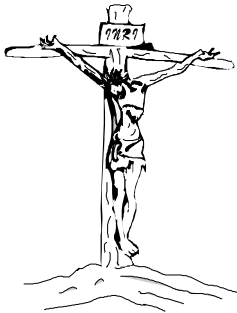


The Parish Magazine of Whitchurch-on-Thames and Whitchurch Hill

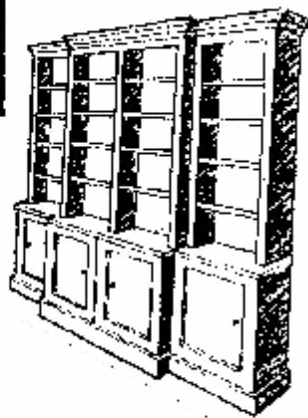


March 2005

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Dear friends in Christ,

With a very early Easter this year, March is set to be an especially busy month, with every Sunday special in its own way, forming part of our preparations for the celebration of the greatest feast of the Christian year.



The first Sunday is Mothering Sunday, and in the morning we shall have the traditional distribution of posies to the ladies. Our guest speaker in the series “God At Work” will be Mrs Elise Hoadley, Clinical Governance Lead at Sue Ryder Care Nettlebed Hospice, who lives in Cholsey and worships at the Ridgeway Christian Centre in Wallingford. As a committed Christian, Elise has been involved in responding to difficult issues arising from government proposals on “living wills” and assisted dying. Later that day, there will be the usual afternoon Family Service in St Mary’s, when the children will be making the Easter Garden.

The second Sunday is Passion Sunday, the first day of Passiontide. (Though in some churches this is kept on the same day as Palm Sunday.) The main morning service will include special prayers on the Passion.

The third Sunday is Palm Sunday, when we shall begin the main morning service in procession with palm branches, recalling Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Some think that the palms are a symbol of the Maccabees who rebelled against foreign occupation, and that by scattering palms in his path, the crowd was therefore hailing Jesus as the deliverer of Israel from Roman rule. Instead of a sermon, we shall have a dramatized reading of the Passion narrative. (see separate notice).

On Tuesday morning of Holy Week there is a special service in the Cathedral for the blessing of oils to be used in churches throughout the year, and renewal of ministerial commitment by the clergy of the Diocese. Three different oils are blessed by the Bishop: the Oil of the Catchumens is used at the beginning of the baptism service; it is sometimes also called the Oil of Exorcism. The fragrant oil of Holy Chrism is used later in the Baptism service and also at consecrations and coronations: and the oil for the healing of the sick is used for

anointing those who are ill, as instructed by the apostle James in his pastoral letter.

On Maundy Thursday Whitchurch plays host to the other churches of the Langtree Team for a special commemoration of the Lord's Supper: I personally find this a very special, powerful and moving service: do come if you have not experienced it before. The Lord's Supper is followed by the stripping of the altar and the removal of all hangings and pictures in preparation for Good Friday. Then the bare wood of the altar will be dressed with fresh flowers for the Altar of Repose, and a one-hour Watch or Vigil follows. (The church will be in semi-darkness during the Watch, sometimes called *Tenebrae*, or 'shadows'. Be advised: some incense will be used during the Watch)

On Good Friday, the annual procession of witness by All Churches Together will take place in the morning: this year it's the turn of Purley on Thames. Other commemorations will happen elsewhere in the Team: full details in the weekly notice sheet when the time comes. And we shall have our own Devotional Hour in St Mary's at 2 pm, when we meditate upon the Stations of the Cross.

On Easter Eve we have a very special celebration: Paul Witcher our churchwarden is to be confirmed by Colin, Bishop of Dorchester in Dorchester Abbey. Paul has of course long been a mature and committed Christian believer, and he shows great generosity of spirit in being willing to make this public affirmation of his full membership of the Church of England. So let's please turn out in truck-loads to support him on this special day, and begin our Easter celebrations together at the Abbey.

And finally, the fourth Sunday is Easter Day itself: time to bring back the flowers, the Gloria and the Alleluias! which were banished during Lent, and celebrate the risen Christ., and the new life which is His gift to us, bought with a price on the Cross.

Christos anesti! The Lord is risen!
Anesti alithos! Truly, He is risen!

A joyful, blessed and anointed Easter to you and yours.

Yours in Christ Jesus

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Peter", with a horizontal line underneath.

MARCH DATES FOR YOUR DIARY.

6 th	10am	God At Work: guest speaker Elise Hoadley of Sue Ryder Care Nettlebed
	4pm	Family Service for Mothering Sunday at St Mary's
13 th		Passion Sunday: Passiontide begins
17 th	8pm	PCC meeting in St Mary's Church
20 th	10am	Palm Sunday: Liturgy of the Palms and reading of the St Matthew Passion at St Mary's
24 th	7.30pm	Maundy Thursday: Last Supper, Foot-washing and Gethesmane Watch at St Mary's (Team Service)
25 th	a.m.	Good Friday: special services and events across the Team, and All Churches Together procession of witness in Purley on Thames.
	2 – 3 pm	Devotional Hour at St Mary's
26 th	7.30pm	Easter Eve: Paul's confirmation at Dorchester Abbey
27 th	10am	Easter Day: Eastertide celebration at St John's

Diary dates for the whole of 2005 (as known so far) are now available on sheets at the back of both churches: please do take a copy home.



PARISH REGISTERS FOR FEBRUARY

Wedding

On 19th February at St Mary's Church, Jessica Margaret Hannah Lee, daughter of Dr and Mrs David Lee of The Peach House, Whitchurch on Thames, to Simon Philip Morris

Funeral

On 23rd February at St Mary's Church, followed by committal at Reading Crematorium, David Francis Madgwick of Avoca Farm, Whitchurch on Thames, aged 71.

PASSIONTIDE SPECIAL EVENTS

At both morning services on Palm Sunday, palm crosses will be blessed and given out to the members of the congregation to take home. At the main morning service, there will be a procession with palm branches and, instead of a sermon, a dramatized reading of the Passion according to St Matthew. Please contact Peter Mottley if you would like to take part (984 2826). Don't be shy: there are at least 17 parts to read!

On Maundy Thursday, we shall have the traditional service of the Lord's Supper at St Mary's at 7.30 pm, including foot-washing, and afterwards the stripping of the altar followed by *Tenebrae* (or the Gethsemane Watch) and the Altar of Repose. If you would like to do one of the readings during the Watch, (of which there are ten) please contact: Peter Steddon (984 1473)



PATTERN OF SERVICES

For some time now, we have been discussing the best way to revise the monthly pattern of services at our two churches so as to retain the best of the traditional Anglican liturgy for those who cherish it, whilst opening up our worship to be more relaxed and welcoming for those who may be new to our church, and to parents with young families.

This calls for a willingness to compromise and consider others' tastes and different points of view from our own. Of course there is some risk that a compromise might give us the worst of both worlds and please nobody. So we are taking this gently, and consulting widely.

The PCC has now reached the stage of considering specific proposals, which will be reviewed, if necessary amended, and then adopted, at the meeting on 17th March. Whatever scheme is decided at that meeting will be introduced for a trial period of 6 months beginning in June. Copies of the proposals are available for inspection in both churches

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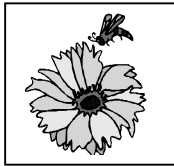


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Pangbourne & District Bowling Club

The Green is situated on the far side of the Recreation Ground in Thames Avenue, Pangbourne.

The new Season starts on April 23rd. and we welcome new members.

If you haven't played before ,except on the Front at one of our Seaside Resorts, and would like to give it a try, look out for an announcement of an Open Day in May when those interested can come along to give it a try.

For more information contact:

Roy Rosekilly 984 3080 or

Tony Voysey 984 3946

IMPORTANT ADVANCE NOTICE

The **Annual Meeting of Parishioners** to elect churchwardens for the coming year will be held in St Mary's Church after Choral Evensong on Sunday 24th April. Mrs Jo Adams will retire as churchwarden for a very well-earned rest, so we are looking her successor, who will play an important leadership role as we begin to plan and develop the parish as we want it to be in 2010.

All parishioners are entitled to attend and vote at this meeting.

This will be followed immediately by the **Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)** to elect members to the Parochial Church Council: one-third of the elected members of the PCC will retire by rotation so we are also looking for new members to succeed them and become part of the leadership team which will make the future happen. **Only members of the Church Electoral Roll are entitled to vote at this meeting**, but all are welcome to attend.

Anyone who wishes to add his or her name to the roll and is eligible to become an elector (being a baptized member of the Church of England, aged over 16, and either resident in the ecclesiastical parish of Whitchurch or having been a regular worshipper here for at least 6 months) can apply by obtaining a form from the Electoral Roll Officer, Mr Tony Voysey, of Mow Cop, High Street, Whitchurch on Thames (984 3946).

Finally there will be a brief first meeting of the new PCC to appoint the Hon Secretary and Hon Treasurer for the year and confirm the date of the first full meeting. Our present Secretary Mrs Claire Drazin will, sadly, be retiring at the end of the current year because of pressure of her other work, so we need to find the right person to take over this responsibility next year



Electoral Role

It is necessary to revise the Electoral Roll this year. For those persons not currently on the Roll and would like to be, please contact the Electoral Roll Officer, Tony Voysey, on 0118 984 3946, to receive an Application Form.

Tony Voysey

Children's Page

‘BAD KING AHAB

The Bible is full of stories that tell us about God and about people. This is rather a bloodthirsty one about all sorts of things – greed, jealousy, deceitfulness, cruelty – all sorts of things that happen all around us every day. But it's also about being fair and standing up for the right, and about the fact that in the end, God is involved and does care about justice and motives.

Rich King Ahab sitting in his palace,
Looking through the window at his gardens all around.
‘All my trees, my lilies and my roses,
All the grass on every bit of ground.
Through this window, and through every window,
Everything my eye can see is positively MINE!

Rich King Ahab, greedy old King Ahab,
Had a thought that came to him and took him by surprise
‘There's that vineyard, that green and fruitful vineyard
Look how big the grapes are - I can't believe my eyes!
But that vineyard is not a royal vineyard,
Belonging to old Naboth - but I've got to make it mine!’

Rich King Ahab, sitting in his palace,
Staring at the wall with a discontented frown.
‘Want that vineyard! Got to have that vineyard!
Stubborn old Naboth, I've got to beat him down.
He must have a price - what must I give to buy it?
I really cannot rest till that vineyard is MINE!’

Rich King Ahab, sulky old King Ahab,
Went to bed and lay there in a sulk for two whole days.
In comes Jezebel, beautiful Queen Jezebel;
‘Has he upset my darling? I'll make certain that he pays!’
Evil Jezebel plots to kill poor Naboth.
‘He'll die for having dared defy the husband of MINE!’

Out goes Jezebel, sweetly smiling Jezebel,
Looking for some evil men to say what isn't true.
'Naboth's guilty of cursing God and our good king.
Stone him to death is what we now must do!'
Evil Jezebel watches as poor Naboth dies.
Now the king can have his way - the victory is MINE!

In comes Jezebel, smiles at sulky Ahab king.
'Come, get up my darling, there's something you must see
Out the window, see that lovely vineyard?
Naboth is dead, so the vineyard now comes free.'
Up jumps Ahab, rushes to the window,
'Is it really true that the vineyard now is MINE?'

But here comes Elijah, God's holy man Elijah,
Definitely not Ahab's or Queen Jezebel's best friend!
Finger pointing, through the door advancing,
'I am here to tell you that your wickedness must end.'
Ahab quaking, Jezebel defiantly,
Listen as God tells them - 'Justice is MINE!

'Ahab,' says Elijah, looking very serious,
'It's time for you to pay for the evil that you've done.
God will punish you - dogs will lick your blood up,
The kingdom now will never be ruled by your son.
Jezebel will die and the dogs will eat her body.
Ahab you must learn, says God, that justice is MINE!'

We need to remember that God, although he is God of justice, is also a God of love and forgiveness. Even Ahab could have been forgiven if he'd said sorry – and meant it! The best true story of all – the one about Jesus – shows us that God loves us and we can be his friends, like Elijah was, and stand up against evil.

Geraldine Witcher

PURLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

A.G.M.

The 27th Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday, 16th February. The existing committee were re-elected, but we still have a vacancy for one more committee member. If there is a Society member who feels they can fill this vacancy, could you please contact Pat Brightwell (Secretary) on 9412424. After the official business had been completed, we had a very interesting talk by Mr. David Penny on “Changes in gardening in the last 50 years”.

Talk

On Wednesday, 16th March, Mr. Victor Scott will give a talk on “Springtime in the Cape”. This will take place in Purley Memorial Hall commencing at 8 p.m. Please try and come along so that we have a good audience as Mr. Scott has to travel a considerable distance to talk to us.

Spring Show

This will take place in Purley Memorial all on Saturday, 2on H H Hall on Saturday, 2nd April. Schedules are now available from the Trading Store. The Show will be open to members of the public from 2.30 p.m. until 4 p.m. Tea and biscuits will be available. Even if you are unable to enter, please come along and support the participants.

Plant Sale

This will take place on Saturday, 21st May in the Memorial Hall Car Park starting at 9.30 a.m. until 11.30 a.m. (approx.). Bedding plants will be available.

Coach Trip

We are hoping to organize a trip to R.H.S. Gardens, Wisley or the HDRA Organic gardens at Ryton, Warwickshire in late June or early July. If you are interested in joining this trip, could you please put your names down on the list in the Trading Store.

Trading

The Trading Store is open Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. until 11 a.m. Membership of the Society, costing only £1.50 for a year is tremendous value, not only can you buy items at the Store (in Purley Memorial Hall car park) at lower prices than most other sources, but you can also make further savings on garden purchases at Collins of Pangbourne, BSB Garden Machinery, Sulham Lane for new mowers, Englefield Garden Centre, Glenville Nursery, Bradfield Southend and Newington Gardens, Newington on the A329 road, north of Shillingford. Please remember to show your membership card at the start of the transaction, as tills have to be set to deduct discount in some outlets. We stock peat free compost (New Horizon and John Innes) at the Store. If you find you are unable to get to the Trading Store during the opening times, you may telephone your order to Alex Stott on 9419186 or e-mail: _vastott@aol.com_



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PRESS RELEASE

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This Message in a Bottle initiative, it is supported by It is funded by Lions and is Whilst it is intended for



people in our community, anyone might fall downstairs or have a car accident, so this scheme can benefit everyone, including you.

As a minimum it saves the Emergency Services valuable time identifying you and your emergency contacts. By telling whether you have special medication or allergies or not, it is a potential lifesaver and provides peace of mind to users and their families.

The Lions Message in a Bottle scheme is a simple idea designed to encourage people to keep their personal medical details on a standard form and in a common location – the Fridge.

Bottles with blank forms to be completed and placed in them are available from all local doctors surgeries, health centres and most dispensing chemist shops in this area.

scheme is not solely a Lions all the emergency services. provided free to all users. use by the more vulnerable



Fill in your details on the form provided.

Mention any pets that may need care and attention in an emergency.

The War Requiem comes to Pangbourne

On Saturday & Sunday March 5th/6th at 8pm in the stunning, and most appropriate, Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel, the Pangbourne Choral Society will be presenting a semi-staged performance of Britten's War Requiem to commemorate the 60th anniversary this year of the ending of WW II.

The *War Requiem* was commissioned to celebrate the consecration of St Michael's Cathedral in Coventry in May 1962. Britten was a lifelong pacifist and the *War Requiem* is about the brutality and futility of war, along with the senseless suffering and monstrous death and destruction that it brings. As well as the normal Requiem text the War Requiem includes many of the World War I poems. The fact that it will be 'semi-staged' will give some extra interest to the event

The Pangbourne Choral Society will be joined by the Pangbourne College Choir, the Philomel orchestra and international soloists Elizabeth Collier, Young-Hoon Heo & Julian Hubbard all under the baton of Darren Everhart & artistic direction of Kim Begley, who writes:

'Having performed this piece many times I have long nurtured the idea of staging Britten's War Requiem. The almost operatic nature of the music together with Wilfred Owen's haunting poetry conjure up strong visual and dramatic imagery.

Traditional presentations of concert oratorio works still have their place however modern media and film techniques have developed our expectations of entertainment and performance.

The Falklands Memorial Chapel at Pangbourne is an exciting space which will suit our ideas for the War Requiem. The 130 strong Pangbourne Choral Society under the baton of Darren Everhart will be acting as well as singing in the manner of a Greek chorus. Evening dress will be replaced by costume. Masks will be used by some and the music partially memorised.

Students from Pangbourne College will swell the choirs ranks and the Art and Drama departments have made the subject matter of the work an integral part of their curriculum.

'The pity of war' as Wilfred Owen puts it is the inspiration for this project as relevant today as when it was written. All ages are involved and the audience will also find themselves inextricably linked to the performers.

This is the first time this moving and powerful work has been staged – an exciting first for all.'

Tickets – (£10, U-18s £2) from Premier Pets, Pangbourne or PCS Tickets, 13 Shooters Hill, Pangbourne, RG8 7DZ.

pcs@musician.org www.pangbournechoralsociety.fsnet.co.uk

WHITCHURCH HILL W.I.

On February 15th the W. I. Welcomed Mr. Neil Paxton, who gave a humorous talk entitled 'The Experience of a Military Police Officer'.

It was a very amusing account of his life in outposts of the Empire—Hong Kong, Far East and Germany etc.

He also gave us an insight into duties involving the Royal Family.

The Cookery Competition was won by Heather Baker.

Our next meeting is the A.G.M. on March 15th.

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Parish Priest:

Reverend Dr Peter Steddon
Rectory Cottage, Whitchurch on Thames
0118 984 1473

Churchwardens:

Paul Witcher, Shepherds Close, Whitchurch-on-Thames
0118 984 4959
Jo Adams, Windings, Goring Heath Road, Whitchurch Hill
0118 984 3362

Vergers:

St Mary's	Alan Matthews	984 4489
St John's	Pat Turner	984 4200

Honorary Secretary:

Claire Drazin, Coombeside Cottage, Whitchurch-on-Thames
0118 984 1219

Organist and Choirmaster:

Julian Oxley, Applecroft, Upper Basildon, RG8 8NT
01491 671415

Honorary Treasurer:

Robert Plumb, Uplands Cottage.
0118 984 4838

Assistant Treasurer:

Tony Voysey, Mow Cop, High Street.
0118 984 3946

Captain of the Bellringers:

Stephanie May, 0118 957 2596

Editor, Parish Magazine

Sue Matthews, Ashdown, Duchess Close
0118 984 4489 or email: suematt@waitrose.com

Team Rector:

Reverend Kevin Davies
The Rectory, Checkendon, RG8 0SR
01491 680252
www.langtree.org

Services for

March

St Mary's

St John's

6th March

4th of Lent

Mothering Sunday

10 am

Parish Communion

Guest speaker Mrs. Elise Hoadley

8 am

Holy Communion

4 pm

Family Service: Making the Easter Garden

13th March

5th of Lent

Passion Sunday

8 am

Holy Communion

10 am

Parish Communion

6 pm Evening Prayer

20th March

Palm Sunday

10 am

Parish Communion

8 am

Holy Communion

With Liturgy of the Palms

And reading of the Passion

11.30 Holy Communion at Eastfield House

24th March

Maundy Thursday

7.30 pm Team service at St Mary's:

Lord's Supper, Foot-Washing and

Gethsemane Watch

25th March

Good Friday

ACT Procession of Witness

in Purley on Thames

2 pm Devotional Hour:

Stations of the Cross

27th March

Easter Day

8 am

Holy Communion

10 am

Easter Communion

6 pm Evening Prayer

3rd April

2nd of Easter

Low Sunday

10 am

Morning Prayer

Mr. Brian Turner LLM

8 am

Holy Communion

Revd Angela Linton

4 pm Family Service