



Parish of Wargrave
with Knowl Hill

OUR VISION IS TO BE A CHURCH AT THE HEART OF OUR COMMUNITY

PARISH

MAGAZINE

APRIL 2023



HOLY WEEK & EASTER

A reflection on what Holy Week
and Easter are

PASTORAL INSIGHT

Understanding how to help
in this important ministry

EVENTS

Exciting events taking place
in the Parish in 2023

In other news:
Open church
Question Time - Part III
Knowl Hill Quiz Night

From the Editor

A warm welcome to the April edition of the Parish Magazine.

With Easter just around the corner we have this as our main feature and I hope that we shall see many of you on the Walk of Witness on Good Friday. This is a lovely way to start the Easter weekend and to witness to the village the message of Easter.

Our monthly 'Rambles with Bob' are in full swing and if you would like to join the circulation list, please let me know. Details of our ramble on 23rd April are in this issue.

On behalf of the Magazine team of Rosalyn, Mark, Annette, Lesley, Christine, Richard and Jim, may we wish you all a Happy Easter!

Good reading,

Bob

BOB AUSTEN | PARISH MAGAZINE EDITOR



WELCOME

The copy date for submissions for the May Magazine is noon on Wednesday 12th March 2023.

Articles of up to 400 words are most welcome for publication in this Magazine and should be sent to the Editor: bobausten@wargravechurch.org.uk. The decision to edit and publish material is at the Editor's discretion. Views expressed in articles included in the Magazine are not necessarily shared by the Editor. The Parish Magazine cannot accept responsibility for any products or services advertised in this publication.

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CONTENTS

April

Regulars

4
SUNDAY SERVICES
Timings of upcoming services

5
BUTTERFLIES &
GROUPS
Get involved with the Church

18
ECO CHURCH
Small steps and a visit from A
Rocha

26
VICAR'S LETTER
Thoughts for the month

30
KNOWL HILL NEWS
Updates from St Peter's
Church and Knowl Hill



10
EASTER
Feasts, egg hunts and Hymns



6
HOLY WEEK
What is Holy Week?

News

15
PASTORAL INSIGHTS
How can you help the
community? Insight mornings

20
TREATING ONESELF
A look back on our Organic
Wine evening and Butterflies
Mothers' Day Dinner

23
LAZY AFTERNOON
A picnic with a difference

24
NIGHT AT THE
MUSEUM
A play of love and loyalty set in
the the 2nd World War

Articles

8
LENT LAMENTS
What are people giving up?

17
OPEN CHURCH
What does an open church
mean?

25
REPAIR CAFE
How CCA help those in need

28
QUESTION TIME
What does God think of
Homosexuality - PART III

Church Life

16
SUNDAY CLUB
Wonder of new life

19
TRY SUNDAY
Did you try? What are your
big questions?

20
SOCIAL ACTIVITIES
What events have taken
place and what exciting
gatherings are coming up

22
EVENTS 2023
Have you got these in your
diaries?

PARISH REGISTERS : WEDDINGS, BAPTISMS & FUNERALS

Baptisms at St Mary's, Wargrave

12th February Thea Pamela Jones

Funerals, Cremations and Ashes at St Mary's, Wargrave

13th February Anthony Albert Mayes, 94, Service at Reading Crematorium

17th February Gladys Rose Brandie, 99, Interment of Ashes, St Mary's Churchyard

26th February Elizabeth Anne Chignell, 72, Interment of Ashes, New Cemetery

If you are interested in holding your wedding, baptising your child or getting baptised yourself, or need to discuss funeral arrangements, please contact Lucy in the Parish Office or alternatively contact our Vicar, John Cook (see page 2).

HOLY WEEK & EASTER SERVICES

There will be many difference services over Holy Week in the lead up to Easter. For a full list of services, see page 6.

SUNDAY SERVICES

April



St Mary's Church, Wargrave

8am Holy Communion: a said service in traditional language

9.45am Service reflective below

1st Sunday of the month: **2nd April - Palm Sunday**

9.45am All Age Family Worship & Baptism

2nd Sunday of the month: **9th April - Easter Sunday**

9.45am Holy Communion

3rd Sunday of the month: **16th April**

9.45am Morning Worship in modern language with music

4th Sunday of the month: **23rd April**

9.45am Holy Communion

5th Sunday of the month: **30th April**

9.45am All Age Parish Holy Communion

St Peter's Church, Knowl Hill

1st Sunday of the month 10.30am Holy Communion

3rd Sunday of the month 10.30am Village Praise

St Paul's Church, Warren Row

2nd Sunday of the month 9.15am Holy Communion

Our Groups

WELCOME CAFÉ

The Café is open on Tuesdays from 2.30pm - 4pm in the Hannen Room

Next Sessions:
4th, 18th & 25th April
(no session on 11th April)

BUTTERFLIES

Butterflies continues to meet on Wednesday mornings (1st and 3rd of the month in term times), enjoying a delicious breakfast, chat and parenting discussion time in the church centre.

If you are the parent of a baby or toddler, we'd love to meet you! Details can be found on our Facebook page @butterflieswargrave

Butterflies is held in the Church Centre, 9.30am - 11am.

Next Sessions: 19th April

Due to Easter holiday, there will be no session on Wednesday 5th April

OPEN CHURCH

St Mary's Church is open Monday to Saturday 9am to the new later time of 5pm.



LADIES' BREAKFAST

Come and join us in the Church Centre at 9am on **Saturday 1st April** for a delicious breakfast and discussion.



Angie Buckland will be leading us through the story of Palm Sunday using song, film, Bible study and prayer.

As usual we start at 9am for breakfast with the study starting at 9.30am and finishing at about 10.45am.

Contact Lesley or Linda for more information.

lesley.turville@gmail.com
lindacaradine9@gmail.com

Please note there will be no Ladies' Breakfast in May to allow you to enjoy the Coronation of King Charles III.



Holy Week & Easter

Our prayer and wish for you is that you will have a very joyful Easter, and that you will receive and enjoy the abundant life that Jesus offers you.

PALM SUNDAY

Sunday 2nd April

8am	Holy Communion at St Mary's
9.45am	All Age Service & Baptism at St Mary's
10.30am	Holy Communion at St Peter's

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Thursday 6th April

7pm	Contemplative Service with Readings at St Mary's
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GOOD FRIDAY

Friday 7th April

9.30am	Young Family Service in the Church Centre
10am	Walk of Witness Jct Highfield Pk & Victoria Rd
10.30am	Hour at the Cross at St Peter's
2pm	Hour at the Cross at St Mary's

EASTER SUNDAY

Sunday 9th April

8am	Holy Communion at St Mary's
9.45am	Holy Communion at St Mary's
10.30am	Holy Communion at St Paul's

HOLY WEEK 2023

HOLY WEEK

Steve Turville

Holy Week is the most solemn week of the Christian year. It is the week leading up to Easter, and commemorates the dramatic culmination of Jesus' 3 year earthly ministry, as he enters Jerusalem to the cheers of the crowds, but is later arrested, tried and crucified, and then raised to life on Easter Sunday.

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday and celebrates Jesus's arrival in Jerusalem. Crowds of people came out of the city to greet him, throwing down palm branches on the road, symbolizing their acknowledging him as a king. In church we give out small crosses made from palm leaves, as a reminder of Jesus's entrance into Jerusalem and his death on the cross. Some people keep these in their homes all year as a symbol of their faith and a reminder of Jesus' death for us.

As this was the week leading up to the great Jewish festival of Passover, Jerusalem and the surrounding area was crowded with maybe hundreds of thousands of pilgrims from all over the Roman Empire. Jesus and his disciples made their camp outside of the city and from Monday to Wednesday they went to the Great Temple each day where Jesus spoke to the crowds.

Maundy Thursday is the Thursday before Easter Sunday. On Maundy Thursday we remember when Jesus ate the Passover meal with his disciples. This meal is famously known as the Last Supper. During the meal, Jesus used the bread and the wine to symbolize his body and blood - his very life - which he will give for the world. That's why sharing bread and wine in church is such an important part of our worship.

It is a reminder that Jesus sacrificed his life for us all. The word 'Maundy' comes from Jesus' final commandment or 'mandate' to his disciples at the Last Supper, that they must love one another. After this supper, Jesus and his disciples returned to the Garden of Gethsemane (aptly, the Garden of Tears), where he was later betrayed by Judas, arrested by soldiers and taken back to Jerusalem to be tried on trumped up charges of blasphemy and insurrection.

Good Friday is the Friday before Easter Sunday and we remember the execution of Jesus by crucifixion and his burial. It is a day of mourning (though we do allow ourselves a hot cross bun or two). During special Good Friday services we remember Jesus' physical and spiritual suffering and death on the cross. If you've seen the film, 'The Passion of the Christ', you will have some idea of how much he physically suffered.

Easter Sunday marks Jesus' resurrection. After Jesus was crucified on the Friday his body was taken down from the cross and buried in a cave tomb. The tomb was guarded by Roman soldiers and an enormous stone was put over the entrance. On Sunday some of Jesus' disciples visited the tomb. They found the stone had been moved and that Jesus' body had gone. Jesus was seen later that day by the disciples, and for forty days afterwards by many people. God had raised Jesus from the dead - what we call the resurrection.

Good Friday and Easter Sunday are central to God's plan for the world, as by Jesus' death, he paid the price of all sin by all people for all time so that we can be accepted by God; and by his resurrection, he conquered death so that we might live forever.

LENT LAMENTS

The Ups and Downs (mainly downs) of abstinence!

It's always interesting to know what people 'do' for Lent so here are a few 'all-age' (youngest participant is Charles, aged 9!) snippets from members of St Mary's and St Peter's willing to share their good intentions.

Annette Dart

My previous great intentions for Lent have usually been total disasters and I never seem to get past a few days of pious adherence after Ash Wednesday. This year I was determined to stay the course and give up cakes and biscuits. I decided to shore up the defences by downloading the Dust & Glory App on my phone for daily reminders of why I am doing this and attending the excellent Lent course with the 'Seeking Wisdom' group. I think the verse from Matthew 4:2 describing Jesus in the desert 'after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry' is an amazing piece of biblical understatement. He must have been ready to eat not just a lamb but the entire flock! I have merely given up a few sweet treats and it's painful. At time of writing it is just 2 weeks into Lent and I am still compliant but very much looking forward to my Easter Egg.



Jim Hadden

For Lent this year I decided to give up my two favourite hobbies - sloth and prognostication*. This year we DID make the trip to St Mary's for the Ash Wednesday service which we haven't bothered with for the past couple of years. So that was an immediate success on the sloth AND prognostication fronts. Blaming Covid for not celebrating our Silver Wedding anniversary two years ago I stopped prognosticating and organised a surprise short break to Bath and bought tickets for the "Big Girls Don't Cry" theatre concert on the actual night of our anniversary. On the home front I see all the tools that I haven't put away yet and all the "little" jobs around the house, garden and garage that sit there glaring at me. So the general clear up and starting the jobs' activity has finally begun. Surprisingly this has given me a nice warm glow so perhaps I will give up sloth and prognostication not just for Lent but for ever!

*Prognostication - the action of prophesying future events

Charles Monté

For Lent this year I have decided to give up whipped cream. Having given up biscuits, pizzas, ice-creams, and chocolate in previous years I needed to find something different to challenge myself with. So, this year I have decided it's whipped cream. This is challenging for me as often when I return home from school, football or rugby training on a cold or wet afternoon mum usually greets me with a warm hot chocolate topped with lashings of whipped cream and mini marshmallows. It is especially hard as I live close to 2 brilliant coffee shops and am always tempted to go in for a treat. 40 days is a long time when you open the fridge and see something you cannot have. However I will keep going and look forward to enjoying the biggest hot chocolate on Easter Day – After all, I am only giving up one thing.
Jesus gave up everything.



Mark Puddy

I have given up eating on workdays when I get home after 9pm. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, when Susan and I are working, we tend to get home late. I then heat up a ready meal, of which Susan eats a little, so I finish up having most of it, as, feeling tired and hungry, it seems a shame to not eat it all. I remember from a talk given in Wargrave Surgery by Dr Jen Singh, that it is a good idea for metabolic health to try eating all the food for the day within 12 hours, leaving the other 12 hours free of intake. While we (almost) manage this on non-working days, we certainly stretch the eating time on working days. This way, I don't go to bed with a stomach full of processed food!



Bob Austen

For Lent this year I decided to do something which I have not done for close on 60 years, which is to give up alcohol. 2 weeks in and I am still sticking to the pledge, although I am sure the vast amount of Diet Coke being consumed is probably doing much more harm than the delicious Rebellion ale, my favourite tippie, ever did! Only another 4 weeks to go and I have yet to experience the sense of righteousness that I expected to feel in my endeavours. Perhaps that comes at the end of Lent when the joy of liberation arrives and I can once again enjoy a pint of foaming, good English beer. If I make it to the (bitter) end I shall be donating what I would have spent on alcohol to Yeldall Manor. I shall not deduct the cost of all the Diet Coke from this, otherwise it will be a very meagre sum!

Feast of Feasts!

As we swap Lent fasting and abstinence for Easter feasting, we asked the very appropriately named Camilla Cook, for her best Easter recipes and tips and she has come up trumps. These recipes will make the Lenten fast all worthwhile

DELICIOUS EASTER RECIPES by Camilla Cook

SIMNEL CAKE

This is a very traditional Easter cake. The 11 marzipan balls placed on the top represent the 12 apostles, minus Judas. I like the fact that it's not iced...and it lasts for ages!

Ingredients

- 175g/6oz light muscovado sugar
- 175g/6oz butter, softened, plus extra for greasing
- 175g/6oz self-raising flour
- 3 large free-range eggs
- 50g/1¾oz ground almonds
- 3 tbsp milk
- 100g/3½oz sultanas
- 100g/3½oz glacé cherries, quartered
- 100g/3½oz dried apricots, cut into small pieces
- 2 tsp mixed spice powder
- 450g/1lb golden marzipan
- 3 tbsp apricot jam
- 1 free-range egg, beaten

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 160C/140C Fan/Gas 3.
2. Grease a 20cm/8in round, deep-sided, loose-bottomed tin with butter and line the base.
3. Put the cake ingredients into a large bowl and beat together until well incorporated. Spoon half the mixture into the prepared tin and level the surface.
4. Roll one-third of the marzipan to the same size as the base of the tin and place on top of the cake mixture.
5. Spoon the remaining cake mixture on top of the marzipan and level the surface. Bake for 1½-2 hours or until golden-brown on top and firm in the middle. If the cake is beginning to brown but not cooked through cover it with tin foil. Leave the cake to cool for 10 minutes before removing from the tin.
6. Heat the jam in a pan, then brush the top of the cooled cake with a little warm jam. Roll out half of the remaining marzipan to fit the top of the cake. Place the marzipan on the cake and use your thumb to crimp around the edges.
7. Make 11 balls from the remaining marzipan and place these around the edge of the cake fixing them to the marzipan with a little beaten egg.
8. Brush the marzipan with the egg and glaze under a hot grill or use a blowtorch for about 5 minutes (turning to ensure even browning).



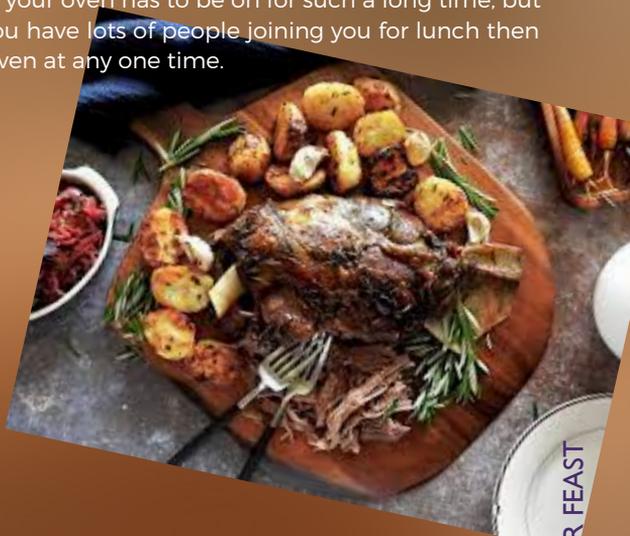
12 HOUR SLOW COOKED SHOULDER OF LAMB

Makes 6

I always cook lamb on Easter Sunday. A reminder of the Lamb of God perhaps? A dear friend gave me the recipe for a 12-hour slow roast shoulder of lamb. I tested it out recently and will definitely be cooking this on Easter Day. It is soooo delicious! This will seem like a total indulgence, given that your oven has to be on for such a long time, but for a special treat it is well worth it! If you have lots of people joining you for lunch then you can cook up to 3 shoulders in the oven at any one time.

Ingredients

Large shoulder of lamb
2 onions, peeled and cut into wedges
2 cups of water
Rosemary, chopped – I like lots of this
2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
Sea salt
Olive oil
Cornflour



Method

The following timing is based on eating at lunchtime not supper. I would put it in the oven to brown at 8.15pm then reduce temp for the 12-hour slow cook at 9pm. On Sunday morning take the lamb out at 9am (plenty of time to get to church!). This can stay covered on the side. At 12.30pm pop it back to the oven for 20 mins to warm up.

1. Turn the oven on to 220°C
2. Pierce the skin of the lamb with a sharp knife
3. Mix the rosemary, garlic, salt and pepper with the olive oil. Rub the mixture all over the lamb shoulder.
4. Pop the onion wedges under the lamb, then pour the water into the pan.
5. Pop the lamb in the oven for 45 minutes, uncovered. This is to give the browning a head start.
6. Reduce oven temp to 100°C
7. Cover lamb with baking paper then two layers of foil, sealed tightly to prevent evaporating moisture leakage. Then place in the oven for 12 hours.
8. When the lamb emerges from the oven in the morning, the flesh should pry apart with very little effort (check the side, not top, to preserve presentation). The pan will have even MORE liquid than it started with because of all the lamb juices.
9. Drain the liquid into a saucepan (removing the fat). Bring to a simmer and reduce to approx. 1/3 of the quantity.
10. In a small bowl place 1 tbsp cornflour and 2 tbsp water. Mix then add to the lamb jus.
11. Serve with roast potatoes and whatever veg you like!

EASTER FEAST

EASTER NESTS

Makes 12

We used to make these when our boys were younger. They are simple to make and yummy! You'll need 12 cupcake cases.

Ingredients

- 200g milk chocolate
- 85g shredded wheat (crushed)
- 2x bags mini chocolate eggs



Method

1. Melt the chocolate in a small bowl over a pan of barely simmering water.
2. Pour the chocolate over the shredded wheat and stir well to combine.
3. Spoon the mix into the 12 cupcake cases and press the back of a teaspoon in the centre to create a nest shape.
4. Place 3 mini eggs on the top of each nest.
5. Chill in the fridge for 3 hours until set.

EASTER FEAST



EASTER EGG HUNT AT THE PUDDY'S

Every Easter, despite the passing of the years (now decades) there is always one regular event of the Puddy Easter; the family Easter Egg Hunt. Susan starts planning this well ahead. She buys bags of mini easter eggs in foil, and, during the Easter Weekend, will say that she is going to hide the eggs, and THERE IS TO BE NO CHEATING! This means that, as she is in the process of hiding the eggs in the garden, she will shoo away anyone she spots spying on her. She will then give out collecting bags and announce, "THE HUNT IS ON."

This prompts a wild frenzy of movement, hither and thither. Particularly when Helen, Tim or Matt seem to make a sudden movement, the others will follow or obstruct them, thinking there is clearly an egg visible for collecting. I tend not to be as good at spotting hidden things and may be wearing the wrong glasses. When looking for ingredients, items of clothing, gadgets, I will tend to say, "I can't find it, someone must have hidden it." In this case, someone actually has hidden the eggs, so what chance do I have?

After a while, there is competitive totting up of eggs. I will be proud of the 3 eggs I have found, while the next closest is Tim's wife, Beth, who already has 8 without really appearing to try very hard.



Susan will then wander around and, without trying to point, will gaze in a significant direction to give a hint to the chief struggler. However, there are others picking up the clue, so instead of me increasing my tally to 4, Matt's will go up to 14.

At a key point when we get fed up looking, we all tot up the number of eggs we have found, and someone will ask Susan how many eggs are left. This is tricky, because 1) she can never remember how many eggs she has hidden, 2) she cannot remember where she hid them all to check and 3) sometimes we find eggs from previous years. Eventually, Susan can't see any more hidden eggs and will declare that we have found them all. There is then the final reckoning to announce the winner, and predictably, as nothing changes, I will have come last.



EASTER DAY: JESUS CHRIST IS RISEN TODAY, ALLELUIA!

Peter Dart

Without doubt this is the most popular Easter Hymn. It was initially written in the 14th century as a Bohemian Latin hymn titled 'Surrexit Christus hodie' and based on Matthew 28 5-6 "The angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.'". Charles Wesley, the co-founder of the Methodist movement, then adapted the latin to these words circa 1739, where the hymn was first performed at the first service at The Foundery Meeting House. Over the years the number of versus has ebbed and flowed. At one point there seems to have been 11 - but we will be singing a much more manageable number on Easter Sunday.



*Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!
Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
Who did once upon the cross, Alleluia!
Suffer to redeem our loss, Alleluia!*

Some churches use the tune Llanfair (which normally goes to the words 'Hail the Day that sees him rise') - but I much prefer Wesley's Easter Song.

Other songs on Easter Day will include two more modern ones by Stuart Townend and Keith Getty: 'See what a morning':

*See what a morning, gloriously bright
With the dawning of hope in Jerusalem;
Folded the grave-clothes
Tomb filled with light,
As the angels announce Christ is risen!*

And also, 'Jesus is Lord', where every verse is so uplifting, especially the 3rd one:

*Jesus is Lord – the tomb is gloriously empty,
Not even death could crush this King of love.
The price is paid, the chains are loosed, and we're forgiven,
And we can run into the arms of God.*

And to finish our service, there is no better hymn than 'Thine be the Glory, Risen Conquering Son' written by the Swiss Protestant minister Edmond Budry and set to the tune from Handel's oratorio Judas Maccabaeus (which is why this terrific tune is simply called 'Maccabaeus'). At Christmas we sing all the popular hymns and carols, like 'O come all ye faithful' and 'Hark the herald' many times. The great pity about Easter is that the music is just as wonderful, but we really only have one opportunity to sing it all - which is on Easter Sunday. So, hope to see you at St Mary's!

PASTORAL VISITOR INSIGHT MORNINGS

With a growing ageing population, there has never been a greater need for people to come alongside those who are no longer able to get out as much as they would like, or even to come down to church. We all know what it is like to be 'locked down' and for most of us it was temporary event, but for some, especially the elderly, 'lockdown' is a long-term way of life. The pandemic highlighted the need for us all to be good neighbours, to watch out for each other, and to help where help is needed. The need for neighbourliness didn't end with the end of the pandemic.

Would you be interested in visiting people in their homes? Would you be interested in bringing someone down to church on Sunday mornings, or the Welcome Café on Tuesday afternoons?

We know that people already do that in all kinds of informal ways, and that's fantastic - please keep doing it - but we would also like to grow our Caring Team in the Parish. As representatives of the church having contact with vulnerable people on a 1:1 basis, you would be required to undergo some training. We aren't talking about social work or counselling but simply providing a listening ear and cheerful conversation. It may be that you might like to take Holy Communion to those who can't get to church, but that would be a separate thing. You would also need to agree to a criminal record check.

If you would be interested in being involved in this important ministry, we are running two Pastoral Visitor Insight Mornings at St Mary's Church Centre, on Saturday 29th April and Saturday 20th May, 9am to 12.30pm. (You only need to attend one morning - they are identical). Please email Revd. Steve for more information or to sign up for one of the mornings.

steve.turville@wargravechurch.org.uk

PASTORAL INSIGHT MORNINGS

Interested in knowing how you can
help others in our community?

**SATURDAY
29TH APRIL OR 20TH MAY**

9AM - 12.30PM

More info & sign up: [Steve Turville](mailto:Steve.Turville@wargravechurch.org.uk)

WARGRAVECHURCH.ORG.UK

SUNDAY CLUB: Will you see this wonder?

Jubi Filho da Silva



Just a month ago my wife Annie was very much "with child". How wonderful. She was awake at night with back pains, awake during the day with heartburn, coughing an apocalypse while the belly ballooned and the child kicked her, repeatedly, I'm told, right on the same rib.

Now the child is with us. How wonderful! We wake up every two hours to either give the baby some milk, give the baby to mummy, change the baby or tend to the toddler screaming from the bedroom, so we are both awake at night with back pains, and awake during the day feeling affected by a chronic condition that gradually changes the human personality. Remember when Jubi smiled and was just lovely with people?

I'm sure you could tell me your own stories. Amidst the sleep deprivation that numbs the mind, drains the joy, and literally dries the eyeballs (impairs the speech too, as a non-native speaker of English), there is wonder. At 3 o'clock in the morning the baby looks at me in the eye. I know she sees only a brown blob, only the contrast, but I see her and I feel it -- the wonder of new life.

This month we will explore the wonder of Easter at Sunday Club (with the help of other leaders who are more awake). Jesus Christ endured pains beyond back ache and heartburn. Arrested in the evening, he was kept awake only to face his own trial, torture, and death, public and humiliating. Yet, on the third day, there is wonder. He is risen! Just as he said he would!

Please pray that our children, and we too, will see this wonder.

A reminder of the contacts to reach out to for all our Young Clubs.

Crèche - Camilla Cook camillacook@btconnect.com

Sunday Club - Annie da Silva hobden.da.silva@gmail.com

Pathfinders - Marc Uniacke marcuniacke@gmail.com

Tuesday Youth Group - Richard Eves richard.m.s.eves@gmail.com

WARGRAVE PARISH TRUST

The Parish Trust is a collection of bequests made many years ago to offer financial help to people in need. The funds are invested to produce a modest annual income. This is increased by contributions from the Parish Council and St Mary's Church.

The board of trustees includes the Vicar and representatives from Wargrave Surgery and Wargrave Parish Council who are able to identify cases of need.

**Need
help
financially?**

Anyone living in the parish may claim.
All communications are confidential.

Secretary/Treasurer: Bob Austen
Email: austenrobert@hotmail.com
Tel: 0118 940 3038 Mobile: 07970 611013

OPEN CHURCH

Christine Walker

For a period of time during the pandemic our Church was closed and for us, the church's heartbeat, it was a huge deprivation not being able to meet there - no Church bells ringing, no big wooden doors flung open to welcome us, no hugs and handshakes, no coffee and chat after the service. It also caused a wider sadness in the community because this was during a time when people would have liked to enter to feel close to God - to say a prayer.

Even now, we, the group raising money for 'Ride and Stride', sometimes come across a fine church which we would like to enter to admire the architecture, to have a nose around or just get out of the rain, only to find that the sturdy wooden door fails to allow us to visit. It does seem something of a contradiction that here is God's house, to which everyone is welcome, and yet we can't get in!

So it is a cause for great rejoicing that our own St Mary's Church is now open every day of the week! On Monday to Saturday we open from 9am to 5pm, and of course there are services every Sunday. During the week the Church will be quiet and empty for you to sit awhile or wander around at your leisure. The church is ancient and a place of great beauty. The earliest documented evidence is 1121 and if you want to learn more of the history and features of St Mary's, there is a splendid new guide book at the back of the church which can be yours for a mere pound.



OPEN CHURCH



SMALL POSITIVE STEPS

Mike Buckland



On 22nd February, St Mary's Wargrave welcomed Sara Kandiah of A Rocha, the Christian nature conservation charity whose UK wing runs the Eco Church programme. She was encouraged by our efforts and had some good ideas for next steps.

For example, a repair hub. Some churches are offering this as a popular cost-saving service to their community. If any carpenters, mechanics, knitters or sewers among us are willing to give it a go, please get in touch. Who knows, it could become a regular thing, and a lot of fun.

On 11th March, the Bishop of Oxford Stephen Croft mentioned St Mary's Wargrave in a powerful address on the environment at Diocesan Synod. You can watch it on his Facebook page and at vimeo.com/807206603. The Synod approved the Church of England's new Net Zero Carbon Action Plan.

On 13th March, St Mary's Wargrave was a finalist at this year's Twyford Together Communities Awards, in the "Go Green" category. Christine Walker and I attended. Thanks to whomever nominated us! The certificate is in St Mary's. Camp Mohawk was nominated in another category.

On 11th April, local farmer Clive Weeke will run a scything course for us to manage the long grass areas at St Mary's and St Peter's in a nature friendly way. We hope to have a photo for our May edition.

Mike Buckland, Stewarding CoG leader
mikebuckland54@gmail.com



Photos by Sarah Kandiah, A Rocha UK

ECO CHURCH





Dear John,

It was lovely to chat with you today and a **huge thank you** again for your Church's support of Tearfund. You're amazing!

You can continue to follow our support on the Turkey-Syria earthquake on our website, especially hearing stories from survivors and how the church has become a refuge in Syria.

Thank you again for your support and prayers, which make our work to see an end to extreme poverty possible.

Every blessing,
Lucy Marson
Church Engagement Executive

TEARFUND.ORG

MESSAGES TO US ALL

DID YOU 'TRY SUNDAY'?

Jubi Filho da Silva

Why are we here? What are we supposed to do with our lives in this season? What is the purpose of life? This is not small talk material. These are not questions to throw at people at a dinner party. These are big questions in life and they deserve real answers, but where do we go to find them?

We could Google it. But whatever the algorithms think, Google doesn't really know us. We could seek family and friends, but they are in the same situation! They too are trying to figure out the answers when they let the questions bother them enough. So who do we turn to?

We could "Try Sunday". This is the name of a series of talks we launched in January as a space for big questions and great answers. The answers didn't come from the latest TED talk, nor from a cultish political ideology, but from Jesus Christ, the one people called "teacher". Did you attend? How did the talks grab you? Do you have big questions? Write to me at jubiracy@gmail.com or reach out to our preachers. We'd love to hear from you. We plan to run "Try Sunday" every January, and experiment with different questions to get the answers that will help us grasp life while we live it, and get to know Jesus better.



ORGANIC WINE & CHEESE EVENING

Sue Witney

VINTAGE ROOTS

A number of us gathered for our second Celebrating event of this year, the organic wine and chese event.

We were privileged to have Neil Palmer and his wife Lynne join us for the evening and Neil gave us an informative account of organic wines, how he got into the wine business and of course, how to best taste them. We tasted 7 wines in total (not insignificant amounts either!) and we then rated them ourselves out of 10 in relation to how much we liked them. There was a good range of wines and it was great to get more of an understanding of the benefits of organic wine.

At the interval, Neil introduced us to his 'corker', like a stool but made of corks . We had the opportunity, for a small price, to guess how many corks there were. Lucinda Bryers came the closest and as well as winning a magnum of wine she was also able to say which local charity the money raised from the cork guessing game went to. She chose Home-Start, a charity operating in Wokingham and we were able to give them £145, an amazing amount.

At the end we all felt that we had experienced a relaxed and informative evening, so much so, a few were keen to stay on!

A big thank you once again to members of the Celebrating CoG committee who helped with this event and made it possible. We really do have a fantastic team!



SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

LADIES' BREAKFAST: 4TH MARCH

Lesley Turville

Twenty-one of us met on Saturday 4th March for a delicious breakfast and lively conversation and teaching.

Jane Shaw led us on the topic of 'Being Still' in times of trouble.

We started by sharing newspaper headlines that had grabbed our attention recently and noted how little good news there is nowadays and how easy it is to be swamped by what is reported and how it is reported.

'Be still and know that I am God'

We followed up by looking at God's command to us to 'Be still and know that I am God'. Psalm 46:10.

CORONATION CONCERT

Peter Dart

King Charles III will be crowned on Saturday 6th May.

The next day, in the Royal Albert Hall, the Royal Choral Society will be presenting a Coronation Concert. The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra will be playing and maestro Richard Cooke conducting.

We are running a coach from Mill Green leaving at Noon and returning by around 7pm. The cost is £10 for the coach and £25 for a seat in the RAH. To book a ticket, please contact peter@familydart.com.



BUTTERFLIES SWISS DINNER

Camilla Cook

Wednesday 15th March saw our annual Butterflies' Mother's Day dinner take on a Swiss theme. Mums booked in the dads to babysit, and for many this was the first time to enjoy a night out on their own since the arrival of their little ones.

On arrival the mums were greeted by a long Alpine style table bedecked with red and white gingham check, groaning with fondue (imported via Batting Holdings direct from Switzerland) and accompaniments, as well as a delicious array of salads.

It was a joy to have time to chat without the distraction of young children (wonderful as they are!) and the fondue provided a very sociable way of eating together. The meal was finished off with a delicious selection of puddings. Yet again, the church centre provided a fabulous venue for a Butterflies event.

A huge thank you to all the team who decorated, set up, cooked and cleared up: Jane, Alex, Cynthia, Julia, Michele and Kerry.



SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Parish Activities

2023 EVENTS CALENDAR

April

Palm Sunday 2nd	8am	Holy Communion	St Mary's
	9.45am 10.30am	All Age Service & Baptism Holy Communion	St Mary's St Peter's
Maundy Thursday 6th	7pm	Contemplative Service with Readings	St Mary's
Good Friday 7th	9.30am	Young Family Service	Church Centre
	10am	Walk of Witness	Jct Highfield Pk
	10.30am	Hour at the Cross	St Peter's
	2pm	Hour at the Cross	St Mary's
Saturday 8th	TBC	Easter Garden Creations	Church Centre
	9.30am	Decorating Church for Easter	St Mary's
Easter Sunday Sunday 9th	8am	Holy Communion	St Mary's
	9.45am	Holy Communion & Easter Egg Hunt	St Mary's
	10.30am	Holy Communion	St Paul's
Saturday 15th Sunday 16th	9.30am	Seminar: Identity	Church Centre
	9.45am	Morning Worship followed by APCM	St Mary's
	12pm	Bring & Share Lunch	Church Centre
Monday 17th	7.30pm	Hope Explored Part I	Church Centre
Monday 24th	7.30pm	Hope Explored Part II	Church Centre
Thursday 20th	2.30pm	CAMEO: Whist Drive	Knowl Hill VH
Saturday 22nd	7pm	Quiz Night	Knowl Hill VH
Saturday 29th	9am	Pastoral Insight Morning	Church Centre

HOLY WEEK

May

Monday 1st	7.30pm	Hope Explored Part III	Church Centre
Sunday 7th	12pm	RCS Coronation Celebration	Royal Albert Hall
Thursday 18th	11am	Ascension Day Holy Communion	St Mary's
	2.30pm	CAMEO: Dingbats	Knowl Hill VH
Thurs 18th - 28th	Daily	Thy Kingdom Come Prayer Initiative	Online
	9am	Pastoral Insight Morning	Church Centre
Saturday 20th	9.30am	Seminar: Hostility	Hannen Room
Sunday 28th	9.45am	Pentecost Holy Communion	St Mary's

June

Sunday 4th	9.45am	Trinity Sunday All Age Worship	St Mary's
Thursday 15th	2.30pm	CAMEO: Bingo	Knowl Hill VH
Sunday 18th	9.45am	Morning Worship with Special Music	St Mary's
	1pm	Lazy Sunday Afternoon	Mill Green

July

Thursday 20th	TBC	CAMEO: Outing	TBC
Saturday 28th	7pm	BBQ at The Sutcliffes	The Sutcliffes

August

Tues 29th - Fri 1st Sept	9.30am	Holiday Club	Church Centre
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More events coming soon...

Lazy Sunday Afternoon

An afternoon of good company and sweet sounds

18th JUNE

1pm - 4pm

MILL GREEN, WARGRAVE

Picnic with a difference

Performances from French Collection
(as seen at the Platinum Jubilee Celebration last year)

Bring your own picnic, drinks and blanket/chairs

All are welcome

Disabled parking only on Mill Green
If the weather is wet then we shall postpone to another Sunday

LAZY AFTERNOON

A NIGHT AT THE THEATRE

An opportunity to enjoy a night at the theatre and support your local Samaritans group in refurbishing their Bracknell offices.

The play is **FLARE PATH** by **TERENCE RATTIGAN**
A moving story of love and loyalty, courage and fear, based on Rattigan's own experiences as a tail gunner in 2nd World War.

Wednesday 26th April 2023
7.45pm

Bar opens from 7pm
Tickets £15 each
And there will be a raffle

Tickets: paula4spi@aol.com / 07980 008489

Wokingham Theatre, Twyford, RG40 5TU



Wokingham Theatre are kindly donating all proceeds from the ticket sales of this opening night to Samaritans.

RAMBLIN' WITH BOB: Sunday 23rd APRIL

We shall be continuing our 2023 programme with a lovely walk from Twyford through Loddon Nature Reserve and crossing the farmland around Stanlake Park before returning to Twyford through Ruscombe.

Meeting in the car park behind La Fontana in Twyford at 12 noon and returning there in time for Sunday lunch at 2.30pm.

If you would like to join Ramblin' Bob and his merry group please see contact details below, and at the same time advise whether you are staying for Sunday lunch.

Closing date for entries is Friday 14th April. Preorder of food essential - lafontanatwyford.com ensuring lunch ready on arrival.

If it is raining, we shall cancel the walk but continue with the Sunday lunch.



Email: austenrobert@hotmail.com

Home: 0118 940 3038 or Mobile: 07970 611013

CCA HIGHLIGHTS 2022: REPAIR CAFE

Although Reading rightly has a reputation of being a high tech centre and an affluent town it also contains areas that are amongst the most deprived in England and it is those areas where Christian Community Action (CCA) mainly works.

2022 saw a return to something approaching normality for CCA's 25 employees and 130 volunteers. Our 2nd hand furniture shop, four charity shops and support centre were able to open largely as normal which meant we were able to help 1,911 people in crisis through our main Oxford Road support centre (by providing furniture, bedding packs and kitchen packs at nominal cost). Our charity shops provided low cost essential household items, clothes, children's toys and books to numerous customers. And our furniture store provided low cost second hand furniture to those on limited incomes. Towards the end of the year we started a clothing voucher scheme for people in particularly challenging circumstances including newly arrived refugees which allows the holder to get 10 items of clothing free.

In 2022 our van crews collected 2,812 items of furniture kindly donated by local residents. And we repaired and refurbished over 300 items saving them from landfill. Residents of Wargrave have been very generous with furniture and other donations in the past and we'd ask you to continue to support us. Particularly if you have furniture you no longer need.

We always need single and double beds in particular. Please contact us with furniture and white goods donations (details below). As Wargrave is not on our main pickup routes we may ask if we can schedule it with other collections. Please let us know if the item(s) would fit in a large estate type car as it may be possible to collect sooner.

Our volunteers and donors enable us to continue to help those people in crisis, we couldn't do what we do without them. We're currently urgently in need of volunteers able to spend ½ day or more a week helping out in our Whitley shop. We're also looking for a volunteer with Wordpress experience that can help us take a design and page structure that has been developed for us by a volunteer with UX expertise and set it up for us in Wordpress. We have a lot of the content ready to upload. Please email mail@ccam.org.uk if you might be able to help.

Email: warehouse@ccam.org.uk
Phone: 0118 951 2338

Patricia Fryer from Arborfield Church together with CCA's support services manager Clarie Lewis packing Christmas parcels for approx 50 clients



VICAR'S LETTER



Dear *Friends*

Last year after the Easter Weekend, I began to read a national newspaper printed on the 15th April which made mention that Good Friday April 15th 2022, was also the 110th anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic. In retrospect I found myself pondering the events in Jerusalem when the Lord Jesus died circa 33 AD, and what happened in the Atlantic.

1) Two things were foretold

Over a decade before Titanic's maiden voyage, Morgan Robertson (1861-1913) wrote a novella called *Futility* (or *The Wreck of the Titan*) about the sinking of an imaginary liner named the Titan, the largest ship in the world, with a passenger and crew capacity of 3000. It was considered unsinkable. On a cold April night, the Titan struck an iceberg just before midnight. The iceberg tore a gash in the ship's starboard side, sinking the unsinkable ship, and a lack of lifeboats meant that more than half of Titan's passengers died in the icy waters of the North Atlantic. This, of course, would prove to be remarkably accurate (albeit accidental) foretelling of one fateful night 14 years later.

Even more astonishing in its detail and accuracy was the foretelling of Christ's death. Reading the Bible there are, at least, 28 specific and deliberate prophecies which were fulfilled on Good Friday. Psalm 22, for example, foretells in precise and excruciating detail the events that Jesus experienced on the cross of Calvary. Read it alongside Matthew 27, and the parallels are incredible. Most strikingly of all, Psalm 22 written hundreds of years before the Roman style of crucifixion was even invented. So, the writer is describing with forensic attention to detail, a process of which they had absolutely no knowledge. The importance of this foretelling is underlined by the Gospel writers. The narratives of the Passion constantly repeat the words fulfilled and fulfil to highlight that Jesus is no hapless victim and his death is no accident. As Dr Luke says in his second volume all this happened "by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge" (Acts 2:23).

2) Two moments of historic sacrifice

There are many examples of self-sacrifice. Reading about the sinking of the Titanic, I was particularly moved to read about a Scottish minister called John Harper who put his six-year-old daughter in a lifeboat and then removed his life jacket and gave it to one of the other passengers. Survivors of the sinking reported seeing him gathering men and women around him on deck to pray. Then, as the ship began to lurch, he jumped in to the freezing water and swam frantically to all he could reach, appealing to them to turn to the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved. Eyewitnesses reported how as hypothermia set in, John Harper, aged 29, sank beneath the waves.

There are too many examples for me to mention all the other examples of selfless courage on the Titanic. We will all probably know of the 8-member band in the 1st Class Lounge who kept on playing for over two hours to keep passengers upbeat and calm. All the band were drowned.

Another woman, Edith Evans, gave up a place in a lifeboat for a woman called Mrs Brown saying, "Take this woman; she has children waiting for her."

These were all acts of costly sacrifice. However, all such examples are surpassed only by the Lord Jesus Christ who went through the emotional, physical, and spiritual Hell, not just of the crucifixion but by bearing the whole weight of God's judgement of men and women in order to save us. Like John Harper, he offers a lifejacket to anyone who will accept it. Like Edith Evans, he gave up safety for certain doom, to provide safety for another.

Good Friday is where we see the single most heroic sacrifice in all of history. As the Apostle Peter puts it: "Christ suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God."

3) Two life-giving tragedies

These sacrifices were not wasted but saved lives in more ways than one. Aguilla Webb (a Scotsman), four years after the Titanic sunk publicly spoke of what happened to him. He said: "I am a survivor of the Titanic. When I was drifting alone on a plank of wood, that awful night, the tide brought Mr John Harper of Glasgow, also on a piece of wreck near to me." "Man he said, 'Are you saved?' 'No, I said, I am not'. He said to me 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved'. The waves bore him away; but strange to say they brought him back a little later, and he said, 'Are you saved now?'. 'No' I said, 'I can't say honestly that I am'. He said again, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved'. Shortly after he went down; and there alone in the night, with two miles of water under me, I believed. I am John Harper's last convert."

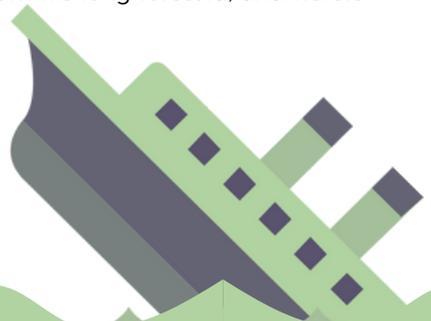
The sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ was not wasted either. Even as he died, he tells a criminal being executed alongside him 'Today, you will be with me in paradise' (Luke 23:43).

The world has never been the same since. Around the world Easter will be celebrated by billions who know that they were drowning in icy waters, before Jesus came to them in the lifeboat of his death and resurrection and pulled them in. And in that cross-shaped dinghy there is room enough for all.

I wonder - have you climbed aboard and benefited from his long-foretold, and heroic self-sacrifice?

John

John R.M. Cook
Vicar of Wargrave with Knowl Hill



QUESTION TIME

Richard Eves



WHAT DID JESUS THINK ABOUT HOMOSEXUALITY PART III

"If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner."

Has anyone ever completely misunderstood where you are coming from?

In the first two parts of this series we saw that based on his complete reliance on scripture as a source of moral authority, Jesus was strongly opposed to sexual immorality, and called on his hearers to repent of it, even down to the level of the instinctual desires of the heart. And we saw that within his definition of sexual immorality, Jesus included same-sex sexual activity. And if we were to stop there, it's possible that we would completely miss the point.

So often when people hear Christians discussing among themselves whether or not such and such a behavior or practice is 'a sin', they assume that the discussion is around where to draw the boundary line. Who is out and who is in. Who needs to be welcomed with love, and who needs to be excluded with disdain.

And perhaps that misunderstanding is itself understandable. After all, that is the standard way that moral discussions happen in the world today. As a society we don't hold to very many of the old 'vices' anymore, but those few which we do continue to observe are policed with uncompromising severity. If you cross the line, you're out, and if you're out nobody owes you anything except scorn. Even worse, having once been called out, there is no clear way to ever get back in.

Once you've been demonstrated to be a racist, no one need ever listen to you again, on any subject. Sexual abusers are the lowest of the low, and never under any circumstances to be allowed to occupy a position of trust ever again.

So if people are accustomed to hearing moral discussions that go like that, it's no wonder that when it comes to discussions about 'sin', they assume the same is true. But this is a grievous misunderstanding of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

In Luke's account of the life of Jesus, he recalls a time when Jesus went for dinner at the house of a prominent religious leader. Midway through the meal a woman enters the room, and approaches Jesus from behind. Then she begins to wash his feet with sweet smelling ointment and her own tears, and dries them with her hair. It's a spectacular act of devotion - an act of love both profound and raw. And all the more so because everyone present knows that the woman is a prostitute. Perhaps because of the way she was dressed, or the way she acted, everyone knew that this woman lived a life characterised by sexual immorality. Indeed a common euphemism for prostitutes at the time was simply "sinner".

We're told that when Jesus' host saw that Jesus allowed the woman to continue touching his feet, he concluded that Jesus must somehow have been the only person in the room who didn't know what this woman did for a living.

If he knew, the host reasoned, there's no way he would have let her touch him.

The host thinks exactly like we do. If Jesus knew that this woman was a sinner, he would want nothing to do with her. And he is exactly wrong. Jesus' attitude could not be more different.

"Her many sins have been forgiven, as her great love has shown." Jesus knows that the woman loves him greatly. And he knows why. She loves him so much because of the great love he has for her - a love he has supremely demonstrated by forgiving her many sins.

Jesus loves sinners. Not for their sin, but despite it. And he enacts that love by offering precious forgiveness, at his own expense, to any sinner who comes to him seeking it. Jesus certainly does draw a boundary line between sin and righteousness; he lived a morally spotless life, and we've already seen the uncompromising nature of his moral teaching.

But then, in his great love, he crosses over that boundary line to come and offer forgiveness to sinful people.

The title of this series of articles has been "What does Jesus think about Homosexuality?" As we've seen, the answer has been that he thinks of it as sexual immorality - as sin. But we can't stop there. We need to ask the next question, "What does Jesus think about sexually immoral people? What does Jesus think about sexual sinners?" And we know because he showed us. He loves them and offers them forgiveness, however many their sins may be. And when sexual sinners, or sinners of every other kind, even sinners who write parish magazine articles, when sinners see that love, they love him too.

Dear Editor,

You said in your editorial letter in the March magazine, Richard's articles on homosexuality have raised interesting feedback and certainly touch on challenging issues. The extract from Bishop Steven's letter that was printed explained some of the discussions held at General Synod and shows that not all Christians hold the same views on this topic, and that is certainly borne out by conversations I have had with people over the years.

I don't think it is particularly helpful to use the magazine to get into a detailed debate about the complex questions and challenges raised. Richard is setting out some of his thinking in his series of 4 articles. Bishop Steven has set out his views in an essay he wrote which is available on the Oxford Diocese website. In it he explains how his understanding has developed and changed over the years, and what he has learnt and come to believe through prayer, listening to others and studying the Bible. He acknowledges that not all Christians will agree with him, and was respectful towards those who hold different views. Whatever each of us have come to believe, through listening to God through prayer and scripture, and through listening to one another, I pray that we will all continue to be prayerful on these matters, and be compassionate and gracious to one another within the Christian family and towards the wider world.

Yours in Christ,
Rosie

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SPRING IS UPON US



CAMEO EVENTS 2023

JAN 19	2 PM	QUIZ
FEB 16	2 PM	BEETLE DRIVE
MAR 16	2 PM	MIXED ACTIVITIES
APR 20	2.30 PM	WHIST DRIVE
MAY 18	2.30 PM	DINGBATS
JUN 15	2.30 PM	BINGO
JUL 20	TBC	OUTING

NO MEETING IN AUGUST

SEP 21	2.30 PM	WHIST DRIVE
OCT 19	2.30 PM	MIXED ACTIVITIES
NOV 16	2.30 PM	BEETLE DRIVE
DEC 14	TBC	CHRISTMAS LUNCH

**EVENTS TAKE PLACE IN THE VILLAGE HALL
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