

December 2018 - January 2019

Englefield Parish News



The Parish of St Mark's, Englefield

Rector

The Reverend Nicholas Wynne-Jones nwwj@stmarksenglefield.org.uk
St Mark's House, Englefield, Reading RG7 5EP 0118 9303595

Churchwardens

Carol Boulter churchwarden@stmarksenglefield.org.uk 0118 9303182
Peter Haig 0118 9302416

Child Protection Officer

Susannah McBain 07772 425133

Parochial Church Council

Secretary

Penny Savage office@stmarksenglefield.org.uk 0118 9410808

Treasurer

Ron Marillier treasurer@stmarksenglefield.org.uk 0118 9305152

Electoral Roll Officer

Sue Smith susan.smith.ufton@gmail.com 0118 98333258

Parish Council

Chairman

Edward Crookes edward.crookes@englefield.co.uk 0118 9302504

Clerk

Nia Rands clerk.englefieldpc@outlook.com 07725 171223

St Mark's Church website:

www.stmarksenglefield.org.uk

Englefield Parish Council website:

www.englefieldpc.org.uk

**Best wishes from the PCC and the Parish Council for a very happy
Christmas and a peaceful New Year!**

Englefield Parish News is published every two months and is now distributed free to all households in the parish of Englefield. Contributions are welcome and can be emailed to catherinehaig@gmail.com or handed in to Nick Wynne-Jones or to the Village Stores by the 20th of the preceding month.

From St Mark's House

Dear friends

If you play board games – at Christmas or any time – you might try *The Royal Game of Ur* as played in 2500 BC and still on sale! Ur was where Abraham ended up, when he left his home, trusting God to lead him, as we remembered at a recent Englefield School assembly. Ur was a pagan culture, yet Abraham heard and obeyed God's voice: throughout his life he trusted God's promises in the most unpromising circumstances. "Against all *hope*, *Abraham in hope* believed" – and God kept his word.

We live in a disillusioned and discouraged time when it can be very difficult to hope. Good things that happen in our world often go unreported, while we hear much of political wrangling, international crises, violent crimes, environmental disasters, hostile culture and hate-filled persecution. It was at a time of national crisis and discouragement that God gave hope to his disheartened people through the prophet Isaiah: "Forget the former things, do not dwell on the past. See I am doing a new thing! Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" (Isaiah 43.19)

As we remembered on Armistice Day centenary, Englefield is remarkable for its continuity and sense of place, for those with deep roots here to remember the past as an encouragement to faith or praise (see pages 8-11). There is a sense in which we *must remember* the past - God's great work for our salvation and those whose lives have touched ours. There is also a sense in which we *must not dwell on* the past but move on to what God has planned for the future - and our newly constituted parish. As one commentator observes: "The past can teach but it must not bind." God is sovereign and doesn't always work in the same way or as we might wish. A friend wrote to us, "as in nature, God seems to work beneath the surface a long while before there are signs of life." So let's keep alert for shoots of new life and, above all, focus on the "**new thing**" Isaiah prophesied: the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ which we celebrate at Christmas and his Second Advent when he comes to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Christians have always been people of hope – not just vaguely hoping for things to get better here and now, but waiting in confident hope for the future Christ will bring, when all wrongs will be put right, when suffering, sorrow and death shall be no more in his new creation. Living with hope means living with the assurance that the future belongs to Jesus Christ.

Have a happy hope-filled Christmas and New Year

Nick and Harriet

Diary: December - January

Saturday 1 st December	Bingo at the Social Club
Sunday 2 nd December	Holy Communion , 10.30 at St Mark's Toy and Christingle service at St Luke's Church, Theale, please bring a toy, wrapped and labelled
Monday 3 rd December	Fish and Chips supper at the Social Club, 8pm <i>please pre-book with Tony by Friday 30th (07802 479952)</i>
Thursday 6 th December	Candlelit Christmas Carol Concert at St Mark's, in aid of Mary Hare, 6.30pm, see page 22
Saturday 8 th December	Englefield Gun Club Race Night at the Social Club (<i>all Club members welcome, please pre-book with Ian by Weds 5th if you would like fish and chips</i>)
Sunday 9 th December	Holy Communion at St Mark's
Tuesday 11 th December	Darts, Games Social at the Social Club, 8pm
Weds 12 th December	Let's Talk Theology 'Music for the Soul', 8pm, bring music which speaks to you, St Mary's, Sulhamstead, RG7 4ED
Saturday 15 th December	Christmas Carols Sing Along at the Social Club
Sunday 16 th December	Holy Communion , 10.30 at St Mark's Carols by Candlelight at St Mark's, 6.30pm, followed by mulled wine and mince pies
Tuesday 18 th December	Christmas Tea Party , 3pm at St Mark's (please ring 01635 269157 to book a place)
Sunday 23 rd December	Holy Communion , 10.30 at St Mark's
Monday 24 th December	CHRISTMAS EVE Christingle Service at St Mark's, 5pm, a short service for young families Midnight Communion at Holy Trinity, Theale, led by Bishop Andrew, 11.30pm
Tuesday 25 th December	CHRISTMAS DAY Family Communion with carols at St Mark's, 10.30
Sunday 30 th December	Holy Communion , 10.30 at St Mark's
Sunday 6 th January	Holy Communion , 10.30 at St Mark's
Sunday 13 th January	Holy Communion , 10.30 St Mark's
Weds 16 th January	Deanery Spiritual Development Group series: Engaging with God St Mary's Sulhamstead 8pm
Sunday 20 th January	Holy Communion , 10.30 at St Mark's
Saturday 27 th January	Holy Communion , 10.30 at St Mark's
Weds 20 th February	Deanery lecture: David Heywood, author of 'Kingdom Learning', at St Mark's

Mondays 3rd and 17th December and 7th and 21st January

Time to Pray in the Englefield Chapel - an opportunity to meet for half an hour for quiet reflection and prayer - from 6pm till 6.30pm, usually on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of every month. All welcome.

Congratulations

To Sarah Armstrong and Daryl Andrews married at St Mark's on Saturday 6th October.

To Rosie Riall, granddaughter of Elizabeth Benyon, who won the Race the Wild Coast long-distance endurance horse race in October, riding 350 kms over four days and 12 stages, along the aptly named Wild Coast of the Eastern Cape in South Africa.

Welcome

Gina Woolgar joined the Englefield House team in November as the new housekeeper. Gina has a broad range of housekeeping skills gained from working with different families in Wiltshire and Berkshire and in her last role she was employed by Lord and Lady Sugar.

Steve Presland has joined the Estate maintenance team, covering all aspects of maintenance work from carpentry to plumbing and fencing to brickwork. He joins the Estate with a wealth of experience and knowledge across all trades, following his previous employment on an Estate in Surrey for almost 20 years.

St Mark's Christmas Tea Party

On Tuesday 18th December the Christmas Tea Party will take place in the church at 3.00pm. Please do come and join us for carols, cakes and Christmas treats. For more information, and to let us know that you are coming, please telephone 01635 269157.

Melanie Townsend



Thank you to the students at Englefield School for the pictures in this issue.



Christmas
at
St Mark's Englefield
★

SUNDAY 16TH DECEMBER

Carols by Candlelight at 6.30pm

followed by mulled wine & mince pies



CHRISTMAS EVE

Christingle Service at 5.00pm

a short carol service for young families



CHRISTMAS DAY

**Family Communion with Carols
at 10.30am**



For more information and contact details please see
www.stmarksenglefield.org.uk

A Rector for St Mark's

Members of the congregation and representatives from the village and Deanery gathered at St Mark's Church on Monday 26th November for Nick Wynne-Jones' Institution by Bishop Andrew and Induction by Assistant Archdeacon Steven Pullin as Rector of the new Benefice of Englefield.

The service was followed by refreshments. Many thanks to all who participated and helped to organise the occasion at short notice.

Midnight service on Christmas Eve

As there will be no midnight service on Christmas Eve this year at St Mark's, everyone is warmly invited to Holy Trinity, Theale. Bishop Andrew is leading the service which starts at 11.30pm. The choir will sing carols around the tree from 11pm. All welcome.

New Bible Study group

A new group has just started meeting on Thursday afternoons at 2pm, at Tidmarsh Grange. The study will use Anne Graham Lotz's DVD series, 'The Vision of His Glory', which was prepared to help Christians who are going through difficult times to find life-changing hope through focus on Jesus. Email hwyne-jones@hotmail.co.uk or ring 0118 9303595 if you are interested.

Christians in the Middle East

A service with the Archbishop of Canterbury is being held in Westminster Abbey on Tuesday 4th December at 5pm to celebrate the contribution of Christian communities of the Middle East - acknowledging their suffering, celebrating their endurance and sense of hope and marking their faithful witness and service to communities throughout the region. Tickets are free but need to be pre-booked via the Embrace the Middle East website or the Westminster Abbey website.

The Archbishop has also contributed a new foreword to the reprint of Hugh Boulter's booklet 'The Christian Presence in the Lands of the Bible' which is being distributed at the service. More information from www.embraceme.org.

Knitting at 91

Many people will remember the sales held by Pam and Arthur Plumb in their garden in The Street which always featured a stall laden with items knitted by Pam. She is now living at Avonbank Lodge in Newbury and continues with her knitting. Last month she was featured in the Newbury Weekly News with some of the items she had made for the Macmillan sale at Avonbank. She told the newspaper that she had learnt to knit at school and, despite being 91 years old, she likes to keep busy with her knitting: 'Sadly I know many people who have died from cancer and so I wanted to do something that could honour their memory and raise money for a wonderful charity who help so many people with cancer.'

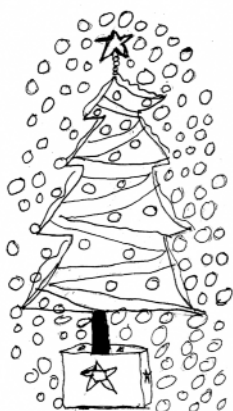
A new face on Theale High Street

My name is Jane Harms. I have lived in and around the areas of Theale and Pangbourne for the last 48 years. A lifelong dream of mine has been to open a home interiors and gift shop. My dream has now been realised and I am happy to announce I have opened a shop on Theale High Street. Please do come along and see me. We are hosting a Christmas event on Tuesday 4th December from 3 - 8pm. Pop in for a glass of fizz and a mince pie.



Jane Harms

(See page 22 for more details about Flowers Farm Interiors, 9 High Street, Theale.)



Christmas at the farm shop

As always, we are selling traditionally reared turkeys and geese from Peach Croft Farm. These turkeys are grown naturally and slowly to full maturity, enjoying the freedom to roam in grassy paddocks and fields around the farm based in Oxfordshire. We also have a huge selection of other meats available to order. Order forms and price lists can be found at the farm shop. The last order date for meat is Saturday 15th December. Please speak to our team if you have any queries or ring us on 0118 9304064.

The Cobbs at Englefield team

Christmas at the Garden Centre

Well the year is almost coming to a close, as I write this we are expecting our first flurries of snow in November. This year has definitely been one to remember with snow in March, the wettest April for a long time then straight into one of the hottest summers for a very very long time. Our Christmas elves have been hard at work and our Christmas corridor is back looking better than ever before. Our Christmas trees and poinsettias are ready for sale, we have the perfect gifts for everyone no matter how big or small. From all of the people we support and the staff team at Englefield Garden Centre, we would like to wish you a happy Christmas and a prosperous new year. See you all soon.



Austin Crabbe, Garden Centre Manager

'Battle's Over' peal from the Tower

Congratulations to the St Mark's Tower who took part in the Englefield celebrations to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War, ringing a wonderful peal on the 100th anniversary of the Armistice. Our ringers were amongst many thousands who joined in this international initiative, to remember all those who lost their lives. The bells of St Mark's rang out just after the beacon was lit in the Deer Park, with the names of those who died from the village read out and the bugle sounding the Last Post.

The team is always ready to welcome anyone to come up and see their practice session in the tower on Tuesday evenings between 7pm and 8pm. Contact Janine Alston on 07740 183087.



'We will remember them'

Extract from the talk given by Richard Smith (Royal Logistic Corps, Major, retd) at St Mark's on Remembrance Sunday



'We will remember them' we say on this day and indeed at British Legion meetings throughout the year, but there is a danger that such a frequently repeated phrase becomes more of a conditioned response than a serious expression of intent.

The first so-called 'Remembrance Sunday' service was actually held before the end of the war, on the 4th of August 1918, the fourth anniversary of its start, which happened that year to fall on a Sunday. Observed in Englefield and throughout the Empire as a united act of intercession on behalf of the success of the Allies it was, as today, attended by many not accustomed to regular church going. Special services were also held in Englefield on Sunday 17th of November that year, too, at the end of the first week of peace. The 4th of August continued to be marked with drum-head services in Kings Meadow at Reading for the next two or three years, but it was the 11th of November with its two-minutes silence that became, at the request of the King, the focus for remembering the victory of right and freedom and those who laid down their lives to achieve it.

While it's also right that we spare a thought for **all** who have suffered, and continue to suffer, as a result of conflict, that's not what today is about. Such wholesale remembrance only compounds the problem we already have, of how we can really remember people we never actually knew in the first place. So the task gets just all too big for us and remembrance, an essentially personal thing, is apt to become, at best, an abstract routine observance. Today then, perhaps we might return to the original intent for this ceremony and focus on the local and personal.

In 1919 remembering them as individuals would have been painfully easy, with the spaces around the table all too obvious every day, but now 99 years later how can we truly remember people we never actually knew? We are perhaps better placed to get close to doing that in Englefield than anywhere, for its continuity and sense of place, of being our somewhere, certainly for those with deep roots here, is remarkable. We can walk on the same ground, worship in the same church, learn in the same school, buy our groceries in the same shop and drink in the same club that they did. Some also work in the same jobs and live in the same houses. So here we can be as close as it's possible to get to those whose names we can read on our memorial. Like young Albert Freemantle, who never really knew his mother because she died two months after giving birth to him, nor, probably his father who leaves no apparent trace in his life other than a name on a birth certificate. Albert was adopted by his aunt and uncle, Charlotte and James Martin at 44 Chalkpit Cottages, and was known as Bertie Martin in the village. He was taught in the same school classroom that some of us were, he sat in the same choir stalls on Sundays where some of you from time

to time sit, and where I sat when I was his age. Albert was called up three months after his 18th birthday and succumbed to his wounds two weeks before the end of the war and two months before his 20th.

Sidney Willcox was a baker living with his parents and two brothers next door but one to Albert Freemantle, so we can imagine him in the early morning making his way along the footpath that then followed the line of the old road across the fields to the pound and up the street past the yard to the bakery to make the bread for the rest of the village. Like Albert Freemantle he too sang in the choir and his death was confirmed only in the last month of war although he had been listed as missing since May.

Harold Willcox was a gardener, so he followed the same route to his daily work as his elder brother, just a little later in the day. William Seymour was another gardener, but he had a slightly longer journey to work from the top of Mayridge Hill along the old Beenham Lane, which I drove along yesterday, through Daintylands where his brickmaker father had probably made the bricks that built their house, and down the road out there. William was posted missing in March 1915 and over a year went by before he was confirmed as killed, although he has no known grave.

But there were others too, there were 13 in all, equal to the number of small poppy crosses you will have seen as you came into church. The others came from just outside the parish and so are not named on our memorial but were still very much part of Englefield. Thomas and Leonard Nash worked on the farm at Mayridge with their father, so they all had a short journey to work from just down the road at number 59. Both volunteered in the first month of the war and Leonard



'There but not there' silhouette of a WWI soldier outside St Mark's (photo Cas Cramer)

disappeared on the first day of the Somme battle. Thomas almost made it through but died of influenza in France just four days short of the Armistice and two months after his wedding to Daisy Hazell from North Street. Daisy was the sister of Arthur Hazell, who had left the village for Australia in 1901 but returned in early 1917 with the Australian Army, in which he had only successfully enlisted at the second attempt, being rejected on medical grounds the first time. He was killed at Ypres before the year was out.

Herbert Marshall lived next door to the Thatcher's Arms in North Street with his wife and young daughter and was a carpenter at the yard, as his father had been. He too was killed in 1917.



We can perhaps more truly remember some of those who came back because happily they lived on in the village for many years afterwards and touched our lives. I can remember particularly Arthur Dance (*shown, left, with his wife Kitty and their six children*), awarded the Military Medal, wounded in 1916 and taken prisoner in 1918, on his Fordson Major tractor from Chalkpit Farm. And Arthur Claydon, wounded at

Gallipoli, our organist here for 30 years. His photograph hangs in the vestry. He married Mabel Reid on the fifth anniversary of the outbreak of war. As infant teacher at the school Mrs Claydon will be remembered by many to whom she gave a good start in life over the course of 40 years.

We can remember, too, those who served in other ways. Edith Benyon and her husband James Herbert opened their home, at their own expense, as a hospital in the first month of the war. The hospital staff included people from the village Volunteer Aid Detachment and Mrs Benyon, assisted by her daughter Winfred and housekeeper Miss Dobbie, acted as Commandant until official demobilisation in February 1919 despite serious illness. Mrs Benyon was made a Dame in recognition of her efforts but survived for little more than a month after demobilisation.

Henry, the son of Edith and James Herbert, at least survived his service with the Berkshire Yeomanry to become the Squire of my childhood and with his wife Violet would run the hospital again in the next war.

So we can remember those of them we knew, and perhaps through them know a little of those we couldn't have known, then that leads me to wonder how these placid, undemonstrative ordinary people found the fortitude to go on standing up for what they knew, what they learned here, to be true and just and right, to stand like Kipling's ox in the furrow and show the resilience of the poppy that flourished even though the fields had been destroyed.

Their immediate tactical engagements were against other men, but as we have heard St Paul remind us, the real strategic struggle is ‘not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places’. Those words taken from the Authorised Version Bible that Mrs Claydon gave me on my 6th birthday. How then, against all that, to be, in Binyon’s words, ‘staunch to the end against odds uncounted’?

Some years ago, with my pal Ken, I was conducting firing practice on a rifle range up in Yorkshire. One day we had visitors to the range: the CO of the regiment we were training and the Padre, Alex. At the end of firing everyone has to parade and declare that they don’t have any ammunition on their person and because they had been involved on the range, the CO and Alex had to as well. With everybody lined up Ken gave them the order to lay their rifle magazines and maintenance kits on the ground in front of them. The CO and Alex hadn’t been issued with them, of course, but Alex reached inside his jacket, took out a book and laid it on the ground. I moved closer, looked down at the book and saw two words on the cover: ‘Holy Bible’. I looked at Alex. ‘My maintenance kit,’ he said.

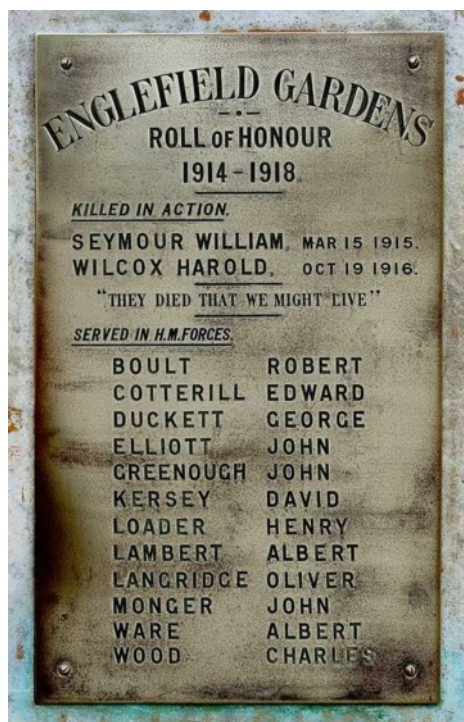
Alex obviously knew his St Paul: he says, ‘Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand’.

Garden Roll of Honour

Pictured here is the brass plaque that has hung on the wall of the fruit store in the Englefield kitchen garden for almost one hundred years.

Head gardener, Sue Broughton, and the current garden team cleaned and polished it in time for Remembrance Sunday and it was photographed by Rod Trevaskus. It commemorates all those who worked in the garden at that time who went to fight in the First World War.

The photograph of the Dance family shown opposite was sent in by Arthur and Kitty’s granddaughter, Ann Downs, who came back to Englefield recently to visit their graves at St Mark’s where she herself was christened and married.



A busy term at Englefield School



We are now over half way through the autumn term and such a lot has been happening. Early in the term we welcomed Marcel and Philippe (Bassistry Arts) to school to give each class a music workshop. As usual, we ended the day with an assembly for parents in which the classes performed the songs they had learned and we played Marcel's version of 'Name that tune'.

The Year 6 children have completed their Bikeability training in readiness for cycling safely to their secondary schools next year. This training is provided by the local authority and keeps our pupils safe whilst encouraging a healthy lifestyle.

Our Year 5/6 class are currently learning about World War II. As part of their topic, they visited Hughendon Manor, the former home of Benjamin Disraeli, where they learned about life during WWII, including toys, games, clothing and growing your own food. They also learned about solving codes. Everyone agreed that it was one of the best visits they had been on and we strongly recommend it.

At the end of September we were delighted to host the Ufton Court Charity Cycle Event. The grounds were buzzing with the set-up and start. Then, as the cyclists returned, there was a more relaxed atmosphere as everyone enjoyed pizza and other refreshments on the school field whilst listening to the Bradfield College Jazz Band. Well done to all who took part. It was a successful event for the Ufton Court team who are aiming to raise enough money to build a Viking Longhouse.

At the start of October we held our Harvest Festival at St Mark's Church. The children sang with gusto and read out some lovely poetry. Donations received were taken to PACT, one of the local charities that we support throughout the year. The school choir sang at the church's own harvest service; as usual they received a lovely welcome from the congregation. The choir also recently performed in the Junior Music Festival at the Hexagon in Reading. They sang their hearts out and thoroughly enjoyed the occasion.



As a school, we are committed to giving each individual the learning experience they need to make good progress and to prepare them for the next stage of their education. For this reason, a group of Year 5/6 pupils was chosen to spend six afternoons at Rushall Farm developing their teamwork, leadership skills and self-confidence. They made dens, built fires which they then used to cook burgers, did some orienteering, carried

out a river study and several other adventurous activities. Every one of the ten pupils participated fully and said it was a fantastic experience. A special thank you goes to Sandra Stone for being such a fabulous group leader.

Four of our Year 5 pupils participated in The Oratory Maths Challenge. They had a wonderful afternoon and we were very proud of them. Well done!

Our Year 1/2 class led a very thought-provoking assembly about Black History and justice. They told us the story of Rosa Parks and explained how important it is to stand up for what is right. The rest of the school also studied Black History and two of our parents came in to talk to the Year 5/6 class about their own experiences.

We held our annual Open Day in October which was well-attended by prospective parents and pupils. The visiting families all commented on the beautiful village in which we are situated, something that we never forget here in school! Being part of the Englefield community is extremely important to us. In our last article we invited local people into school to become voluntary reading helpers. I am delighted to announce that two local ladies are now very much part of our school community - thank you to Paula and Margaret for your time and commitment.

We were delighted that so many of our families joined in with the Remembrance Day service at St Mark's and the beacon-lighting in the evening. Both were very special and memorable occasions and it was lovely to be made so welcome by the local residents. We also held our own centenary Remembrance service at St Mark's. We would like to thank Reverend Nick for leading the service, Richard Smith for reading out the roll-call and Dinah Perkins for helping with the organisation. It was a very serious occasion and one which should stay with the children for many years.

During Parliament UK Week we welcomed Richard Benyon who came to talk to the whole school about his role as an MP. The children asked some taxing questions which were answered clearly for all ages to understand. Thank you, Mr Benyon!

Still to come before Christmas, Year 6 pupils will be taking part in a special remembrance service at Westminster Abbey. Our youngest pupils are putting on 'Christmas with the Aliens' this year. Local residents are invited to the dress rehearsal in the school hall at 2pm on Tuesday 11th December. Please call Claire in the school office (930 2337) if you would like to join us. To finish off the term, we will be holding our candle-lit carol service in St Mark's at 6pm on Wednesday 19th December. May we take this opportunity to wish you all a peaceful Christmas and happy New Year.

Pupils playing on our new adventure playground which was partly funded by the Englefield Charitable Trust. Local families are always welcome to use these facilities at weekends and during the school holidays.



Date	Sidesmen	Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel
December 2nd Advent Sunday BCP	Ronan and Saffy O'Sullivan		Dee Boddy 1 Thessalonians 3:9-end	Victoria Fishburn Luke 21:25-36
December 9th 2nd Sunday of Advent	Paula Fenwick Linda Price	Peter Hollands Malachi 3:1-4	Don Barton Philippians 1:3-11	Elizabeth Benyon Luke 3:1-6
December 16th 3rd Sunday of Advent	Doris Edwards Dianne Graham	Catherine Haig Zephaniah 3:14-end	Ian Savage Philippians 4:4-7	Saffy O'Sullivan Luke 3:7-18
December 23rd 4th Sunday of Advent	Ian and Penny Savage	Linda Price Micah 5:2-5a	Melanie Townsend Hebrews 10:5-10	Peter Haig Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]
December 25th CHRISTMAS DAY	David and Stephanie Gibbons	Victoria Fishburn Isaiah 9:2-7	Harriet Wynne-Jones Titus 2:11-14	Richard Benyon Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]
December 30th First Sunday of Christmas	Peter and Denny Hollands	Elizabeth Benyon 1 Samuel 2:18-20,26	Gloria Sleep Colossians 3:12-17	Dinah Perkins Luke 2:41-end
January 6th Epiphany BCP	Ronan and Saffy O'Sullivan		Mike Kimber Ephesians 3:1-12	Aldo Guiducci Matthew 2:1-12
January 13th 2nd Sunday of Epiphany	Richard and Susan Smith	Dianne Graham Isaiah 43:1-7	Kahlen Spaulding Acts 8:14-17	Melanie Townsend Luke 3:15-17,21-22
January 20th 3rd Sunday of Epiphany	Paula Fenwick Linda Price	Ronan O'Sullivan Isaiah 62:1-5	Peter Hollands 1 Corinthians 12:1-11	Hugh Boulter John 2:1-11
January 27th 4th Sunday of Epiphany	Doris Edwards Dinah Perkins	Linda Price Nehemiah 8:1-3,5-6,8-10	Don Barton 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a	Ann Stone Luke 4:14-21
February 3rd 5th Sunday before Lent BCP	Dianne Graham Liz Marillier		Gloria Sleep 1 Corinthians 13	Ian Savage Luke 2:22-40
February 10th 4th Sunday before Lent	David and Stephanie Gibbons	Carole Ford Isaiah 6:1-8	Paula Fenwick 1 Corinthians 15:1-11	Ron Marillier Luke 5:1-11
February 17th 3rd Sunday before Lent	Peter and Denny Hollands	Catherine Haig Jeremiah 17:5-10	Harriet Wynne-Jones 1 Cor 15:12-20	Stephanie Gibbons Luke 6:17-26

If you are unavailable for any duty on the rota, please try to find a swap, or otherwise contact Saffy O'Sullivan on 0149 website, www.stmarksenglefield.org.uk/rota, or in the church porch. Please let Penny Savage know if you have any on 0118 9302731, and the intercessor will include your request on the following Sunday.

Intercessions	Sacristan	Administrators	Sunday Club	Cleaners
BCP	Dinah Perkins	Gill Barton Melanie Townsend	Carolyn Ahanchian Sara Guiducci	Paula Fenwick Linda Price
Ron Marillier	Dee Boddy	Denny Hollands Peter Haig	Tiffany Ebrey Catherine Haig	Doris Edwards Dinah Perkins
Dinah Perkins	Catherine Haig	Dudley Fishburn Penny Savage	Susannah McBain Liz Reeves	Elizabeth Benyon Melanie Townsend
Harriet Wynne-Jones	Penny Savage	Torquil MJ Saffy O'Sullivan	NO SUNDAY CLUB	ALL HELP PLEASE Flowers and cleaning church 24 th December
Penny Savage	Penny Norris	Carol Boulter Peter Haig	NO SUNDAY CLUB	John and Liz McKean
Melanie Townsend	Susan Smith	Terry and Dinah Perkins	NO SUNDAY CLUB	Gill Barton Dianne Graham
BCP	Dinah Perkins	Dudley Fishburn Melanie Townsend	Penny Savage Liz McKean	Paula Fenwick Linda Price
Catherine Haig	Dee Boddy	Carol Boulter Saffy O'Sullivan	Zoe Benyon Alice Johnson	Doris Edwards Dinah Perkins
Carol Boulter	Catherine Haig	Peter Haig Dinah Perkins	Andrea Kean Catherine Haig	Elizabeth Benyon Melanie Townsend
Stephanie Gibbons	Penny Savage	Gill Barton Denny Hollands	Melissa Bennett Sara Guiducci	John and Liz McKean
BCP	Penny Norris	Carol Boulter Peter Haig	Carolyn Ahanchian Liz Reeves	Gill Barton Dianne Graham
Harriet Wynne-Jones	Susan Smith	Torquil MJ Penny Savage	Tiffany Ebrey Denny Hollands	Pete and Carole Ford
Penny Savage	Dinah Perkins	Denny Hollands Saffy O'Sullivan	Liz McKean Sara Guiducci	Doris Edwards Dinah Perkins

01 825996 or 07799 060949. For diary planning for future Sundays, an up-to-date rota can always be found on the notices for the pew sheet or announcements to be made in church. For prayer requests, please contact Dinah Perkins

News from Five a Day

After a few weeks of lovely sunny days in November, the temperatures are starting to drop but we are still busy getting the garden ready for winter. All of the produce is now finished, the last of which were the medlars. This fruit is well known in the



Middle East but not so well known here. They are unusual because you need to let them rot before you can make jam or jelly from them. This year they were spotted by a family from Syria, who were excited to see the medlars and the quinces in our garden. They returned the following week and took several bags of them away to turn into jam.

In December we run our very popular Christmas wreath workshops and there are still places on Saturday 15th session. If you are interested please contact yvonne@fiveaday.org.uk.

Finally we would like to thank everyone who has supported us throughout the year and wish you and your families joyful celebrations over Christmas and the New Year. The garden will be closed in January but we will be back in February and we are looking forward to another productive year ahead.

Yvonne Redgrave, www.fiveaday.org.uk

RIP

The death of Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha, the billionaire owner of Leicester City Football Club who died in a helicopter crash at the stadium in October, was much mourned by the polo world as well. He had strong links with Englefield. His King Power team was stabled in the village for several years and he and his sons regularly played polo on the Englefield pitch and joined in asados in the stables. He will be much missed by everyone who knew him and our thoughts are with his family.

Aldworth Christmas Market

Saturday 15th December is Aldworth's community-run Christmas Market with food, fashion, plants, decorations, freshly made festive wreathes and handicrafts in the village hall from 9.30 to 12 noon. Enjoy meeting friends, some warm refreshment and 'buy local'. Proceeds support village amenities and local charities. HAPPY CHRISTMAS to everyone from Aldworth Saturday Market volunteers.

News from Rushall Farm



Why did Jesus say 'I am the good shepherd'? At that time everyone knew that shepherds could not be trusted! They couldn't testify in a court of law in Israel. They were known for their thieving, that they lied, were poor and couldn't be educated. It is like a farmer today putting 'good' in front of the word 'gypsy' or 'traveller'. Their reputation goes before them!

Here at Rushall Farm I looked after 800 ewes for 40 years, which meant having over 2,200 animals around in the spring. I did my best with them, but everyday it was something: a ewe dead on its back, sheep out on the road, including stopping traffic on the M4, a garden demolished by straying rams, inquisitive lambs swimming in a water trough, ewes stuck in fences or brambles, or a ewe struggling all night to give birth because I was too tired to get up. A friend of mine, Stephen Hart, was named UK Flock master of the Year some years ago. I always think that to get a true answer as to how good the shepherd is you would have to ask the sheep.

Every Tuesday a group of young people from Brookfields and Castle Schools spend the day at Rushall Farm. For most it is the highlight of their week. One lad, Thomas, is over six feet, big and strong, autistic, and with no verbal communication. It is not easy at times to get him to fully cooperate and like all of us he can be stubborn. Today he would not get out of the minibus. When I arrived, staff were really wanting to get on and have a coffee. All other attempts having failed they asked me to have a go. I stood by the side door and smiled sweetly, beckoning him out. He responded by beckoning me in, which I eventually did. He then showed me that I needed to put my seat belt on and sit with him. I carried out his instructions. Then when he was ready he nodded at me, we both undid our seatbelts and got out of the bus together!

When Jesus looked at the crowd 'they were like sheep without a shepherd'. The opportunity that this Christmas offers us is that we can invite the good shepherd to come into our situations, sit with us a while and then start journeying together. You know there was a huge smile on Thomas' face when he got out of the minibus and he had a really good day.

John Bishop

A 100th anniversary Remembrance visit

10th November – 8pm at the Menin Gate, Ypres, Belgium, among 5,000 plus people. Reading thousands of names of WWI dead while listening to the combined British bands and pipes including Police, Royal Marines and Fire Service was so moving. 11th November – 11th hour, 11th day, 11th month at Thiepval, France, in another huge gathering. The sounding of the Last Post, the observance of the silence by men and women of all ages proudly wearing either their own medals or those of parents and grandparents awarded for service in the two World Wars and other conflicts (remembering their brothers in arms and their own hell).

The following week was spent visiting many related places including: Poperinge, Saint Cerre, Esquelbecq - where 40 oak trees have been planted and named to commemorate the British prisoner of war victims of one of the worst atrocities of WW1 involving their slaughter in a barn which is also preserved. Then on to Tyne Cot (the largest cemetery in the world), where I placed four named poppy crosses commemorating the service of Englefield men – my great uncles William and Alfred Vince, my father Victor Vince and Arthur Reeves, Graham's uncle (who was killed at Arras in France). The memorial statue of a Canadian Soldier at Langemark, then the Welsh Memorial where I laid a poppy. At the Vimy Ridge Canadian Cemetery we saw the preserved trenches and were appalled by the closeness of the shell holes which showed how little chance they had of survival.

It was a very sobering experience and, for me, illustrated why we must salute those who, by their sacrifice and service, gave us the precious gift of freedom we enjoy today, and we must do our utmost to ensure that this freedom is never destroyed.


Elizabeth Reeves

Bradfield Young Farmers

Englefield Estate game keeper, David Wiggins kindly gave up an evening to talk to us about game keeping and gun handling and safety. It was a most informative evening that left most of the Club members with a deeper sense of understanding and respect for this often misunderstood role.

The Club programme in the run up to Christmas will include a visit to Yattendon Estate to learn about the process of growing and harvesting Christmas trees. We're going to Walters' Turkeys to try our plucking skills and of course we have our annual visit to the Panto at the Corn Exchange in Newbury. There will be the traditional Christmas party and then we will be back on the competitions trail in the New Year.

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Thoughts for the week

These reflections are just some of the short commentaries that are compiled by Aldo Guiducci each week on the readings in church. They are all available, week by week, on the pew sheets and on the church website.

‘And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests’ (Ephesians 6 v 18a)

As we mark the 100th anniversary of the armistice which ended the fighting of the first World War, it is fitting to be reminded once more that life is a battle against ‘the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms’ (verse 12). This passage expounds how we are to face off against the enemy in this battle, and it ends by pointing us to the primacy of prayer in the struggle. To quote John Piper, ‘Life is war. That’s not all it is. But it is always that. Our weakness in prayer is owing largely to our neglect of this truth. Prayer is primarily a wartime walkie-talkie for the mission of the church as it advances against the powers of darkness and unbelief. It is not surprising that prayer malfunctions when we try to make it a domestic intercom to call upstairs for more comforts in the den. God has given us prayer as a wartime walkie-talkie so that we can call headquarters for everything we need as the kingdom of Christ advances in the world.’ Do we recognise the struggle in our lives and turn to prayer to call in firepower for conflict with a mortal enemy? Or have we stopped believing we are in the fight, and instead look at prayer as a means of asking for ‘more comforts in the den’?

‘But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, and since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool’ (Hebrews 10 v 12-13)

Jesus is unlike anybody else who has ever lived. In these verses, the writer of Hebrews draws the comparison between him, and all the other efforts made by people down through the years to get right with God. The Old Testament is filled with sacrifices which were made year after year by the Israelite priests to deal with the problem of human sin. Year after year these sacrifices took place, an endless parade of activity which highlighted the gulf that separates the holy God from his unholy people. The meaning is clear: the sacrifices were ineffective at taking away the problem of sin. But then Jesus enters the frame, and makes a sacrifice unlike any other – the sacrifice of his perfect, unblemished life. This final sacrifice did what none of the others could, and dealt decisively with the problem of human sin. After this sacrifice, nothing more is needed, which is why Jesus ‘sat down’ – a visual sign that the problem of sin had been solved. Why would we trust in anything else?

‘See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven?’ (Hebrews 12 v 25)

The whole message of Hebrews is about the superiority of Jesus over all the other messengers who came before him. While God spoke to his people by his Holy Spirit through the prophets at various times down through history, his last – and clearest – word to the world was ‘the Word made flesh’ (John 1:14). Jesus is the pinnacle of God’s self-revelation, in which we see God’s character perfectly portrayed. While this is amazing good news, the writer of Hebrews sounds a note of caution: the very fact that this message is so clear and authoritative makes our response to it of paramount importance. If we reject Jesus, there can be no excuse or mitigating circumstances which we might plead. If judgement came upon those who rejected mere men (the prophets), how much more can we expect judgement to come on those who reject God himself, come in the flesh?



St Mark's Church in the snow taken last winter by Isabel Allen.

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