

Englefield Parish News

February - March 2019



The Parish of St Mark's, Englefield

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St Mark's Church website:

www.stmarksenglefield.org.uk

Englefield Parish Council website:

www.englefieldpc.org.uk

Front cover: *Spring flowers already in bloom in the greenhouses at Englefield Garden Centre (see page 13 for more information).*

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

What do you do when you don't know what to do? Take a lesson from Jehoshaphat! At a time of national crisis, he was the King of Judah (c860 BC) who called the nation to prayer and the people to trust God: 'We don't know what to do, but our eyes are upon you.' The first half of that prayer seems all too true of the Brexit impasse; the second half is the only focus that can resolve our problem. We are especially blessed in having a Queen, and her father in his wartime speeches, who have issued national calls to prayer and given a strong Christian lead to the nation. In this year's Christmas broadcast, her Majesty said, 'The Christmas story retains its appeal since it doesn't provide theoretical explanations for the puzzles of life. Instead it's about the birth of a child and the hope that birth 2,000 years ago brought to the world. Only a few people acknowledged Jesus when he was born. Now billions follow him...I believe his message of peace on earth and goodwill to all is never out of date. It can be heeded by everyone; it's needed as much as ever.'

Jesus in his Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:13-16) called his disciples to be salt and light: 'salt' in a decaying culture where Christian teaching on sexuality has been swept aside, behaviour condemned in Scripture is now openly practised and Christian witness dismissed as bigotry; 'light' in a society darkened by violent crime on the streets and family breakdown in our homes. In this setting the Church Army, which we supported at Christmas, is helping young people and families find a way out of crime. Stories from their Centres of Mission provide inspiring reading and reasons for hope: Tyler (15) says, 'Before I gave my life to Jesus I used to be a troublemaker on the streets, getting into police chases and everything.' 'It breaks our hearts,' say the Church Army workers, 'that any young person's future is stolen from them by the drug, crime and gang culture that has arisen out of poverty.' Jesus taught us to pray, 'Your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven' and to seek actively to be peace makers in our deeply divided nation.

Recently the Times reported 'Just when politicians seem to need divine intervention more than ever to resolve the Brexit crisis, a cross-party group of MPs has called for an end to the 460-year-old practice of reading prayers in parliament.' Thankfully the Archbishop of Canterbury has called on people to pray for God to grant MPs 'wisdom and courage' in the Brexit vote – and beyond.

'We don't know what to do, but our eyes are upon you.'

Nick and Harriet

Diary: February - March

Sunday 3 rd February	Holy Communion , 10.30 at St Mark's
Sunday 10 th February	Holy Communion at St Mark's
Weds 13 th February	Let's Talk Theology: Experiencing God Through Worship , 7.45pm, St Mary's, Sulhamstead, RG7 4ED
Sunday 17 th February	Holy Communion , 10.30 at St Mark's
Weds 20 th February	Berks & Bucks Drag Hunt meet, Mayridge Deanery lecture: David Heywood, author of <i>Kingdom Learning</i> , speaking on how laity and clergy could develop ministry and outreach, at St Mark's, 8pm. All welcome
Sunday 24 th February	Holy Communion , 10.30 at St Mark's
Saturday 2 nd March	Holy Trinity Charity Dinner , Holiday Inn, Padworth, 7pm for 7.30pm, details on page 19
Sunday 3 rd March	Holy Communion , 10.30 at St Mark's Pancake Church informal service for young families, 4pm at St Luke's Church, Theale
Tuesday 5 th March	Shrove Tuesday
Wednesday 6 th March	Ash Wednesday , communion service at St Mark's at 7.30pm
Sunday 10 th March	Holy Communion , 10.30 at St Mark's
Weds 13 th March	Let's Talk Theology: Experiencing God Through Serving , 7.45pm, St Mary's Sulhamstead, RG7 4ED
Sunday 17 th March	Holy Communion , 10.30 St Mark's
Sunday 24 th March	Holy Communion , 10.30 at St Mark's
Monday 25 th March	PCC meeting , 6.30pm
Wednesday 27 th March	Parish Council meeting , 6.30pm
Saturday 31 st March	Mothering Sunday family service with posies of flowers for mums, 10.30 at St Mark's
Monday 1 st April	Berkshire Churches Trust lecture , Long Gallery, Englefield House, more details page 9
Sunday 21 st April	EASTER DAY
Mondays 4 th and 18 th February and 4 th and 18 th March	
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 1 st and 3 rd Mondays of every month. All welcome.	

The Wednesday coffee mornings have now restarted after the Christmas break at the Village Tea Rooms, with coffee, tea and homemade biscuits every Wednesday morning from 10am to 11am. All welcome.

Congratulations

To Annabel and Justin Simpson on the birth of Benjamin on Thursday 10th January, a brother for Jessica and grandson for David and Penny Norris.

To Hugh Boulter on being admitted to the Order of St Frideswide at a service at Christ Church on Sunday 26th January. This honour is awarded to those who have made outstanding contributions to the life of the Diocese.

To Graham Reeves who received the Lifetime Achievement Award at West Berkshire Council's Community Champion Awards in December for his 30 years of devoted service to providing transport for the elderly and disabled. As Treasurer and Co-ordinator of the Carebus Volunteer Group, he still works every day of the week, arranging pick-ups for hospital appointments, and over the years has also arranged the purchase of two new care buses and two cars and recruited volunteer drivers. Graham continues to drive one of the cars himself taking people to hospital in Reading and Newbury.

RIP

David Shelley, Sir William's youngest brother, who died on December 31st and whose funeral was at St Mark's on Thursday 17th January.

Pat Ling, Penny Savage's mother, who died on 6th January. A service of thanksgiving for her life was held on 23rd January at St John's, Woodley.

Alexandra Pawley-Kean, sister of Andrea Kean, who died in December. Our thoughts are with all their families and friends at this sad time.

Parish Council update

Terry Perkins retired from his role as Councillor to Englefield Parish Council in September 2018. The Council would like to thank him for his long service and dedication. The Council would also like to welcome new Councillor, Richard Smith. The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Wednesday 27th March at 6.30pm. The Annual Parish Assembly will be held on Wednesday 22nd May. More information will be available in due course and all are welcome to attend.

Nia Rands, Clerk to the Parish Council



Nick Wynne-Jones' Institution and Induction as Rector of St Mark's took place on Monday 26th November. Members of the congregation and representatives from the village and Deanery gathered for the service led by Bishop Andrew. The refreshments served afterwards included a celebratory cake made by Sarah Andrews of Sarah May Cakes.



Photographs taken by Terry Perkins.

Bible Study group

The group that started meeting during Advent on Thursdays at 2pm, at Tidmarsh Grange is hoping to continue with a new study. Email hwynnejones@hotmail.co.uk or ring 0118 9303595 for more details.

Englefield Tower news

The Englefield band marked the beginning of the New Year with achieving our first Quarter Peal. This peal was dedicated to Len Palfrey on his 76th birthday, thanking him for all the training and support he has given to us at Englefield. The band would also like to thank the conductor Michael Palfrey for his persistence and amazing ability to keep the peal intact when we made mistakes and forgot our places.

If you are looking for a new experience, challenge or hobby for 2019, why not come and see us on any Tuesday evening between 7pm and 8pm at St Mark's tower. Bell ringing is a team activity for any age that stimulates the brain and helps to keep you fit. It also makes a pleasurable sound and is a lifelong learning experience. We need new ringers to help keep the Englefield Tower functioning. Please contact me at janinealston@hotmail.com or 07740 183087.

Janine Alston

New electoral roll

Every six years each parish is required to prepare a new electoral roll. During the period of preparation of the roll, members on the previous roll need to apply to be included. New people can also apply during this period. Inclusion on the electoral roll entitles people to vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, which this year will take place on Monday 29th April. Forms will be available at church from Sunday 17th February and must be returned by Sunday 7th April.

Sue Smith, Electoral Roll Officer

Deanery talk

The next Deanery Spiritual Development Group talk will be given by David Heywood, author of *Kingdom Learning*. His talk will explore how clergy and lay members of the church could develop ministry and outreach and will be held at St Mark's on Wednesday 20th February at 8pm. All are welcome.

Englefield Social Club update

Most residents will have already heard the sad news that Englefield Social Club Limited took the very difficult decision to cease trading on 31st December 2018 due to its financial position and falling patronage. As the owner of the building, the Estate is very keen that the premises continues to be used for the benefit of the community and we believe there is an opportunity to put in place new arrangements to provide residents of all ages with a venue for a variety of events, classes or social gatherings. We recognise that the building will need some refurbishment to meet the required standards but, for now, we are inviting ideas for the activities that might be held there. Suggestions we have already received include continuing the regular fish and chip suppers or curry nights, introducing fitness or well-being classes and making the venue available for use by families and their children.

We would welcome your thoughts as to the kind of activities you would like to run, or attend and would encourage you to complete our online survey by 31st January 2019. To access the survey please type the link into the web address bar <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/3BSTSGF>.

Alternatively, visit the Estate's website www.Englefieldestate.co.uk and follow the link to the survey from the 'Announcements' tab on the home page. If you would like a hard copy they will be available in Englefield Stores or by emailing us at office@englefield.co.uk. We are particularly keen to hear from those of you who may wish to volunteer to promote or manage the new arrangements.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Social Club committee, Ian Southall and other dedicated members of the community for their hard work and commitment to the Club over many years.

Edward Crookes, Estates Director

World Day of Prayer

Formerly known as the Women's World Day of Prayer and following the same pattern of 24 hours of continuous prayer all around the world, this will take place on Friday 1st March. Our local service this year is at St John's, Mortimer, at 10.30am. The theme is 'Come Everything is Ready' and it has been prepared by the women of Slovenia. Everyone is welcome.

Dinah Perkins

Save the date

Please put the date in your diaries for this year's Englefield Flower Show and School Fete which will take place on Saturday 13th July.

The committee would like to see even more entries to make the show even more interesting for visitors and to provide yet more competitive fun for entrants. With this in mind, some of the classes have been altered and new ones added. Look out for the new schedule, details of which will be published in the next issue, with copies also available in the Village Stores and Englefield School.

Mark Postles, Flower Show Chairman

From the Chair

This is just a small notice of the feelings of Joe Telford and myself on the closure of the Englefield Social Club. As we were Chairman and Vice Chairman we have found it very hard to come to terms with, especially as the reason for its closure is financial due to lack of local support. Unfortunately this is happening all over now to small pubs and clubs but we found it sad that those living in Englefield village plus many other members were not supporting their local venue.

Please if it should continue under the Estate in any way, try to support it as much as you can so that, as the older members of the village have to stop driving or find it difficult to travel, they will have somewhere to meet and socialise.

Once again we are both very sorry to be involved in the closure and would like to take this opportunity of thanking Ian for 18 years running the club and an excellent bar from which I have never had anything but a great beer.

Tony Palmer

An evening with the author

Author Diane Setterfield, granddaughter of Ambrose Setterfield who lived at No 25 The Street, will be speaking about her new novel, *Once Upon a River*, at Theale Library on Wednesday 13th February 6pm to 7.30pm.

Family congratulations

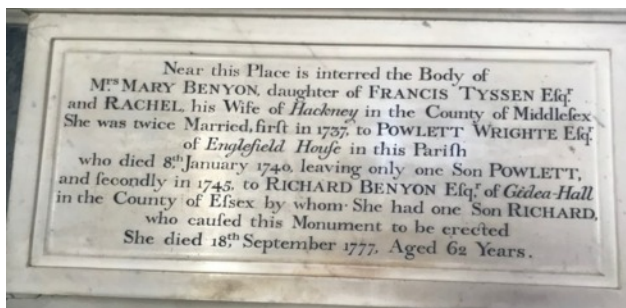
Best wishes to Anna Reeves, the granddaughter of Graham and Liz Reeves whose aim is to help teenage children - she has started studying Sociology at Leicester University, and congratulations to Holly Davies, the granddaughter of Michael and Valerie Davies and Graham and Liz Reeves on gaining her master's degree in speech and language therapy. Holly has been appointed as a speech therapist in an oncology unit.

Graham will kill me for writing this, as he was taken by surprise when he received the Lifetime Achievement Award for 2018 in the West Berkshire Council Community Champions Scheme, but I am so pleased about this because he works quietly without seeking praise, and has organized community transport in our area for thirty years. I know he believes in applying his version of the JFK speech 'Don't think what can the community do for me? but what can I do for the community?'

Liz Reeves

Finding a family link

Gazing at the memorials in St Mark's on Sundays I thought there might be a connection between my family, the Solllys, and the Benyons' land ownership in Essex where my forebears lived for many generations. I am chair of the Sole Society (genealogical research group of the Solllys and related names) and in that capacity during a recent visit to Essex Archives in Chelmsford I indeed found that link.



My great grandfather Richard Solly (1793-1877) was a tenant of Richard Benyon de Beauvoir (1769-1854) of farming land in Tollesbury, Essex. Richard Solly also owned land in his own right in nearby Mundon near Maldon, and was described as '...principal resident of the parish of Mundon who tenanted Mundon Hall and acted as overseer...' The census of 1861 described Richard Solly as farming 143 acres, employing seven men and five boys.

Now 150 years later the descendant of Richard Solly worships in the same church as Richard Benyon de Beauvoir's descendant, but not in Essex but Berkshire!

George Solly

Making the M4 a smart motorway

As you may have noticed, work has started on construction of the M4 smart motorway between junctions 3 and 12. This is the longest smart motorway project in England to date (51 kilometres, 32 miles).

The main aspects of the scheme are as follows:

- Use of the latest technology to monitor traffic flow and set speed limits accordingly in order to keep traffic moving smoothly
- Information about road conditions and speed limits will be displayed on electronic road signs
- The hard shoulder will be converted to a permanent traffic lane to create additional capacity

To minimise disruption work will take place on different stages at different times. The current intention is to start at junction 8/9 and progress west towards junction 10. In tandem, work will take place on four bridges between junction 8/9 and junction 7. The more complex section of the scheme, progressing east from junction 8/9 towards junction 3, will start in May 2019. The work from junction 12 to 11 is intended to start in May 2020 and complete in February 2022. More information, including regular newsletters, can be found at <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/m4-junctions-3-12-smart-motorway/>.

Berkshire Churches Trust talk

We are delighted to announce that the fourth annual BCT lecture will be given by Tim Tatton-Brown and will take place on Monday 1st April in the Long Gallery at Englefield House. His subject will be Henry I and his Berkshire churches - Reading Abbey and St George's Chapel, Windsor.

Tim Tatton-Brown is a freelance archaeologist and architectural historian. He is consultant archaeologist to St George's Chapel, Windsor, and Lambeth Palace, and was formerly consultant archaeologist to various cathedrals, including Salisbury, as well as to Westminster Abbey. He is co-author of the recent book, *Salisbury Cathedral: the making of a medieval masterpiece*. Tickets will be available from liz.betteridge@ntlworld.com.

Peter Durrant, Chairman Berkshire Churches Trust

Filming in Englefield

January has been another busy month for filming for Englefield House and St Mark's Church, with three different productions and film crews on site.

First off was *SAS Red Notice*, a film adaptation of the Andy McNab book of the same title about a hostage situation on the Eurostar. The lead character and hero of the film is Tom Buckingham and Englefield House acted as his family home. The usually elusive author was himself on set providing direction and ensuring everything was realistic. It also provided an opportunity for Richard Benyon to catch up and reminisce with Mr McNab as both served in the armed forces at the same time.

Secondly, the Netflix drama *The Crown* returned to us for Season 3 with a whole new set of actors, including Golden Globes winner Olivia Colman. Olivia as the Queen and Tobias Menzies as Prince Philip shot scenes in St Mark's Church which depicted a chapel on the Windsor Estate. As they left the chapel, Prince Philip was exchanging views with the Queen regarding the service and sermon by the Dean of Windsor, Robin Woods, who held the post from 1962 - 1971.

Finally and towards the end of the month, an American TV romantic comedy series titled *Four Weddings and a Funeral* filmed in both the church and the House. The film features four weddings and a funeral, but that's where the similarities to the original 1994 film starring Hugh Grant end! St Mark's was the venue for the funeral and the House the wake, which included a firework display!

Peter Carson, House and Events Manager



Easter services 2019

Services during the Easter period will include, as in previous years, a communion in the evening on Maundy Thursday and an Hour at the Cross at 2pm on Good Friday, as well as the usual family celebration service of communion on Easter Sunday.

More details will be available on the pew sheets in church and in the next issue of the Parish News.

News from Rushall Farm



When we first came to Rushall Farm in February 1974 it included 275 acres north of the M4 at Mapletons, land known well for its flints and clay caps. We had a rotation including spring barley under sown with grass, which then produced grazing and hay for our flock of sheep. Following a rather poor take of the grass we decided to roll a 50 acre field with a heavy flat roll. A few days later it rained very hard and water cascaded off the motorway and field, flooding Bottom House Farm. The Newbury Weekly caught the scene beautifully with a picture of the dog still in its basket floating in the kitchen. Order was restored fairly quickly by the Pangbourne Fire Service with some weighty pumps. Order had to be restored again a couple of years later when a large tree blew down. 24 hours later Dick Knight who lived there had repaired the fence, cleared the wood and planted a new tree.

Not so at Rushall Farm today, where the evidence of our tree safety survey is obvious. All our footpaths, bridle paths and roads are strewn with felled trees and branches, casualties in a costly major effort to reduce the risk to children and walkers. So, it is time to plant with oak, hawthorn, cherry, birch and beech, maybe some sweet chestnut but definitely no ash. Ash trees grow well on our soils. It is one of the toughest hardwoods and absorbs shocks without splintering. It is used for making tools and sport handles, including hammers, axes, spades, hockey sticks and oars. An attractive wood, it is also used for furniture and is excellent firewood. But today it is under major threat from ash die back which is caused by a fungus called Chalara. This causes leaf loss, crown dieback and bark lesions in affected trees. Once a tree is infected the disease is usually fatal, either directly or indirectly, by weakening the tree to the point where it succumbs more readily to attacks by other pests or pathogens, especially Armillaria fungi, or honey fungus. This makes felling an infected tree very difficult because brittle top branches can easily fall on the chain saw operator's head - definitely not a good idea. It is therefore, sadly, time to rewrite our Woodland Management Plan prioritising coping with the disease over our 100 acres of ancient woodland. BUT even more important is planting those new trees!

John Bishop

News from Five a Day

Green shoots are springing up at Five a Day Market Garden! The dry weather in January gave our hardy volunteers the chance to prune fruit trees, burn the prunings and the pernicious weeds dug up last autumn, and revitalise the growing areas within the polytunnel where we grow tomatoes and cucumbers. This is also where young broad beans are growing well before they're transplanted outdoors. The beans we have already planted outdoors are making good progress too.

News of these green shoots was welcomed by Yvonne Redgrave, the project coordinator, who is in hospital recovering from sepsis. Thank you to everyone in Englefield who has sent cards and good wishes to Yvonne. We look forward to seeing her in the garden later in the springtime.



We ended 2018 on a high with many of our squashes and pumpkins decorating St Mark's Church for a wedding followed by Harvest Thanksgiving. During December we hosted several popular workshops when our colourful willow was the foundation for door-wreaths made with lots of local greenery. Everyone was very creative and a lot of front doors looked very pretty!

The willow is coppiced every year as a way of managing these wonderful plants and encourages new growth which we can use next winter. The coppiced willow stems were taken to a therapy garden in Reading where they will be woven into a low fence to outline the garden paths and beds. Thank you to the volunteers from Conserve Reading On Wednesdays who cut the willow.

This spring we look forward to welcoming new volunteers to Five a Day. In January we met at least a dozen enthusiastic people at the V365 recruitment event in Newbury, and hope to see them at our regular gardening sessions. These are on Wednesday and Friday mornings, usually between 10am and 1pm but often longer if the weather's good. If these days are not convenient we will set up other sessions. Our regulars return in February, and we also resume the Thyme Together sessions for older people and their carers. Please visit www.fiveaday.org.uk for details of these and our events. We're planning craft workshops at the end of March before the Easter holiday.

Wendy Tobitt on behalf of the Five a Day Committee

Getting ready for spring

As I write this piece it is currently clear blue skies and three degrees with possible snow forecast in the coming week, so it could be an interesting start to the season. The staff team and people we support have been making sure our primroses and Tête à Tête daffodils are flourishing at the moment (see the picture on the front cover!) giving you a lift with some colour for the start of spring.



Our seed potatoes are in along with our summer bulbs, so you can get chitting and planting over the next couple of weeks. The staff team have had their spring clean making the garden centre more customer friendly, The people we support have just started potting up all our herbaceous plants to go into the tunnels to grow on ready for the summer. We look forward to seeing you all over the coming months.

Austin Crabbe, Garden Centre Manager

St Mark's Christmas giving

I am happy to report that the total amount collected during our Christmas services came to £1,838.75. Thank you all for your generous giving. The money will be distributed to three charities: PACT (Parents and Children Together, the local charity run by the Oxford Diocese), Church Army Centres of Mission (supporting outreach and community work across the country) and CSW (Christian Solidarity Worldwide).

Our giving to CSW, in particular, reflects our desire to support those working under constant terrorist threat, often intensified during the Christmas season. As the Archbishop of Canterbury has remarked: '... in the birthplace of our faith, the Christian community faces extinction. Hundreds of thousands have been forced from their homes, killed, enslaved, persecuted and forced into conversion to Islam. During the Season let us review our commitment to pray and speak out for Christians in the Middle East, as our eyes turn to Bethlehem, Nazareth and Egypt, and places in the Christmas story. It's time to pray with special focus and dedication for those Christian communities who trace their roots right back to the time of these stories.' A sobering reminder of the terrible situation being faced by our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Ron Marillier, PCC Treasurer

News from the School

Looking back to the end of last term, it is amazing how many special Christmas events we had at the school.

For the first time we held our Christmas Fayre on a Friday evening. The atmosphere was lovely with games under the fairy lights and it was well attended. This will become a regular Friday event and residents are always welcome to come along. Fifteen of our choir members sang to a full congregation for the annual carol service at St Mark's; they made a wonderful sound and represented the school brilliantly. Our choir also visited Purley Park Trust, a care home for people with learning disabilities, to sing carols to some of the residents. It was great to hear the residents joining in with their favourites.

We started our annual carol-singing with a small but merry group and managed to collect two tins of chocolates plus some generous donations from local residents before being joined by two other Englefield families. We all returned to school for mince pies, hot choc and lots of chocolates. Thank you to those who came along on the night. We raised £35.35 which was added to our carol concert collection and went to PACT and CIRDIC, two charities who support local residents less fortunate than ourselves.



Our Key Stage 1 production was 'Christmas with the Aliens'. It was lovely to welcome some local residents to our first performance. The children sang their hearts out and acted their parts with great confidence and humour...they were clearly having a lovely time! Well done to all and a big thank you to the staff and parents who prepared the children so well.

In addition to our performances, we had breakfast with Father Christmas, followed by him reading a story to our younger pupils. We also made mats and hats in our house groups for our school Christmas lunch. Thank you once again to Mrs O'Sullivan and Mrs Burt for providing a delicious meal for the whole school. The highlight of our school Christmas was our Carols by Candlelight at St Mark's Church which was a great finale to our busy and hectic term.

In January, the children returned well-rested after an enjoyable holiday. Our Year 5/6 pupils (seen below) were given an informative, educational and interesting workshop about the dangers of smoking. They got fully involved in the session and learned some grizzly facts about health issues related to smoking. The information was put across in a fun way but the serious meaning wasn't lost. This workshop was funded by West Berkshire Local Authority.

Thank you to the PTA who have recently bought us some great new book sets for guided reading in Key Stage 2. The children might even get to read some with Paula and Margaret, local residents who have become valuable members of our school community.

Please remember that you are welcome to contact the school (930 2337) if you would like to come in to help in any way.

Hilary Latimer, Headteacher



Progress at Cobbs

The newly expanded farm shop 'Cobbs at Englefield' is nearing completion at Wickcroft Farm with its opening expected around mid-March. This exciting project will breathe new life into the redundant farm buildings, whilst also creating 25 new jobs, and involves moving the existing shop into a much larger space with a traditional butcher, delicatessen counter and a new 80-seater restaurant serving homemade refreshments, lunches and afternoon teas. For updates see

<https://www.cobbsfarmshop.co.uk/news/>.

Date	Sidesmen	Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel
February 3 rd 5 th Sunday before Lent BCP	Dianne Graham Liz Marillier		Gloria Sleep 1 Corinthians 13	Ian Savage Luke 5:17-32
February 10 th 4 th Sunday before Lent	David and Stephanie Gibbons	Carole Ford Isaiah 6:1-8	Paula Fenwick 1 Corinthians 15:1-11	Ron Marillier Luke 6:46 - 7:10
February 17 th 3 rd Sunday before Lent	Peter and Denny Hollands	Catherine Haig Jeremiah 17:5-10	Harriet Wynne-Jones 1 Cor 15:12-20	Stephanie Gibbons Luke 7:16-28
February 24 th 2 nd Sunday before Lent	Dudley and Victoria Fishburn	Liz Marillier Genesis 2:4b-9; 15- end	Dianne Graham Revelation 4	Carol Boulter Luke 8.22-33, 38-39
March 3 rd Sunday before Lent BCP	Paula Fenwick Linda Price		Dudley Fishburn 2 Corinthians 3:12 – 4:2	Dinah Perkins Luke 9:18-36
March 6 th Ash Wednesday Communion, 7.30pm	Dinah Perkins	Penny Savage Joel 2:1-2, 12-17	Aldo Guiducci 2 Corinthians 5:20b; 6-10	Peter Haig Matthew 6:1-6; 16-21
March 10 th 1 st Sunday of Lent	Doris Edwards Dinah Perkins	Melanie Townsend Deut 26:1-11	Hugh Boulter Romans 10:8b-13	Ann Stone Luke 4:1-13
March 17 th 2 nd Sunday of Lent	Dianne Graham Liz Marillier	Ian Savage Genesis 2: 4b-9, 15-end	Stephanie Gibbons Philippians 3:17-4:1	Aldo Guiducci Luke 13:31-end
March 24 th 3 rd Sunday of Lent	David and Stephanie Gibbons	Ronan O'Sullivan Isaiah 55:1-9	Carole Ford 1 Corinthians 10:1-13	Melanie Townsend Luke 13:1-9
March 31 st Mothering Sunday	Peter and Denny Hollands	tbc	tbc	tbc
April 7 th 5 th Sunday of Lent BCP	Dudley and Victoria Fishburn		Mike Kimber Philippians 3:4b-14	Penny Savage John 12:1-8
April 14 th Palm Sunday	Paula Fenwick Linda Price	Aldo Guiducci tbc	Ron Marillier tbc	David Gibbons tbc

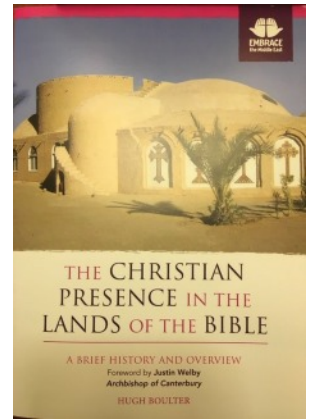
If you are unavailable for any duty on the rota, please try to find a swap, or otherwise contact Saffy O'Sullivan on 01492 9302731 website, www.stmarksinglefield.org.uk/rota, or in the church porch. Please let Penny Savage know if you have any request on the following Sunday.

Intercessions	Sacristan	Administrators	Sunday Club	Cleaners
BCP	Penny Norris	Carol Boulter Peter Haig	Carolyn Ahanchian Liz Reeves	Gill Barton Dianne Graham
Harriet Wynne-Jones	Susan Smith	Torquill 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
Melanie Townsend	Dee Boddy	Terry and Dinah Perkins	Susannah McBain Alice Johnson	John and Liz McKean
BCP	Catherine Haig	Carol Boulter Saffy O'Sullivan	Penny Savage Catherine Haig	Paula Fenwick Linda Price
	Penny Savage	Dinah Perkins		
Ron Marillier	Penny Savage	Dudley Fishburn Melanie Townsend	Zoe Benyon Liz Reeves	Gill Barton Dianne Graham
Dinah Perkins	Penny Norris	Peter Haig Dinah Perkins	Andrea Kean Denny Hollands	Elizabeth Benyon Melanie Townsend
Harriet WJ	Susan Smith	Gill Barton Denny Hollands	Melissa Bennett Alice Johnson	Pete and Carole Ford
Sunday Club	Dinah Perkins	Peter Haig Penny Savage	Carolyn Ahanchian Sara Guiducci	Doris Edwards Dinah Perkins
BCP	Dee Boddy	Dinah and Terry Perkins	Liz McKean Liz Reeves	John and Liz McKean
Carol Boulter	Penny Savage	Saffy O'Sullivan Melanie Townsend	Susannah McBain Denny Hollands	Paula Fenwick Linda Price

1 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 on

Christians in the Middle East

At the beginning of December the Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey organised a service to celebrate the contribution of Christians in the Middle East. It was an amazing occasion. There were senior clergy representing different denominations including Suheil Dawani, the Anglican Archbishop of Jerusalem and the Middle East, Angaelos, the Coptic Archbishop of London, who we know from his talk at St Mark's in September 2015, Theophilos III, the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem, as well as Maronites, Melkites, Armenians, Syrian Orthodox and Syriac Catholics. The congregation in the Abbey was up to 2,000 people.



We had moving addresses from Prince Charles and the Archbishop of Canterbury, both of whom recognised the great pressure which communities in the Middle East are under from different sources. At the same time they wished to acknowledge and celebrate the contribution which they make by witnessing to Christ in the work which they do in the fields of education, health, social justice and care for the displaced, available to all. We had music from the Coptic Orthodox and the Syriac Orthodox choirs. From a personal point of view I was delighted that the Abbey and Embrace the Middle East asked me to do a revised version of my booklet, *The Christian Presence in the Lands of the Bible*, which has a foreword by Justin Welby and which was made available to all those who attended. I have a few spare copies if anyone is interested.

At the supper after the service I sat next to a Coptic nun from Cairo who works with the Zebaleen children who scavenge the city rubbish dumps eking out a living for their families. The nuns look after them and give them an education. Sister Clare who I was sitting next to had never previously been to England and had travelled by herself to be at the service. On my other side I had the Greek Orthodox Archdeacon of Jerusalem. When I asked him about the political situation in Palestine and Israel, he replied that his church was the successor of the church which St James had founded over 2,000 years ago. They had been in Jerusalem before Muslims, Israelis and other Christian denominations and intended to stay there. The current unrest was likely to continue as it served to keep the current politicians from both sides in power.

This exemplified for me the complexity of the situation and the danger of lumping all Christians together. So, please pray for them in the Christian witness which they bring to that part of the world and regard them as fellow disciples and not victims.

Hugh Boulter

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A brave soldier from Englefield

Ann Downs (nee Dance) recently revisited Englefield and sent the following account prompted by seeing the 'Lest We Forget' soldier silhouette outside the churchyard. Her grandfather was one of those mentioned in Richard Smith's talk on Remembrance Sunday printed in the last issue.



I have known Englefield since I was a baby. My father, William Arthur Dance, was brought up in the village with his five siblings. They all attended the village school and worshipped at St Mark's where I was christened in June 1953 and married on 20th December 1975 by the Reverend David Cound. But it's not myself that I'm writing about but my dear granddad, Arthur George Dance, who is buried in St Mark's churchyard

with his devoted wife, my granny, Mary Keturah (Kitty): 11715 Corporal Arthur George Dance of the 2nd Royal Berks Regiment.

Arthur joined his regiment aged 18 and after training was sent to join the 2nd Battalion, who were stationed in trenches at Fauquissart a small hamlet about ten miles to the west of Lille in Northern France. It would have been a bit of a baptism of fire for Arthur as the Battalion suffered two wounded on 11th January, the day he joined it, followed by four killed and six wounded on 12th January after which it was relieved and moved out of the trenches at 5pm on 13th January to billets at Laventie. From the records examined it appears that Arthur served with the 2nd Battalion for the whole of the war. The Battalion was involved in the Battle of the Somme taking part in an attack on Ovillers on 1st July 1916. Despite heavy bombardment of the German lines the 2nd Battalion suffered heavy casualties. It went 'over the top' at 7.30am with 824 officers and men and by 9.00am it had been reduced to 389 officers and men, a casualty rate of 47 %. The Ovillers Military Cemetery includes the graves of 63 soldiers from the Battalion some of whom Arthur would have known.

Fast forwarding to 1918, the Germans launched a major offensive 'Operation Michael' on 21st March which lasted until 5th April. The objective was to capture the channel ports used by the Allies to send troops to the front line. On the day the operation started the 2nd Battalion was billeted in St Martin-Au-Laert, a suburb of St Omer. It was moved to Bethencourt to take part in operations on Saturday 23rd March. Over the following eight days it was involved in carrying out rearguard actions during which time it sustained approximately 330 casualties including troops who were killed, wounded or missing. It was during this period that Arthur was awarded the Military Medal, the award being detailed in the Battalion War Diary.

Overall Arthur was not only very brave but also a lucky soldier. He would have been in the trenches for over 3½ years and survived which was no small achievement. What a man! Sadly, although Arthur survived the war and went on to have six children with his wife Kitty, he died from cancer at the age of 65 when I was just eight years old. He worked on Chalkpit Farm as a stockman after his return to Englefield. I remember him as a placid soul; nothing phased him. Quite remarkable after the atrocities he must have witnessed. The photo opposite shows Arthur and Kitty with their six children on the occasion of my parents' wedding. Sadly they've all passed away except my dear Auntie Joan who is 93 and lives in Devon (she's the one on the left of the front row). I just thought you'd like to know the story of a brave soldier from the beautiful village of Englefield and maybe relate it to others to keep his memory alive. I'm sure there are others in the same graveyard with similar stories.

Ann Downs

News from the Old Fire Station

Here at The Old Fire Station Nursery we've been very busy recently with Christmas. Once again we were delighted that the Estate allowed us to use the Long Gallery for our children's party. The children had been practising for weeks and were thrilled to be able to sing to their parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents and friends. We saw even more guests for the party this year and the carols and songs were sung with gusto. Different to last year we were visited by the great man himself who, dressed in resplendent red and white arrived 'as if by magic' from behind the curtains with a lovely large chair from the house, surrounded by presents to a backdrop of a huge fireplace; it did look fantastic. The room was the usual cacophony of sound at events like this but when Father Christmas rang his bell from behind the curtains the immediate hush that befell the room was truly amazing. The children sat beautifully, cross-legged, hands on knees and ramrod backs in anticipation of his arrival. Their open mouths as he was revealed was a wonderful reminder of the way we all once felt about this time of year.

We were delighted that our new manager, Marianna, accepted the position just prior to Christmas although I believe 'a baptism of fire' was how she described the timing of her arrival. We're making a few changes at the nursery and continuing to improve both what we do and how we do it, so, if you see us walking around the village, do give us a wave and we'll all wave back.

Duncan Highet



Englefield's 'Workmen's Club'

The Workmen's Club was built in 1884 and opened in January of the following year. Its original purpose was simply as a Reading Room, but it was not popular and on 16th June 1886 it was reopened as somewhere the men of the village could go to socialise, smoke, drink and indulge in various games and entertainments. There had previously been two public houses in the village: the Crown (now number 1 The Street) and the Three Daggers (number 26/27) but both of these had closed during the 1860s. John Woods, the publican from the Three Daggers, moved to the appropriately-named New Inn in North Street at the junction with Piper's Lane but that had closed by 1891 and was demolished by 1913. There was also the Thatcher's Arms just down the road and the many alternatives in Theale. It was the dubious attractions of these that the Rector hoped that the opening of the Club would overcome: 'In the public house there a risk of noise, bad company and excess of drink, dangers which the Committee hope to avoid in the social gatherings in the Club,' he wrote.

Originally just a single, large room the Club had the billiard room added in 1894 and in keeping with the original intent this room also housed a lending library, with the books held on tall shelves along the left-hand side. By 1896 the collection numbered almost 1,000 books with annual lending amounting to 1,200 titles a year. In addition to the books, newspapers and magazines were provided as the gift of Mr Benyon and continued to be available into the 1960s.

The first caretaker and steward was James Claydon who also worked as a garden labourer but ceased that occupation after 1895 when the Post Office was opened in an extension to the caretaker's house and he became sub-postmaster as well as Club caretaker. As Club caretaker he was paid £4 a year, rising to £6 in 1893, and Mrs Claydon received a gratuity of £1. James Claydon continued in these roles until 1930 when W G Cook took over (until 1964) on retirement from the Army after 26 years' service. He was recommended for the post by Capt Dempsey (later General Sir Miles Dempsey) and took it in preference to an alternative recommendation for the job of gatekeeper at Blenheim Palace. He was initially paid £1 a week with additional payments determined by the Committee for catering for functions. By 1949 the salary had doubled to £104 a year but there was then no mention of extra duty payment. The following year the annual flat rate was replaced by an hourly one of two shillings and threepence. House, coal and light were all provided.

In addition to snooker and billiards, the usual range of pub games was provided, and games tournaments were often held against neighbouring villages, with snooker and darts matches and whist drives continuing up to the 1960s. Annual dances started in 1891. Admission was free for Club members, with tickets for their lady

partners at threepence each. During the time of James Herbert Benyon (1897-1935) the New Year's Eve 'Squire's Dance' gave free entry for both members and their guests (although the lady's name had to be notified to the caretaker beforehand) with food and the first drink also free. Regular smoking concerts were also held, where the members entertained each other with songs and dramatic recitations. For many years Club members also formed a troupe of 'Englefield Minstrels' who performed to great acclaim at many village entertainments in the Long Gallery. In these more 'enlightened' times it is sadly not possible to publish the only known photograph of the troupe in full make-up, taken in the Long Gallery not long before the First World War.

Richard Smith

Bradfield Young Farmers

What a great run up to the festive period we had at Bradfield YFC. Some brilliant meetings followed on from the successful County AGM. Our December programme included a very chilly visit to Yattendon Christmas Trees followed by turkey plucking and dressing at Walters' Turkeys. A good number of our members and their families made it to the Corn Exchange for the Panto, which is always a good night out. We had a very festive evening making novelty Father Christmas wreaths and finished the year with a Christmas party for the members.

January is when we start the hard work and make preparations for the year to come, particularly with competitions. Public Speaking, Reading and Stock Judging training are all on the cards for the dark winter months but will set the members up for the challenges ahead. Of course we will also be having fun and learning some new skills and crafts along the way.

To find out more contact sonia.walters2@btinternet.com or find BYFC on Facebook.

Could you help?

The Action for Children Here4me project, based in Thatcham, provides, manages and trains mentors and advocates for children and young people both in care and on the edge of care in Berkshire. We are looking for volunteers as our next training is coming up in early March. If you are interested in finding out more about the amazing work our volunteers do and the difference they make please call us on 01635 873739 for more information.

Paula Church, Project Administrator

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.

‘His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms’ (Ephesians 3 v 10)

God’s purpose was always to raise up a people for himself, who would reflect his character and live to worship him. Though there were some hints in the Old Testament, the truth that this people would include people of all racial backgrounds – Gentiles as well as Jews – was only revealed with the coming of Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. As Paul explains the revelation of this mystery that was hidden, he points to the church, to those who believe in Jesus and live under his authority, as being the mechanism through which God’s wisdom is made known. It is the dynamics of God’s people living in the world which showcase God’s great plan of salvation. The church has a key role to play in pointing to the awesome wisdom of God, drawing attention to his grace and mercy and acting as a beacon to attract those God is calling, and challenge those who oppose him.

‘And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased”.’ (Luke 3 v 21b-22)

The idea of God as trinity is difficult to grasp. In trying to get out from under this difficulty, people sometimes point out that the word ‘trinity’ doesn’t appear in the Bible. They are, of course, absolutely right. However, this passage in Luke points very clearly to the truth that God is three distinct persons – God the Son, rising from the river after his baptism, has God the Holy Spirit descend on him in the form of a dove, while God the Father speaks to him from heaven. While we struggle to reconcile the idea of one God being a trinity of persons, the Bible simply presents the truth of it. It has been said that the Bible is like a pool shallow enough for a child not to drown, but deep enough for an elephant to swim. While God has given us reason and rationality, there are times when wisdom leads us to trust in what God has revealed without trying to understand it fully.

‘He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing”.’ (Luke 4 v 21)

The words of the prophet Isaiah were uttered centuries before Jesus was born. Down through the years, God had spoken to his people through the prophets, who together painted a vivid picture of what God’s Messiah would be like when he finally appeared on the scene of world history. The fact is that every one of these prophecies is fulfilled in Jesus. In his book, *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, Josh McDowell says: ‘The Old Testament contains over three hundred references to the Messiah that were fulfilled in Jesus’. Many of these prophecies, such as the circumstances surrounding his birth and his death, would have been totally outside Jesus’ control were he only a man trying to act in line with what Scripture had foretold. The fact that Jesus fulfilled all these ancient announcements strengthens our confidence that he is who he claims – God’s Messiah, come to redeem his people and set them free. How else can we explain this staggering coincidence?



A stunning photograph of St Mark’s in the moonlight taken on the evening of the Englefield School carol service in December.

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