyne (sequel to Boy in Striped Pyjamas)

Journey By Moonlight – Antal Szerb

In Cold Blood – Truman Capote A Thread of Violence – Mark O'Connell

Shrines of Gaiety – Kate Atkinson

Girl, Women, Other - Bernadine Evaristo

If you are interested in joining the reading group or would like more information, please contact Jane Birnage (janebirnage@icloud.com 07770 220605)

SHELSWELL POETRY APPRECIATION GROUP

The theme for February was Money. We began with *A Man's a Man for a'That* by Robert Burns. He scorned wealth if it was the only attribute of a man. *The World of the One Percent* by Elton Camp was a fitting follow-up as were the lyrics to *Money*, the song by *Pink Floyd*. WH Davies, in *Money*, *O!*, has a cynical view of how money attracts false friends.

In *Ten Pence Story* Simon Armitage tells the story of a coin – an idea hugely popular with primary school teachers in the past, and in *Money* Howard Nemerov examines the history and design of the American nickel, whilst Allen Ginsberg, in *Velocity of Money*, has a very jaundiced view of what money does. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, whom we tend to think of as an artist rather than a poet, ponders the symbolism of French currency, which traces change of regimes in that country, in *On a Handful of French Coins*.

Philip Larkin, in his poems *Money* and *Toads* regrets the necessity to earn money – although in a poem we did not look at on this occasion, *Toads Revisited*, he comes to terms with the necessity to make a living. *Worry About Money* by Kathleen Raine seems to be about the poet consoling herself for her lack of it by remembering the parable of the widow's cruse of oil from the New Testament, but there is a definite edge of bitterness to her words. Shel Silverstein thinks wryly about his childhood naivety around money in *Smart* and Robert Frost in two poems - *A Roadside Stand* and *Money* - reveals his thinking about its importance.

One of the most thought-provoking poems on the subject was *Money* by AJS Tessimond, and, on the surface, the most light-hearted was the nursery rhyme *Sing a Song of Sixpence*. Its historical echoes of the dissolution of the monasteries and the execution of Anne Boleyn by Henry VIII, however, are much darker. Finally, why oh why do so many poets show so little imagination when reaching for a title on the subject?!

Our next meeting's date and theme had not been fixed at the time of going to press, but it will be the first or second Tuesday in March. It will begin at 10.30. If you would like to join us, please contact me for details, on 01869 811994 or at judith.harvey@live.co.uk

REPORTS FROM THE PARISHES

Cottisford and Juniper Hill St Mary the Virgin

CHURCHWARDEN: Charles Jackson, Cottisford House, Cottisford Tel 01280 848247
TREASURER David Barnes, Honeysuckle Cottage, 11 Hardwick Tel 01869 277690
PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Flora Skinner Tel: 01869 277366

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Judith Harvey, Lark Rise Cottage, Juniper HillEmail: judith.harvey@live.co.uk

SERVICES

Sunday 3rd March 9.15 am Holy Communion Sunday 17th March 9.15 am Holy Communion and...



FAMILY EASTER SERVICE

Sunday 31st March at 10.45 am



Come and join us for our family Easter service. Join in the Easter egg hunt (any age!) and enjoy refreshments after the service.



Also, we shall be decorating the church on Saturday 30th March at 10.30 am. Donations of flowers and greenery plus help would be welcome.

Save the date - Sunday 21st April

We are holding a Pet Service on 21st April at 10 45 am. All pets welcome – great and small - plus their well-behaved owners. Refreshments will be provided.

COTTISFORD AND JUNIPER HILL SOCIAL COMMITTEE



Snowdrops in the Churchyard

Thank you to those of you who came and supported Snowdrop Sunday on 11 February. We were very lucky, the rain held off for the afternoon. We will let you know next month how much was raised.

We will be using some of the money to spruce up our notice boards (one of which took a bit of a hit in the recent bad weather, a big thank you to the parishoner to repaired it) and benches.



We will also soon be arranging dates for pop up pubs and coffee mornings.

If you would like to help with any of our events or host a pop up pub or coffee morning contact us on the email below

Sandrambickmore@gmail.com

Finmere St Michael and All Angels

CHURCHWARDEN: VACANT TREASURER: Emma Brennan

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER: Katherine Grimston, The Old Rectory, Finmere

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Paul Nash Email: paan63@yahoo.co.uk

emma mary@hotmail.co.uk Tel: 01280 848364 Tel 01280 848268

Church Services

Sunday 17th March 9.15 am Holy Communion

Sunday 24th March 9.15 am Morning Service

Thursday 28th March 7.30 pm (Maundy Thursday) Holy Communion

Sunday 31st March 9.15 am (Easter Day) Holy Communion

Village Hall

The village hall has been fully renovated and is now available for hire. A number of facilities have been added, including updated AV facilities with a new projector and large screen, new flooring and front and fire exit doors and enlarged storage spaces for regular users. WiFi facilities are also available



For all hall bookings enquiries, please visit www.myfinmere.com/villagehall. We hope that the village enjoys and appreciates the maintenance of the field, carried out with all diligence by Trevor.



Finmere Village Hall, continued

The Hall and the PC have recently received a charge in excess of £4,000 for the annual maintenance of the field mower. Please support the Hall in its necessary fundraising activities by booking tickets for the March Ouiz Night. Thanks.

Finmere Village Hall Saturday 9th. March

7.00 for 7.30pm

With Chilli & rice + puddings in the interval Bring your own drinks



Tickets - £12 / head or £60 / team of 6 from 01280 848268 or via the village hall website at www.myfinmere.com

Proceeds towards Finmere village hall funds

Also, don't forget the monthly 'no charge' Tea & Cakes at the hall on the second Tuesday of the month, together with the Light Lunches on 4th. Tuesday of the month.

Allotments

All quiet on the allotments – guess everyone is keep in the warm and armchair planning the new season



The Poor's Plot continues to have a small waiting list for allotment plots and it looks as though there is a possibility that a few plots may shortly become available, so any aspiring allotment users should visit www.myfinmere.com/poorsplot

Some Finmere related links:

Finmere 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 – <u>www.myfinmere.com</u>

Finmere Poor's Plot – www.myfinmere.com/poorsplot

Old Finmere history website – www.myfinmere.com/history

Finmere on Wikipedia - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finmereipedia

Finmere Primary School - www.finmere.oxon.sch.uk



Please come along to support Finmere's "Tuesday Teas"

If you are at home in the day, please pop into the Village Hall for a cuppa & a catch-up...

Tuesday 12th March from 2 - 4 pm Tea, coffee, cake & biscuits All locals welcome, no charge

We would love to grow the numbers so please bring a friend!

If you need transport, please contact Jo (07974 740312) or Katherine (07770 804025)

If anyone would like to help with "Tuesday Teas", we need help serving refreshments, setting out tables, providing lifts and BAKING CAKES!

Your baking costs can be reimbursed - No need to volunteer every month; just help when you can...





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

Church Services & Events

• Sunday 3 March – at 10.45am, Morning Service

- Sunday 10 March at 6.00pm, Holy Communion
- Sunday 17 March at 10.45am, Holy Communion
- Thursday 28 March **Maundy Thursday** 12 noon Holy Communion in Stoke Lyne Church.

7.30pm Holy Communion in Finmere Church

• Friday 29 March – Good Friday - 12.15pm All Age Service in Fringford Church

2.00pm Last Hour on the Cross in Hethe Church

6.00pm Devotional Service in Stratton Audley Church

• Sunday 31 March – Easter Day at 9.15am Holy Communion

To find out the times and places of other services on Sundays, please check the back cover of this magazine, the Benefice website www.shelswellparishes.info, the noticeboard at the church, or ring the Benefice office (01280-848192). You will always be welcome in our other parishes.

Events

Posy Making on 9 March

Calling all Dads and children! Come along to the church on the Saturday before Mother's Day to make a posy to take home to your mother. Time: 10.00am to 11.00am. Flowers and greenery provided, and some refreshment. No charge. Look forward to seeing you.



Annual Meeting of Parishioners (or 'Vestry Meeting') to appoint Churchwardens

This meeting will take place on Sunday 17 March, in church, after the 10.45am service.

Easter Lilies

If you would like to donate an Easter Lily in memory of a loved one, please contact Carol Reader either on email: carol.reader@btinternet.com or by telephone 01869-277057. A stem will cost £5. The lilies will be on display in the church over Easter.

Preparing the Church for Easter

Cleaning and decorating the church will take place on Saturday 30 March from 9.30am. If you can help and/or donate flowers/greenery it would be much appreciated. Just come along.

Beer Festival

Looking ahead – the date of the 2024 Fringford Beer Festival is Saturday 15 June.

- Sponsor a barrel £110. contact Simon Knight for details about sponsorship: 07598 104444 or email: simon.knight@btinternet.com
- Do you like real cider? If so, would you like to be involved in the selection and buying of cider for this year's Beer Festival with a view to perhaps taking on responsibility for the cider next year? If you're interested please call Diana on 07710 259955 for a chat.

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.

Fringford Church 100 Club

Numbers cost £3 a month (£36 annually) Payment by BACS, cheque or cash. Draw each month for 50% of the income divided amongst 3 winners: at the moment 1st prize £61, 2nd £37, 3rd £25. You can still sign up to the 100 Club. Contact Christina McCullagh to register - **07867 515207**. The draw takes place monthly at the Village Coffee Morning.

Little Lambs Babies & Toddler Group

Every Wednesday during term time in Stratton Audley Church, from 9.30am to 11.00am. [Not during holidays and half term.] Just come along, but if you need information in the meantime, email admin@shelswellparishes.info

FRINGFORD FRIENDS NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT GROUP

Support is always available from the Fringford Friends, Neighbourhood Support Group:

- Telephone: 07704 756840
- Email <u>neighbourhoodsupport@fringford.info</u>

To join Fringford's **What's App Group** ring or email Christine Underwood: 07961 972388 or email silvercb1@outlook.com



FRINGFORD VILLAGE COFFEE MORNING

Village Coffee Mornings will take place on Monday 18 March and Monday 15 April. Drop by for a coffee/tea and a chat any time between 10.30am and 12 noon. It is in the Chinnery Room at the Village Hall. Contact Penny on 277310 if you want more information.





We enjoy any type of craft and a natter getting together to relax and enjoy each other's company. Some of us knit, crochet, embroider, quilt, sew or create craft items/albums.

We get together once a month, either on a Wednesday evening at 7 – 9pm or Sunday afternoon at 3 – 5pm

We meet in the Chinnery Room at Fringford Village Hall.

Our next sessions for 2024 are:

March Sunday 17th
April Wednesday 17th
May Sunday 19th
June Wednesday 19th

Sessions are £2.00 drop in or £10 to cover the year

No need to book – just come and join us! If you would like information, please email Irene <u>ireneethomas@btinternet.com</u>

Regular Activities held in Fringford Village Hall

To find out more or book a place, please contact the hirer direct.	
Weekly Activities	Monthly Activities
FS Dance Monday & Wednesday (term time) After school classes BALLET • TAP • MODERN • STREET leah.fsd@gmail.com or 07885827592	Village Coffee Morning All ages welcome Third Monday in the month - Chinnery Room Drop in anytime between 10.30 am and noon Penny Wood 01869 277310
Puppy Stars Dog Training Tuesday evening – various classes Contact Nick 07542 131400 www.puppystars.co.uk	Parish Council Meeting All villagers welcome Third Monday in the month 7.45pm Contact 01844 237766 or fringford.parishclerk@gmail.com
Fringford Yoga Wednesday (term time) 9.30am – 11am Carolyn White 01869 277161	Bicester Sound Bath Meditation First Sunday of the month from 7.45 pm Sonia - contact@holisticaxis.com Please text - 07709634847
Just Puppies Puppy Training Wednesday evening – various classes Contact Kerri 07720 891489 www.justpuppies.training	Shelswell WI First Thursday of the month 7.30pm Contact Lesley Beagent on 07729605670
Pilates Thursday at 10.00am natashaflowerspilates@gmail.com or 07545 525820	Mindfulness Meditation Monthly Sunday 11am to 12.30pm janerainey17@gmail.com or 07971 008337
My Baby Spa Monday mornings Spa experience for babies up to 12 months and toddlers 1 – 4 years www.mybabyspa.co.uk contact Danielle at contact@mybabyspa.co.uk	Fringford Sewcial Sew and Chat! Monthly Wednesday from 7pm Or Sunday from 3pm Contact Irene at ireneethomas@btinternet.com Village Hall Team Meeting Every 4 weeks – 7.00 pm Open meetings – all welcome fringford.hall@gmail.com or 07936 879175

To book the hall for your own event, please go to fringford.info, village hall, how to book Here you will find all the information you will need to book on-line.

For any other queries please phone or text 07936 879175

For any other queries please phone or text 07936 879175 or email: fringford.hall@gmail.com

Tel 01869 277690

Tel 01869 277690

Tel: 01869 277366

Tel 01869 277690

Hardwick St Mary the Virgin

CHURCHWARDEN: David Barnes, Honeysuckle Cottage, 11 Hardwick TREASURER: David Barnes, Honeysuckle Cottage, 11 Hardwick

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Flora Skinner

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Veronica Barnes, Honeysuckle Cottage, 11 Hardwick

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

Church Services

Sunday 24th March (Palm Sunday) 4 pm Evensong with the Shelswell Group Choir Sunday 31st March (Easter Day) 9.15 am Holy Communion

Cantares Consort

As advertised in the front section of the magazine, *Cantores Consort* will return to perform at Hardwick church on Saturday 11th May 2024 at 7:30pm.

Hardwick church is open daily 10am to 4pm.

Private prayer and quiet contemplation

View the architecture, memorials and stained glass windows

Please make use of this special space

Pilgrim Pathways

Why not walk the Hethe to Hardwick to Cottisford to Hethe "Pilgrim Pathway". This 4-mile circular route takes in the C of E churches of each of these villages as well as Holy Trinity, Hethe's RC church. You can start and end your walk at any point on the route, which takes in some glorious North Oxfordshire countryside. Pick up a free brochure outlining the route from any of the churches or contact David Barnes (01869 277690), who can send you one.

Hardwick Church guidebook

The new guidebook for Hardwick church and the parish of Hardwick with Tusmore is available to collect from the church or contact David Barnes (01869 277690), who can send one to you. This 44-page booklet has over 20 colour photos and provides a fascinating insight into the features and history of Hardwick church, the village and the Tusmore Estate. We ask that you make a minimum donation of £5 to church funds.



Hethe St Edmund and St George

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

TREASURER: Mike Green, Greenhill Cottage, Main Street, Hethe PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Flora Skinner as abo

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT:

Flora Skinner as above Mike Green as above

WEBSITE: www.hethe.org

Tel 01869 277366 Tel 01869 278166

Tel 01869 278166

If you have any news or a village 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 the next edition of the Shelswell News is on Page 2.

ST EDMUND & ST GEORGE CHURCH

Church Services and Events

Sunday 10th March (Mothering Sunday) 9.15 am Holy Communion Sunday 24th March (Palm Sunday) 8.00 am Holy Communion Friday 29th March (Good Friday) 2 pm Last Hour on the Cross Sunday 31st March (Easter Day) 10.45 am Holy Communion



You will be welcome at services at any of our churches in the benefice, or if you are away from the village, you can find a nearby service through the web site https://www.achurchnearyou.com.

The church is open every day for visits and private prayer.



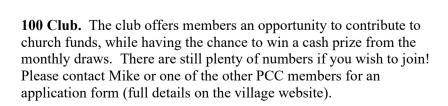
Many thanks to Linda Cotton for volunteering to clean the church and provide flowers this month.



If you can contribute to the on-going availability of the church, you may make a one-off gift through a single transaction or set up regular donations, using a debit or credit card, or Apple or Google Pay, using the secure Parish Giving (PGS) website - https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/home/ or through the following QR Code:



Scan here to make a one-off donation or to set up regular giving by direct debit





Hethe Community Coffee Morning in the Village Hall

Monday 11th March from 10.00am to 12.00pm

Friends, neighbours, dog walkers, pram pushers: an opportunity to meet during the daytime – there's great cake too!



Parish Council. Message from the Chair (note that by the time of publication, the defibrillator may be installed):

"We are in process of getting the defibrillator installed so should hopefully be working the next few weeks, in porch of church. We are hoping to arrange some CPR/First Aid training for villagers and will update more when we have found options to offer this."

Refuse/Recycling.

Don't forget to renew your licence for collection of the brown garden waste bins.

Message from Oxfordshire County Council (see the CC website for more details):

"We can all now dispose of limited amounts of DIY waste for free at the county's household waste recycling centres – we just need to book in advance.



"Online bookings are for a single visit only. An address, vehicle registration number, email address, and the date you wish to visit will be needed, along with the site you want to use. You will then receive immediate email confirmation of your booking, which must be shown to site team on arrival."

Village Hall Fundraising

Hethe Village Hall Fundraising presents :

Quiz Night with supper

Saturday March 9th 7.30pm

Entry £10 per person

Come in teams of up to six people or just turn up to join in the fun!





Raffle and hot buffet with puddings at half time, bring your own drink; soft drinks available for purchase.

For Village Hall bookings, please contact Flora, the Village Hall Booking Secretary, on 01869 277366 fjskinner@hotmail.co.uk. The photo shows the planned modernisations to the hall.



The Stay & Play Group contact is Kelly Woodford on 07716 981263. They meet on Friday mornings.

The Hardwick Road Allotments. Please note that the contact for the allotments off the Hardwick Road is Yvonne Thomas, 3 Wilson Way, Caversfield, OX27 8FB, tel 243536 or 07773065890. The agents are Carter Jonas for the Oxford Diocese.

Keep up to date with what is happening in the village through:

Our village web site (courtesy of the Parish Council): https://www.hethe.org/Facebook Pages:

Community Spirit of the Hethens - https://www.facebook.com/groups/914036669040803 Hethe Community - https://www.facebook.com/groups/651105142605166 Next Door - https://nextdoor.co.uk/

Mixbury All Saints

CHURCHWARDENS: Martin Ayres, Northwell Farm, Finmere
Alec Howard, Middlestead, Mixbury
Tel 01280 848295
TREASURER: David Mitchell. 2 Town Farm, Mixbury
Tel 01280 847769
PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Anna Howard
Tel 01280 848295
MAGAZINE CORRESPNDENT: Sue Goodman pasgoodman551@gmail.com
Tel 01280 848002

CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday 10th March (Mothering Sunday) 9.15 am Mixbury Half Hour Sunday 31st March (Easter Day) 9.15 am Holy Communion



The Beautiful Spring BY George Cooper

"I was here first," said the snowdrop: "look!" "Not before me!" sang the silver brook. "Why," cried the grass, "I've been here a week!" "So have I, dear," sighed a violet meek. "Well," piped a bluebird, "don't leave me out! I saw the snow that lay round about." "Yes," chirped a snowbird, "that may be true; But I've seen it all the bleak winter through." "I came betimes," sang the southwind, "I!" "After me, love!" spake the deep blue sky. "Who is it cares?" chimed the crickets gay: "Now you are here, let us hope you'll stay." Whispered the sun, "Lo! the winter's past: What does it matter who's first or last? Sky, brooks, and flowers, and birdies that sing, All help to make up the beautiful spring."

MIXBURY CHURCH FLOWER ROTA 2024

March Emma Bray

April Easter 17th April – Everyone

May Barbara Mortimer

June Kate Darby
July Sue Goodman
August Helen Backon
September Philippa Brown

Harvest festival – everyone

October Morag Westworth

November Fi Bairstow

December Carol service and Christmas - everyone

Reserve Sam Lockwood



MIXBURY CHURCH CLEANING ROTA 2024

Thank you to everyone who has volunteered to go on this rota in order to clean and to help maintain the church throughout the year. Your hard work is very much appreciated.

MARCH Giovanna Holdcroft and Tanya Howroyd

APRIL Emma Bray and Viv Williams

MAY Alison Bailey, Pam Burrill and Jules Channon

JUNE Nicola Adams and Anna Howard & Sue Bosher

JULY Julie Mitchell and Helen Backon

AUGUST Rebecca Ayres and Eryl Tobin

SEPTEMBER Giovanna Holdcroft and Tanya Howroyd

OCTOBER Emma Bray and Viv Williams

NOVEMBER Alison Bailey, Pam Burrill and Jules Channon

DECEMBER Gail Bellingham, Mel Soar & Sue Bosher

If anyone else would like to help with cleaning, we would be very grateful for extra volunteers. This would help to lighten the load on otherwise busy people. The job only requires a couple of hours simple cleaning in your allotted month, and if you can find a partner or join a group of two to make groups of three, it can be a pleasant way to involve yourself in the village and familiarise yourself with our beautiful church. For more information please contact Julie Mitchell on 01280-847769

MIXBURY POP UP PUB NIGHTS

The Mixbury Pop Up Pub has been a tradition in the village for many years now and is a lovely way to socialise and make friends. The hosts provide the venue, glasses and a few nibbles and the guests arrive with their own drinks.

If you are interested in hosting a pub night please contact Tanya – email: markandtanya@yahoo.co.uk.

LOCAL FOOTPATHS

There was recently an obstruction on a footpath around Mixbury, unfortunately the wrong landowner was reported to the Local Authority. It would be more neighbourly if you find an obstruction locally to knock on the nearest door and enquire who the landowner is and the matter can be easily dealt with to save wasting local authority time. The same goes for vegetation overgrowing on foothpaths, its just polite to ask the landowner first if you can trim it back. There was some time ago a self appointed Footpath Warden who should be contacted if you are in any doubt.



ELECTIONS - THURSDAY 2 MAY 2024 (taken from the Cherwell Elections Web page)

On Thursday 2 May 2024, electors in Cherwell will vote for councillors to represent them on the district council. 16 out of 48 seats, one seat per ward, are up for election.

9 parish councils have elections scheduled on Thursday, 2 May 2024.

There will also be elections for the Police and Crime Commissioner on the same day. Electors in the Cherwell district vote for the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner.

All electors who are registered and eligible to vote will receive a poll card in late March 2024.

If you've recently moved or turned 18, you may not be registered. You can do this by following the link Register to Vote.

If you wish to vote at the polling station you will be required to show an accepted form of photographic ID before being issued with a ballot paper, to find out more information on what forms of ID are accepted or on how to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate visit the <u>Voter ID page</u>.

If you are unable to attend the polling station, you can <u>apply to vote by post</u> or you can <u>apply to appoint a proxy</u>. Please visit Cherwells Election page to follow the appropriate links.

Key dates for elections on 2 May 2024

- Nominations can be submitted weekdays (excluding Bank Holidays) between the hours of 10am and 4pm from Monday 25 March 2024 until 4pm on Friday 5 April 2024
- Deadline for new applications to register in time to vote at the above election: Tuesday 16 April 2024
- Deadline for submitting applications to vote by post at the above election: 5pm, Wednesday 17 April 2024
- Deadline for applying for a Voter Authority Certificate: 5pm, Wednesday 24 April 2024
- Deadline for submitting applications to vote by proxy at the above election: 5pm, Wednesday 24
 April 2024
- Polling Day will be on Thursday 2 May 2024 with polling stations open from 7:00am to 10:00pm
 - Distribution of poll cards will be between 22 March and 25 March 2024

Newton Purcell St Michael and All Angels

CHURCHWARDENS: Ann von Maltzahn, Home Farm Shelswell Park Tel 01280 848680

Vacant

TREASURER: Fai Li

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Flora Skinner

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Ann von Maltzahn

Tel: 07725 009838

Tel: 07725 009838

Tel: 01869 277366

Services:-

Sunday 3rd March - 9.15 a.m. Holy Communion. Sunday 31st March - 10.45 a.m. Easter Sunday Celebration

Annual Meeting of Parishioners -

This will follow our service on Sunday 3rd March. Formerly know as the Vestry meeting, it is when Churchwardens are elected for the coming year.

Easter Sunday -

We look forward to welcoming you, your family and friends to this special service on Easter Sunday at 10.45 a.m. It will be followed by refreshments, an Easter Raffle AND Egg Hunt so not to be missed and a lot of fun!



Church Flower Rota & Cleaning -

We still need volunteers to help with occasional simple flowers for the alter and some cleaning so if you feel you could help please contact Ann von Maltzahn either on 01280 848680 or by email - ann_maltzahn@yahoo.com She will look forward to hearing from you!

Stoke Lyne St Peter's

CHURCHWARDEN: Christopher Poole <u>CTP@oxford-educational.co.uk</u> Tel 01869 346020 TREASURER: Janey Poole <u>janey@oxford-educational.co.uk</u> Tel 07810 120457

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER Emma Brown emmabrown911@gmail.com

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Rena Andrews renaandrews820@gmail.com Tel: 01869 346653 PARISH ROOM BOOKINGS: Kelly and James Holden-White kholdenwhite@aol.com Tel 01869 345211

WEBSITE www.stokelyne.org

St Peter's Church Stoke Lyne Services

Sunday 3rd March 10 am Food for Thought Thursday 7th March 12 noon Holy Communion and Soup Lunch Sunday 17th March 4 pm Fun at Four Sunday 24th March (Palm Sunday) 10.45 am Holy Communion Thursday 28th March (Maundy Thursday) 12 noon Holy Communion Sunday 31st March (Easter Day) 10.45 am Holy Communion

Flower Duty for March

Jane Webb

Stoke Lyne 100 Club – February Results

The February 100 Club results are as follows:

1st PrizeMembership No 27James Lewis2nd PrizeMembership No 39Matt O'Brien3rd PrizeMembership No 55Jane Webb

Congratulations to all and once again spread the word for more members to sign up for this Club. More members = more prize money.

Kind regards Janey Poole Treasurer

St Peter's Church PCC

Tel: 01869 344502 (Office) Tel: 01869 346020 (Home) Mobile: 07810 120457

Food for Thought - Sunday, 4th February at 10 am

Ali Miller led the service and Rena Andrews assisted with setting out the breakfast after which Ali began the service. She began by welcoming everyone to this popular service and opened with the well-known hymn "Morning Has Broken" assisted by Flora on the organ. The sermon was taken from St John's Gospel chapter 1: verses 1-14 and was all about God: through Him all things were made, in Him was life, and that life was the life of all mankind. We then had a discussion about the different viewpoints people have about creation and God's role in it. It was interesting to hear all the differing viewpoints. Sometimes when we talk about God, we look upwards to the sky. He's not in the sky, God has moved into the neighbourhood to dwell among us.

We then had another hymn, "For the beauty of the earth", with Flora accompanying again on the organ. Ali had prepared some prayers to be read by some of the congregation. Ali was thanked by Harriet for preparing and leading the service.

Rena Andrews



Stoke Lyne W.I. - Thursday, 8th February

We usually meet at Hethe Village Hall but as we didn't have a speaker booked, we were just going to have a social meeting and then the committee decided we should go out for lunch, and we met at the Paisley Pear in Brackley. This is a Marston Brewery restaurant with accommodation, very handy if you are visiting Silverstone. Menus were passed round, and meals chosen. While waiting for our food we did some business and papers were circulated concerning various activities coming up in the near future. Names were taken for the North Ploughley Group meeting on Thursday 21st March at 7.30 at Fringford Village Hall. Shelswell W.I will be the host institute and the speaker will be Liz Wooley whose talk on children in wartime during WW2 should be interesting for those who remember.

The meals were very good and the service excellent, I would recommend it. There was lots of chatting and laughter, we don't always have time for that at our normal meetings, everyone agreed it was a lovely meeting in lovely surroundings.

Rena Andrews.

Stoke Lyne Craft Fair – 24th April, St Peter's Church

Please see separate advertisement.

Spring Bulbs

As usual, there is a wonderful display of snowdrops in the churchyard especially round the back, and the daffodils are starting to come out as well.



Stoke Lyne Spring Clean
Saturday 6th April
10am
Bacon sandwiches for helpers

We have plenty of jobs inside the church and in the churchyard, please come along and offer an hour or two of your time.

Please bring tools for cutting back branches and hedges (if you have them).





A special Stoke Lyne Film Night
Saturday 30th March 6.30pm
'The Passion of The Christ' (15)
Free entry
Refreshments available for a
donation.

Please let Kelly know you will be coming: kholdenwhite@aol.com

A Look at the Font in St Peter's Church



Photo by Rena Andrews

As I didn't move to Stoke Lyne until the mid-nineties, I assumed that the church font had always been in the same place. However, I got a surprise when I spotted a new digital image of the interior of the church taken on 24th May 1960 on the Oxfordshire County Council "Heritage Search" website: the font was situated just inside and to the right of the main doorway as you enter the church. Here is a link to the image:

https://heritagesearch.oxfordshire.gov.uk/images/POX0572860.

I therefore suspected that it may have been moved for the 1992 re-ordering to make way for the folding wooden screen which could be drawn across the body of the church to create a separate parish room (which was itself removed in the 2019 re-ordering) so I checked with magazine correspondent Rena and she confirmed that this was the case. She also remembered that there used to be a hook in the ceiling near the door which could be used, presumably with a rope, to pull the heavy wooden hood off the font (you can clearly see its counterpart on top of the hood in Rena's photo above). She recalled that not all the original blocks at the base of the font were used in its new position as there was not enough room. If you look at Rena's photo above and compare it to the online image, you can see that the new base is indeed smaller.



Stoke Lyne Christmas Fair, 2017, showing the wooden partition and where the font would have been on the left hand side. Photo by author.

There is another image on the Heritage Search website which shows an even older version of the font:

https://heritagesearch.oxfordshire.gov.uk/images/POX0120294

This dates from 1820 and is of a pen and ink drawing made by John Buckler (1770-1851) who is famous for his drawings of churches and many other historic buildings. The original of this image is in the Bodleian Library. It looks rather like a chimney pot stuck on a hexagonal stone base but is more properly described as a "tub font". There is no lid or hood. The Oxfordshire Historic Churches website says of the interior of St Peter's:

"Most of the fixtures and fittings are C19 with the exception of the stone font which is C12".

It seems that when architect Henry Woodyer undertook the 1868 restoration of the church when C. B. Marsham became vicar, he did not forget to include the font: "The Buildings of England: Oxfordshire" by Jennifer Sherwood and Nikolaus Pevsener (1974) whilst talking of this restoration says "He also embellished the Norman tub font" which I assume means that as well as undertaking various repairs to it he was responsible for the font cover. The "Four Counties" article on St Peter's describes the font as it as "fine hooded Norman tub font" but apparently the hood is not to everyone's taste: The author of blog called "Church Crawler" who visited the church in June 2005 is rather dismissive of it, saying "The most entertaining features inside were Victorian - a bad font with a conical font cover, the latter with awkward continuous Norman arcading".

This is not the first time that the font has faced adverse criticism. J C Blomfield's 1894 "History of the Deanery of Bicester" says of the pre-1868 font: "Some idea may be formed of the state of the Church in this village, as it appeared previously to its restoration, from the notes of the Rural Deans, when they paid their official visits from 1847 to 1868 ..." "The Font is an ancient one, painted white in the inside. It is not used with a plug, "but a washhand Bason is used for the purpose of holding the water instead of the Font itself."

"July 19, 1854. "A white bason, and broken stones in Font. "wretched."

The font must have been used for innumerable baptisms in the village over the years. Here's an example of an ornate baptism certificate from the 1920s: We can imagine the family and sponsors gathered round the font when it still stood by the door:



With permission of Pedro Collins

Brenda Hazel (with thanks to Rena and Pedro)

Stratton Audley and Godington St Mary and St Edburga; **Holy Trinity**

CHURCHWARDENS: Sarah Noujaim, 15 Cavendish Place, Stratton Audley Penny Oakey, Grange Farm, Godington

Tel 07941 273145 Tel 01869 278778 Tel 07725 009838

TREASURER: Fai Li

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

Maxine Ling

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT:

Vacant (Stratton Audley),

Sylvia List (Godington) editor@shelswellparishes.info

Church Services in Stratton Audley

Sunday 3rd March 6.00 pm Compline

Sunday 10th March (Mothering Sunday) 10.45 am Morning Service

Sunday 24th March (Palm Sunday) 9.15 am Holy Communion

Friday 29th March (Good Friday) 6.00 pm Devotional Service with Shelswell Group Choir

Sunday 31st March (Easter Day) 10.45 am Holy Communion

0 HOLY TRINITY, GODINGTON

The Church is open for private prayer and contemplation Saturday and Sunday, 10 am - 4 pm

STRATTON AUDLEY LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

At a recent meeting of the society the 2024 programme of activities was agreed and the details are as follows, starting with April -

STRATTON AUDLEY LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY



WIRELESS WAR SECRETS OF POUNDON & GODINGTON (or HOW GODINGTON WON THE WAR)

April 26th at 7.30pm

Presentation by John Beaumont in the Church

John will be giving a talk on the wireless station at Poundon and its activities (as far as they are known) during WW2. He was helped in this by the amazing memory of Norman Tew who lived in Godington during this period and from anecdotes from several others

There will be a charge of £5 per person, to include a glass of wine or soft drink.

On May 31st there will be a TOUR OF THE BATTLEFIELDS OF NASEBY led by Stephen Barker, which can accommodate 4 cars and a maximum of 19 people. Further details next month.

10th September sees a return of the well-known local raconteur Charlie Ross who will be entertaining us with talks about his auctioneering life.

Dorothy Howarth

FOODBANK DONATIONS STILL REQUIRED

The foodbank donation point in the church porch in Stratton Audley, supporting Bicester Foodbank, is still in place and will remain so for the foreseeable future. Thank you very much to all those who have dropped donations into the box - please keep them coming! Urgently needed items are listed below. Please note that the Rector, Alice Goodall is now a 'Local Referrer' and can refer anyone who is in need to the Bicester Foodbank. Contact: Alice Goodall, The Rectory, Finmere 01280 848192 alicegoodall313@gmail.com

URGENTLY NEEDED FOOD ITEMS

- TINNED FRUIT
- TINNED VEGETABLES
- TINNED TOMATOES
- TINNED SOUP
- TINNED FISH
- INSTANT COFFEE
- HOT CHOCOLATE

WE'VE GOT PLENTY OF

- BREAKFAST CEREALS
- PASTA
- TINNED SPAGHETTI
- BAKED BEANS





Little Lambs Baby and Toddler group

Wednesdays (Term Time) at 9.30am - 11.00am.

We meet
in Stratton Audley Church
for play, music and stories.
Tea, coffee and snacks
for Adults and Toddlers.

THE LAST WORD

Quotes, Jokes, Articles of interest and for younger Readers!

"When Noah sailed the waters blue, he had his troubles same as you. For 40 days he drove the Ark before he found a place to park."



31st March John Donne, poet and preacher

John Donne (1572 – 1631) was an English poet, scholar, soldier, secretary and finally Dean of St Pauls Cathedral in London. But he is most remembered for his sermons and his poetry, for he is seen as the greatest of the 17th-century 'metaphysical' poets.

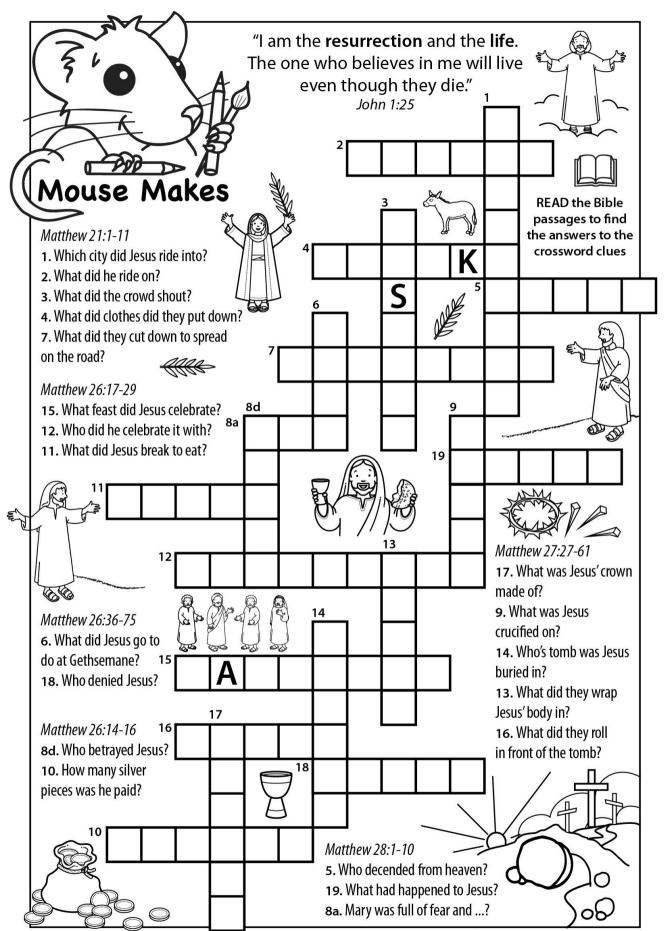
Donne was born in 1572 into a Roman Catholic family in London. After studying at Hart Hall, Oxford (a precursor of Hertford College) and Thavies Inn at Holborn, in 1592 he was admitted to Lincoln's Inn.

In 1594 Donne decided to convert to the Church of England, and this opened up a whole new life for him. In 1596 he joined the naval expedition led by the Earl of Essex against Cadiz in Spain. When he returned he served as a Member of Parliament and was appointed private secretary to Sir Thomas Egerton, Lord Keeper of the Seal. All was going well, but then the 29-year-old Donne fell in love with Egerton's 16-year-old niece, Anne More, and in 1601 he secretly married her. Egerton was furious, and Donne lost his job, and even ended up in prison for a short time.

For several years after that Donne worked as a lawyer. Then in 1610 he wrote a book encouraging Roman Catholics to take the Oath of Allegiance to the king. The book caught the eye of James I, who may have suggested that Donne go into the Church. Certainly, Donne was appointed as a royal chaplain only a few months after his ordination in 1615. In 1617 Donne's beloved wife, Anne, died giving birth to their twelfth child. In 1621 he was appointed the Dean of St Paul's Cathedral, and proved to be a much loved and inspiring preacher until his death on 31st March 1631.

Throughout his working life, Donne continued to write poetry. His best loved prose includes this well known Christian reflection on how people are linked together so that the fate of one person affects everyone else, but without requiring people to sacrifice free will or individual autonomy.

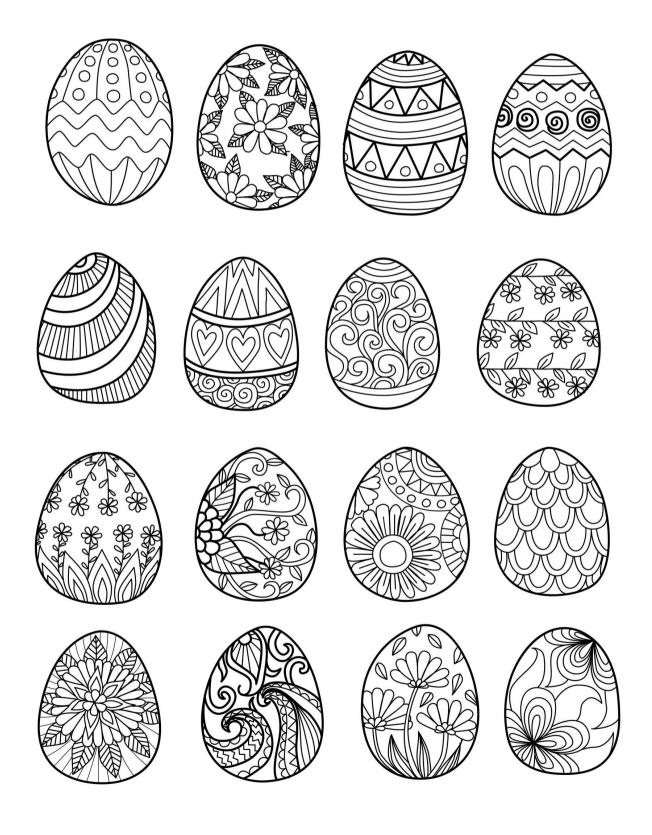
"No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or of thine own were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."



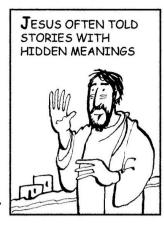
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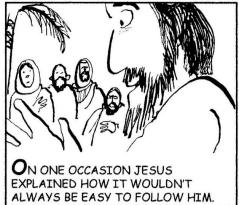


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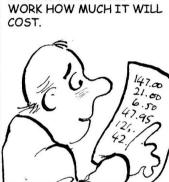


The tale of the Tower Builder





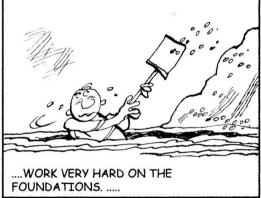


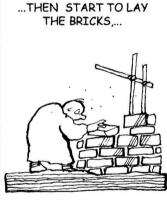


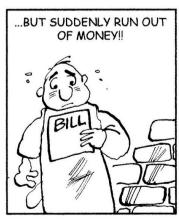
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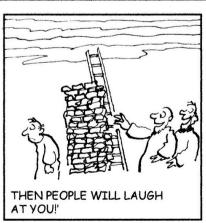














WE NEED TO REALISE THAT ALTHOUGH FOLLOWING JESUS IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO.; IT'S ALSO A GREAT CHALLENGE.

Mr Bates vs The Post Office: not the only one

"We're here because the Post Office told every single one of us sat here today, told us over and over, 'You're the only one.' And that was wrong. That was a lie, actually. Because... well, look at us. Here we all are. And from this moment forwards, none of us will be the only one ever again."

By now, most of us know what the Post Office did all those years ago. It's hard to believe that hundreds of innocent sub-postmasters were repeatedly lied to and prosecuted. When Horizon, the computer system rolled out to each post office, incorrectly showed huge account shortfalls these were blamed on sub-postmasters. They were told that nobody else had any issues, that they were the only one.

Except that they weren't – and the Post Office knew this.

But still the Post Office went ahead and prosecuted these sub-postmasters. Some went bankrupt, some went to prison, some committed suicide. The anger and outcry against the Post Office is welcome. The cry for justice is right. We all want to live in a society where justice is done.

As Jules Gadsby of the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity says: "As Christians, this should be close to our hearts. The Lord is a God of justice. Righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne (Psalm 89:14).

"And Christ stands by those who suffer. He doesn't look on from a distance, but as one who, at the cross, has experienced it Himself.

"It's through His people, reflecting His character and His priorities, that He reveals this.

"We may never have to battle like Alan Bates and the sub-postmasters. But each of us will, in some way, be called to be a mouthpiece for truth and justice in our workplaces, homes, or community.

"In doing so, we show what God is like. And we show those facing unfairness and injustice that they're not alone. We are there with them. God is there with them."

From the Parish Pump, quoting from an article by Jules Gadsby, Church Engagement Specialist at London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC).

What do you think of the weather forecasts?

It seems there is some turbulence between the Met Office and the Royal Meteorological Society (RMS).

The RMS has objected to the recent "deluge" of cautionary statements that the Met Office put out concerning the recent storms. It says that "probably not a day went by" during one week of bad weather, "without a weather warning." The RMS fears that too many warnings will risk people ignoring them.

The Met Office, backed by a Cabinet Officer minister, Alex Burghart, disagreed. Responding to an urgent question in the House of Commons, Mr Burghart said: "The forecasting capabilities of our experts in the Met Office and the accuracy and speed at which they can warn and inform the public of incoming severe weather events does, with no doubt, save lives and protect our homes and businesses."



Yellow Snow – a warning too many?



Easter eggs hanging on apple branches during Lent in central Europe

Did you know...

In an ancient central European tradition, people decorate apple trees by hanging eggs on them during Lent. Nowadays, the eggs may be wooden or plastic, but in the past, they were blown hen's eggs decorated with vegetable colours.

The eggs are usually hung out about four weeks before Easter, and taken down just afterwards, as the leaves and apple blossom are about to come out. This is probably more fun than another Lent tradition in Germany and Poland – spring cleaning the house!

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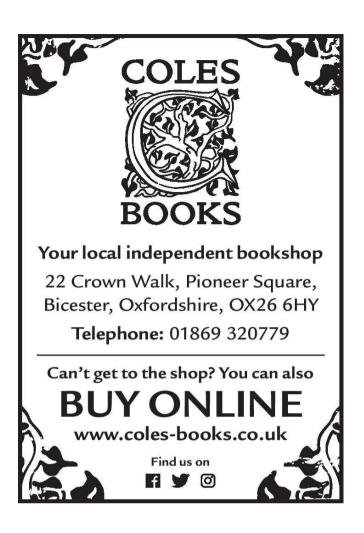
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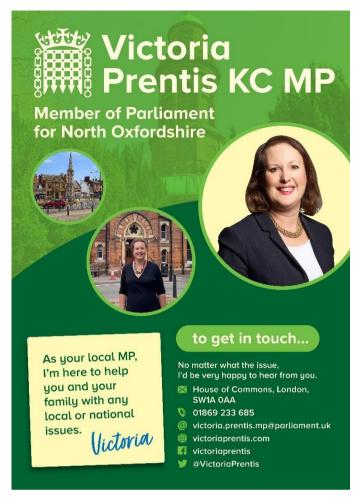
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6.00 pm 10.45 am 9.15 am ALTAR 8.00 am DATE Compline STRATTON AUDLEY SM Holy Communion with hymns (BCP) NEWTON PURCELL 10am 'Food for Thought' STOKE LYNE Lay-led Holy Communion with hymns (CW) COTTISFORD 10.45am Morning Service FRINGFORD 3rd March 3rd Sunday of Lent PW/John Alderdice SM/John Alderdice 9.15am Purple AG: Revd Alice Goodall Thursday 7th March (12 noon) Midweek Holy Communion and Soup Lunch STOKE LYNE SHELSWELL GROUP SERVICES: MARCH 2024 CW: 'Common Worship' modern language service BCP: 'Book of Common Prayer' traditional language service VM: Revd Vicki Mellor Evening Communion FRINGFORD SM Morning Service STRATTON AUDLEY PW Holy Communion with hymns (CW) **Mothering Sunday** Mixbury Half Hour 10th March Purple K SM: Revd Sam Mortimer 10.45am Holy Communion with hymns (CW) FRINGFORD Holy Communion with hymns (BCP) COTTISFORD Holy Communion with hymns (CW) FINMERE SM 5th Sunday of Lent 4pm 'Fun at Four' STOKE LYNE 17th March AG/SM Purple AG CO: Revd Carolyn Oley Holy Communion with hymns (CW) STRATTON AUDLEY Evensong with the Shelswell Group Choir Holy Communion with hymns (CW) STOKE LYNE Morning Service FINMERE PW Holy Communion (BCP) HETHE SM 24th March Palm Sunday HARDWICK LW: Revd Liz Welters K Red 6pm Devotional Service with Shelswell Group Choir STRATTON AUDLEY PW 7.30pm 7.30pm FINMERE AG 2pm Last Hour on the Cross HETHE Holy Communion (CW) STOKE LYNE PW: Mrs Penny Wood (LLM) Good Friday (Hangings Removed) 12.15pm All-age Service FRINGFORD Maundy Thursday (White) Holy Week 12 Noon LW/FS AG Holy Communion with hymns (CW) STRATTON AUDLEY AG Holy Communion with hymns (CW) NEWTON PURCELL CO Holy Communion with hymns (CW) STOKE LYNE LW 10.45am Family Service COTTISFORD PW Extension with hymns (CW) Holy Communion with hymns (CW) HARDWICK VM Holy Communion with hymns (CW) FRINGFORD SM Holy Communion by 9.15am Holy Communion with hymns (CW) FINMERE AG Holy Communion with hymns (CW) HETHE SM 31st March Easter Day White