

ST. MARY'S CHURCH - PURLEY ON THAMES

**

SUNDAY SERVICES FOR JANUARY

See page 3 for full details.

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BAPTISMS Enquiries about baptism should be made to the Rector (941 7727)

WEDDINGS Enquiries about weddings should be made to Jackie Benstead (942 9116)

FUNERALS Enquiries about funerals should be made to the Rector (941 7727)

Dear Friends,

I trust you all had a peaceful Christmas, and I would like to wish each one a very happy new year. Having said that, I am aware that "happiness" is very dependent upon what is *happening* at a particular time. None of us knows what will happen to us - individually, in our families, in the nation and throughout the world in 1998. We may sometimes think we would like to know in advance, but God in His wisdom and mercy has kept it hidden from us. One day's events are enough to cope with at a time. (You can read what Jesus said about the future and not worrying about it, in the New Testament - Matthew 6 vv 25 - 34).

At the end of last year I had the great privilege of a period of Sabbatical Leave. Thanks to the generosity of members of St. Mary's, my wife and I were able to have a wonderful holiday in Switzerland at the beginning of September, and then after a few weeks' study at home, I went off to Israel for a month (see separate article) for a special study tour. I returned at the end of November, feeling the vast change in temperature, to get back to work in time for Christmas. I'd like to thank my colleague, Brendan Bailey, for looking after the parish whilst I was away, and other people who did extra things in my absence.

My period of home study was on the subject of how a person can become acceptable to God. It is a very common viewpoint that it is the quality of our lives -i.e. our behaviour, which makes us good enough for God. If it is, no one can ever be acceptable to God because our way of life falls far short of His standards, and for that matter it very often fails to reach our own standards!

God wants to welcome everybody, but it has to be on *His* terms, not our own. The wonderful truth is - and this is at the heart of the Christian message - that God accepts a person, not because of what we do in life, but because of what His Son Jesus Christ did for us - in His death on the cross. Our part is not to think we can somehow earn our acceptance, but to receive the gift God offers to us through Christ - forgiveness for our shortcomings, and a new life with His enabling presence within.

God offers this free gift to every single person, but sadly it is often ignored or rejected. I wonder if *you* know about it? It makes such a difference to experience His love and presence each day and to know that whatever does happen, nothing will ever be able to separate us from that love.

I don't know what 1998 will bring for you, but the prayer of my heart is that you may discover the peace which only God can give - through Jesus Christ.

SUNDAY SERVICES FOR JANUARY

4th Jan. 9.30 a.m. Family Worship
 11.15 p.m. Morning Worship
 6.00 p.m. Holy Communion

11th Jan. 9.30 a.m. Family Worship
 11.15 a.m. Holy Communion

18th Jan. 9.30 a.m. Holy Communion
 11.15 a.m. Morning Worship
 6.00 p.m. Evening Worship

25th Jan. 9.30 a.m. Family Worship
 11.15 a.m. Holy Communion

RECTOR'S VISIT TO ISRAEL

Coming back to the UK at the end of November with only a short time before Christmas seemed very strange to me, having left for Israel on October 26th. My mind was not at all geared up for the festive season!

My Study Tour was with *Shoresh Tours* - part of the ministry of the Church's Ministry among Jewish People (CMJ) from St. Albans, and it provided an extensive tour of the land. We visited places from the Lebanese border in the north to the Red Sea in the south, from the Mediterranean coast in the west to the River Jordan in the east. Inevitably we visited some of the main tourist sites - Nazareth, Bethlehem and, of course, Jerusalem, but for a lot of the time we were at 'off the beaten track' sites. During the month we stayed overnight in eight different places, including one night in a Bedouin tent in the desert near Arad. Sleep evaded us that night as the Israeli Air Force were having a late-night/early morning Disco in the next tent. The last words of our Guide before we turned in were "Make sure you shake out your shoes in the morning"! Setting aside the noise of the Disco - "*By the Waters of Babylon*" and "*I wanna break free*" etc., I was a little concerned lest an unwelcome visitor should crawl across my pillow during the night! The following morning we arose very early to see sunrise over Masada by the Dead Sea - a memorable sight.

Our itinerary took us to the Golan Heights, looking over into Syria, the Sea of Galilee, including a trip on a "Jesus boat" (a replica of vessels thought to have been in use during Jesus' lifetime on earth), ancient Capernaum, the first Kibbutz - Degania, Qumran and the caves where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in 1947 (here we met the character Steven Spielberg met and who later became Indiana Jones!

We drove south the Red Sea town of Eilat through the barren wilderness and desert and then for three days we hiked in the Red Canyons, the Valley of Zin and other very remote and desolate places. The middle week and the last few days of the trip were spent in the city of Jerusalem. For me, the most impressive places were: the Mount of Olives and especially the church *Dominus Flevit* where Jesus wept over the city, the Southern Wall excavations and particularly the heap of massive stones, thrown down by the Roman army when the city was destroyed in AD70, and the steps leading up the Temple Mount

carved out of bedrock which the Lord Himself may well have used. Going to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre/Church of the Resurrection was a moving experience too. The site has good historical attestation (unlike many of the other traditional sites), and to stand before the place of crucifixion and to see the place where the body of Jesus was laid, was wonderful. On our last Sunday afternoon we went through the Western Wall tunnel and saw the massive stone foundations of the Temple Mount built by Herod the Great in the years before Jesus was born.

All in all the tour gave me the experience of a lifetime and I came home tired, but very glad I went. Needless to say, I felt the great change in temperature here!

Roger Howell

CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

The collection from Children's Society Boxes in the district produced £180, which has been sent off - a good present!

Sybil Pryor

SOUTH AMERICAN MISSION SOCIETY

St. Mary's Church has for some years now had a link with the Church in South America through a family who work for the South American Mission Society. Andy and Mandy Lines and their children live in Paraguay, and they have worked in that country for the past seven years. They have been home on leave for the last few weeks and we shall be welcoming them once again to Purley on Saturday and Sunday, February 7th and 8th. They were last with us about three years ago. Their visit will provide an opportunity to hear what is going on in the Christian Church in a very different part of God's world.

Further information about their visit is available from the Rector.

LUNCH POT

The Spring term starts on Thursday, 8th January. We shall be celebrating our first week of the New Year by serving Black Bun as part of our cake selection. This is a dark cake packed with fruit, nuts, spices and whisky which is traditionally served in Scotland on New Year's Eve. If you've never had it or even if you have, come and try Lunch Pot's version. Why not enjoy a bowl of homemade soup and a filled jacket potato while you are there.

Our termly meeting will be held on Monday, 9th February in the Church vestry at 8.00 p.m. All are welcome to come. Please bring your comments and/or ideas with you.

Don't forget Lunch Pot every Thursday of the term at the Church hall, 11.45 a.m. -1.00 p.m. See you there!

Abi Stinson

REST IN PURLEY?

*"If I should die think only this of me
there is some corner of a Reading graveyard that is for ever Purley"*
(apologies to Rupert Brook)

Having heard, not too obviously, of a Special Parish Meeting which questioned the Parish Council's wisdom in planning a graveyard behind Beech Road, I went along to press the case for this much needed facility for the village (St. Mary's churchyard now being full). I was dismayed by the NIMBY attitudes which hid behind excuses about the unsuitability of a graveyard near a children's playground. The children who choose to play around St. Mary's churchyard seem happy enough to do so! I was deeply moved by one gentleman whose dying wife's wish is that she could be buried in her village for her children's sake. Alas, the vote at the meeting supported the objection, and if it causes the council to re-think she will be deprived of that last wish.

The problem is that, after years of searching, all other sites have proved unavailable or prevented by rules of the Environmental Agency. Do villagers want to be buried (or have their ashes scattered) in Reading? It looks as though they may have no option. Those at the meeting were but a small proportion of residents. The most vocal were those who, by their youth, probably view the prospect as too far off to worry about just yet. Is that to be believed to be the voice of the village? The Parish and higher Councils need to know what is the true public vote, and the best way for them to find out is for villagers to write to them. If you would prefer eventually to rest in Purley, you need to say so now, in writing, to the Clerk of the Council, or your chance may be lost for ever! Please do write to him - Mr. R.D. Fullbrook, 28 Fontwell Drive, Tilehurst RG30 4QR.

Mrs. J. Brown

PURLEY MEMORIAL HALL ACTIVITIES FOR THE COMING MONTH

14th Jan.	7.30 p.m.	Women's Institute
21st Jan.	8.00 p.m.	Horticultural Society Meeting

Mrs. J.E. Hutchings (984 3809)

BARGAIN CORNER

Cedar wood lean-to greenhouse with glass. 8' wide x 6' deep. Dismantled. In good condition. Buyer collects. **£55.00** **Tel: 942 0067**

KEEP FIT CLASS

A safe, enjoyable, effective exercise class takes place every Wednesday, 7.30 - 8.30 p.m. at Long Lane Primary School. Something different every week. Any queries please phone Andrea Turner on 01491 825910.

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Sorry to say can't give an account on the December meeting/Christmas Party because it hadn't taken place when this article was written. Christmas festivities will be safely tucked under your belt by now, plus extra inches, so we'll enlighten you on January's programme.

No speaker for this month, so we'll entertain ourselves as only Purley W.I. know how. It will be a members meeting at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 14th January, in the Memorial Hall, so if you care to join us plenty of laughs will be available.

The competition for those dying to indulge will be "A Favourite Christmas Decoration" and the stall will be a Bring and Buy (you must have received something at Christmas you don't need from Auntie Elsie!). Come on ladies dig deep.

Sylvia Conquest

BARGAIN CORNER

Exercise Cycle, Weider XR 560 C. Very good condition.

£25.00

Tel: 941 5301 (after 7 p.m.)

Happy New Year to everyone at Playgroup. A warm welcome to all our new children and to the children who have already been with us for a time.

The Christmas Fair, held in conjunction with Purley Infant School, was a great success. It was good to see so many of our children there. We also held our annual play and Christmas Party last month. The children who attend the Playgroup are 3 and 4 years of age yet they were wonderful actors and actresses in the story of the Nativity. Everyone had fun at the Christmas Party and it is a great way to finish the year.

Now we are ready to start the new term. We shall continue with the theme of the Alphabet. We were up to "J" before we started the Christmas celebrations. The children love to bring something from home to show on the display table. We have one letter of the alphabet each week, long enough to grasp the concept, but not get fed up with it.

The Playgroup accepts Certificates of Eligibility, which means that children aged 4 and over have free education each session. We provide a different session for these children, on Friday mornings. Here we offer a more structured session in preparation for school, suitable for the older child. This is in addition to their usual sessions.

Purley Playgroup is a popular and successful place for Pre-School children. With this in mind, if you have just moved to the area, or have young children, please contact the Supervisor, Sue Slade, on 941 0778. Your children's names can then go on the waiting list to ensure a place at the appropriate time.

Calendar of Events

5th January	Spring Term begins
14th February	Half-Term
23rd February	New Term Starts
4th April	End of Term

Annie Thorpe

REVIEW OF 1997 SEASON

A busy and successful season was celebrated at the recent Annual Presentation Evening held at Purley Sports and Social Club.

Excellent League results ensured that the Saturday 1st XI finished as Champions of Division 1 of the Hewlett Packard Berkshire League and gain promotion to the Premier League. Not to be overshadowed, the Saturday 2nd XI finished as runners-up in the 2nd XI Premier Division.

The two Sunday sides too fulfilled full fixture lists with good performances and results being achieved.

The Club emphasis on Youth Cricket started to bear fruit during 1997 with an Under-11 team competing well in a League comprising teams from much larger clubs than ourselves, and older Colts starting to perform well in adult Sunday Cricket.

1997 AWARDS

Saturday 1st XI

Batsman of the year: Frank Springer
Fitzgibbon

Bowler of the year: Delroy Hay

Player of the year: Len Vallard

Saturday 2nd XI

Batsman of the year: John

Bowler of the year: Mark Nash

Player of the year: Alan Schofield

Sunday 1st XI

Batsman of the year: Jeff Hinds

Bowler of the year: Jeff Hinds

Player of the year: Barry Hall

Sunday 2nd XI

Batsman of the year: Eddie Brown

Bowler of the year: Stefan Atkins

Player of the year: Hayden Wheeler

Young Player of the Year: Mark Nash
Colt of the Year: Paul Reber

For 1998 we look forward to further developing the Club. An Artificial Wicket has now been installed which will help us widen adult and colt cricket opportunities, including running a Midweek Evening team in a Reading League.

If you are interested in participating in the Cricket Club in any way (Colts, Adults Playing, Umpiring, Scoring or just watching), new members are always welcome!

Please contact:

Martin Bishop (942 7142) or

Brian Smith (984 3653)

GARDENER'S CORNER

This month we have some more readers' questions and a look at what's new in the 1998 seed catalogues from the major suppliers.

Readers' Questions

The first question originates from the recent Houseplant care section which I included a couple of months ago. In that article I said that when watering Saintpaulias (African Violets) that you should keep the leaves and crown dry by watering from the base of the plant. The question raised is "If this action is to be followed, then how can pests be dealt with if they attack the plant without spraying?"

The answer is to use one of the many proprietary insecticide sticks now available which, when placed in the soil, release their chemical in a controlled manner. The insecticide is then taken up by the plant and kills the offending pests much as a systemic insecticide spray would. This avoids wetting the leaves and the many problems this can cause. If the infestation is persistent, which can occur with aphid attacks especially in the warmer months, and the stick method fails to control the pest, then a systemic spray can be used in moderation but the plant must be kept out of direct sunlight until the leaves and crown are completely dry.

The other question this month comes from our Editor. Pauline wanted to know how to overwinter geraniums.

This is something I do every year especially with the more attractive leaf coloured varieties. I usually lift them in late October when the first frost has occurred and cut them back to one new shoot at the base of the plant. It is crucial at this stage to allow the pruning cut to dry to help prevent grey mould (botrytis) from setting in and destroying the plant. A spray with Sybol or other similar fungicide will also help.

The plants are potted up in almost dry soiless compost and kept in a frost free greenhouse. They should be checked frequently and any dead foliage removed. If grey mould does occur, remove all infected foliage and stem and spray with the fungicide.

Losses are bound to occur but with this treatment you should keep the majority and have them flower again next season. I tend to use these plants as stock plants rather than in a new bedding display as they tend to get a little woody and straggly after more than one season.

All you need to do is treat the new shoots forming from the base of the plant as cuttings and pot them up in compost containing a good proportion of sand. These cutting should be taken off with a cut just below a leaf joint and their lower leaves removed before planting in the compost. A 2" pot is sufficient or you can put up to 5 around the edge of a 5" pot. These will soon root in the greenhouse and, after potting up individually, will make good bedding plants for the summer display.

I look forward to browsing through the new season's seed catalogues every year but I have noticed this year that some of the main seed companies are a little short of newer varieties. The exception, however, must be Fothergills whose move is to cater for the plant enthusiast and also to champion the revival of the more uncommon potato varieties both from this country and overseas is a revelation. If you're a committed potato grower, then their "Just for the Taste" potato catalogue is for you. Over 50 varieties are listed from the commonplace to the rare and all at reasonable prices.

The enthusiasts' catalogue cover features the new "Tower" series Aquilegias which are quite stunning. Another plant which caught my eye was the new Delphinium "New Century Green Expectations". This plant comes in a range of shades `with the accent on flowers incorporating different shades of green, including an occasional almost green flower'. If you like unusual climbers, then you should try Ipomoea nil `Muraski Jishi'.

This is a lovely semi-double with rich purple-blue flowers marked with white picotee edging.

Dobies new vegetable seeds for 1998 all fit on one page of their new catalogue! However, the new French Bean "Rasada" looks a good choice and I was also interested in the new cabbage "Calorsa" which is a cross between Red cabbage and a Savoy. The resulting F1 hybrid is claimed to have the advantage of both in that it has a sweet taste and a crunchy texture. Some supermarkets are already selling a similar cross called 'Colorosa'. I suggest you try one before ordering to see if the claims are really valid.

In the flower section the new Lobelia 'Regatta Blue Splash' is well worth trying. This new variety has larger flowers with a combination of white with a blue throat. It is a semi-trailer and, therefore, ideal for baskets and tubs. The other Dobies offering worth a mention is the new afro-french marigold 'Zenith Red' F1. This marigold has large orange mahogany red double blooms. It would make a superb display with a pastel flowered accompaniment such as peach Nicotiana or pastel coloured petunias.

Suttons have the new Petunia F1 Prism Sunshine both as an easiplant and to grow from seed. This petunia which was developed in Costa Rica has large vibrant yellow flowers which are prominently veined and fade resistant. A good choice with a blue ageratum or similar for beds or baskets. Also featured is a new geranium variety 'Mr. Stripey'. This unique variety has medium sized flower heads which are splashed and speckled with red on a salmon pink background.

Another new variety comes in the form of a bicoloured Salvia called 'Salsa Bicolour'. This variety has salmon, scarlet and rose coloured flowers with white tips. They are required to be early flowering and bushy in growth and, therefore, ideal for growing in containers or tubs.

Finally, if you are keen on growing Dahlias but don't like or have room for the larger varieties, then look out for the new 'Cane' varieties. These plants grow to a maximum of 3ft. high and come as either 'Lemon Cane' or my favourite 'Candy Cane'. All the flowers have white tips which enhance their appearance.

Happy Gardening!

Colin Graves

FROM MY HISTORY NOTEBOOK

A Court Baron of Purley Magna

From medieval times the general administration of a manor was carried out by a Court Baron presided over by the lord's steward (a solicitor) and the homage, who were two men sworn each year; they seemed to have performed duties similar to those of the churchwardens of the parish. The record of only one such Court, held in 1786, has so far been found for the manor of Purley Magna.

In the economic soup of the 18th century many estates up and down the country changed hands and by 1786 Robert Mackreth was Lord of the Manor of Purley Magna, which had been held for over 250 years by the St. John family of Lydiard Tregoze, Wiltshire. A General Court Baron was convened at John Emmon's house called the Red Lyon in Purley on Monday 23 October that year. It was presided over by Mathias Deane, gent., the Steward, and attended by the Homage of John Sherwood and Thomas Martin.

The main business of this Court was to ascertain and record the boundary of the Manor, so, taking with them a number of posts marked with the letters PM (for Purley Magna), the three men set off from the Red Lyon and walked to Warren Shaw on the road to Reading. There they cut a cross on a beech tree before going along the middle of the Turnpike Road to within 60 yards of the Roebuck. Turning into Broom Close they drove their first post into the corner of the field there.

Although the old field names have now gone out of use and the original boundary markers of oak bollards, elm and beech trees, quickset hedges and ditches have long since disappeared, by using old maps, etc. many of the references can still be located. From Broom Close they proceeded clockwise round what seems to be essentially the 19th century parish boundary. Their route took them along the south side of several fields including Upper Hides, Kernham Close and Jordans Pightle to Purley Cross where an old oak bollard appeared to be marked with a cross. This tree has gone, but the boundary bank can still be seen on the east side of Long Lane near Denefield School.

From here the boundary continues west but is far less easy to follow as the land was intermingled with that of Sulham and Whitchurch. The men continued along the left hand side of Eleven Acres, Harry Jarrs Close and Long Lands and went through a gate into Blaze Ground Lane. After passing a "figure with a dial" they entered the south part of Purley Hall and went out of the west door of the house and back on to the Turnpike Road leading to Pangbourne. There they went through the barn, round the house and cart

shed of Marsh Farm and cut through the garden, climbed under a hedge into Down Field until they reached an elm tree marked with a cross.

The western boundary of the manor did not form a continuous line but then consisted of detached portions of fields. Their zig-zag route now mentions a gate opposite Old Man's Lane and fields such as Lady Platt Close, New Mead and Chorley Mead. When they reached the bank of the River Thames they followed the north boundary continuing "half stream and whole way" and included the New Cut and Mapledurham Pound (the lock had only recently been built) until they reached "the second gate under the wood called Warren Shaw". From there they went up on a direct line to the tree marked with a cross where they had commenced their perambulation having driven in a total of 11 posts to mark the boundary.

The Court then went on to deal with some general administration. Philip Lybb Powys, Esq. claimed to hold the manor of Little Purley which lay within the bounds of Purley Magna. Several Copyhold tenancies consisting of a cottage with land had lapsed to the Lord of the Manor by the death of one or more persons by whom the Lease was held. These were now occupied by John Green, William Gutteridge, Benjamin Humphries, William Lookman, John Newbury and the Widows Dench, Haines and Simmonds. John George Liebenrood Esq. owed an annual Quit Rent of 4s. and John Sherwood similarly owed 2s. for Pond House.

On the waste of the manor the Court recorded that there was a pond on Purley Street called Hackmoor Pond; and the greater part of the cottage and garden occupied by Joseph Lambourn and William Sherman were in the road leading to Pangbourne and had been enclosed from the wasteland of the Manor.

Although by the late 18th century the manorial system was over 500 years old and coming to the end of its useful life, this single document tells us something of how Purley Magna had been governed for many hundreds of years. As a precursor of the Parish Council, the Manorial Court also involved the householders of a community with their local government.

Jean Debney

(This article was first published in Purley Parish News in September and October 1983 and has been reproduced by kind permission of Jean Debney).

LAUGHLINES

A member of one synagogue said to a member of another, "Our wonderful rabbi talks daily with the Almighty!"

"How do you know?" asked the other man.

"He told me!"

"He might have been lying."

"Nonsense! - the Almighty wouldn't talk daily with a liar."

PURLEY PARISH NEWS

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I welcome contributions from anyone to this magazine, particularly on local issues and events. Please note, however, I reserve the right to edit contributions to suit space availability. Comments and opinions expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or the P.C.C. of St. Mary's Church, Purley on Thames - sponsors of Purley Parish News.

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This month's magazine is published on **Saturday, 3rd January**. All copy for the February issue must reach me by 15th January and the magazine will be published on **Saturday, 31st January**.

Editor