

ST. MARY'S CHURCH - PURLEY ON THAMES

**

SUNDAY SERVICES FOR THE COMING MONTH

See page 4 for full details.

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Tel: 942 9116

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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)

LETTER FROM THE HONORARY CURATE

MARCH 1999

Dear Friends,

This is my first opportunity to write to you on this page in my new capacity as Honorary Curate at St. Mary's. I won't be new to many of you, who will already know of my connections with Purley for nearly thirty years, fourteen of them serving as a Lay Reader in the church.

For those of you who don't know anything about me, I'm married to John and have one married daughter, Trudie. Professionally, I am a qualified nurse and currently manage an area of community nursing.

Since my ordination last October, I have been serving as a non stipendiary minister (N.S.M.) and Honorary Curate to St. Mary's Church. As you may imagine, the learning curve is very steep. With my background it is, therefore, hardly surprising that, as I write this, my attention is being drawn to the furore surrounding Glen Hoddle's remarks, which suggest that people with disabilities are paying for their sins of a previous life.

"Hero to Zero" read the headlines. "I'll be surprised if he's there at the end of the day" says another official.

Well, I'm sure that whatever he really meant by those remarks, they did little to help or comfort the many people crippled by injury or disease, or to those who care for them.

Why these things happen, why there is pain and suffering are searching questions to which there are no simple answers. Sometimes the answers appear to be relatively clear, perhaps an accident or a natural disaster, but a birth defect or the many physically degenerative diseases are far harder to explain. Perhaps some day we will have the answers, although I very much doubt that the sins of a former life will be amongst them.

At the same time, we cannot ignore the fact that many excesses of modern living including drinking, smoking and over-eating, together with worry, stress, bitterness and the resentments we nurse in our hearts can affect our bodies and our minds.

Jesus knew this which is why we so often read in the gospels of Jesus not only physically healing people but also bringing them forgiveness, freedom from guilt and emotional peace in the process.

Over the years I have met and nursed numerous people with physical disabilities, many of them have been content, creative and happy people, giving me far more than I ever gave to them; many but not all of them were Christians. Conversely, I have also cared for people crippled emotionally by their physical circumstances.

Physical, psychological, social and spiritual health; God is concerned that we should be well in every part of our being, which is why He sent Jesus to draw us closer to Him.

"Hero to Zero" - not God. He won't disappoint you and He'll definitely be there at the end of the day. I wish you His peace.

Jean Rothery

PARISH REGISTERS

Confirmation

3rd February Jon Saverton at St. Stephen's, Upper Basildon

Wedding

23rd January Matthew Holder and Lisa Chandler

Funeral

22nd January Maurice George Lyons (ashes), aged 70 years

SUNDAY SERVICES FOR MARCH

7th March	9.30 a.m.	Family Worship
	11.15 a.m.	Morning Worship
	6.00 p.m.	Holy Communion
14th March	9.30 a.m.	Family Worship
	11.15 a.m.	Holy Communion
21st March	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
	11.15 a.m.	Morning Worship
	6.00 p.m.	Evening Worship
28th March (Palm Sunday)	9.30 a.m.	Family Worship
	11.15 a.m.	Holy Communion
	6.00 p.m.	Special Evening Service and Farewell to Revd. Brendan Bailey

FAREWELL SERVICES

On Sunday, 28th March we shall be saying farewell to Brendan Bailey, Curate of St. Mary's, and his wife Lucy. After a special evening service on this Sunday at 6.00 p.m., there will be some refreshments, during which we can say "goodbye" and express our appreciation for his ministry in the parish. Brendan will be preaching at all services that day. His Institution and Induction at Nettlebed will take place on Tuesday, 4th May at 7.30 p.m.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) will take place on Tuesday, 20th April at 8.00 p.m. at St. Mary's Church. All are welcome to come but, in order to take part in any voting, you have to be on the Church Electoral Roll, the revision period of which is 1st - 30th March. For further information on this, please contact Graham Pearson (984 3070) or the Rector (941 7727).

CHURCH GUIDE

A new edition of the Church Guide - *A History of the Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Purley on Thames, Berkshire* - written by John Chapman in 1988 is now available. It costs £2 and can be obtained from the Rector (941 7727). Proceeds will go

to the Restoration Fund.

DISTRESSED FAMILY

If you discovered that a family grave had been vandalised, how would you feel? Distressed would be too mild a word to use. You would feel hurt and angry about it. You would wonder who could do such a thing.

On Saturday, 31st January two graves were vandalised in the churchyard - both belong to the same family, who still attend to them. Both of the large crosses were pushed over - one being completely smashed, and very likely beyond repair. Quite apart from the cost involved here - probably many hundreds of pounds - this senseless action has brought distress to the family and left the churchyard looking very untidy. **The police have been informed about this.**

THE CHURCHYARD IS NOT A PLAYGROUND - ANY CHILDREN FOUND HERE WILL COME UNDER SUSPICION AND MAY WELL FIND THEMSELVES IN TROUBLE.

Many of the gravestones are very heavy and could easily break limbs. **There will be an accident here before long**, but it could be prevented if children kept away from the churchyard altogether. Roger Howell, Rector

AUCTION OF PROMISES

On **Saturday, 5th June** St. Mary's is holding an Auction of Promises in aid of the Restoration of the Bells and associated works. Make a note of the date and watch for further details in next month's Purley Parish News. We shall be glad to receive any items for auction, e.g.

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| * using talents and skills | * hand-made items |
| * baby-sitting services | * wine |
| * holidays | * provision of meals |
| * cakes | * gardening services |
| * house decorating (external and internal) | * etc. etc. |

The idea is that people offer things (large or small) to us, for which others make bids and the money raised goes towards the Restoration Project. You can help us to get this work done on the church as soon as possible by offering us items for the Auction of Promises, and coming to the event and bidding for them.

St. Mary's Church has been here since before the twelfth century. Help us to make sure it stays here for future generations. IF YOU CAN HELP IN ANY WAY, CONTACT ROGER HOWELL AT THE RECTORY (941 7727).

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES

Palm Sunday (March 28th)

9.30 a.m. Family Worship

11.15 a.m. Holy Communion

6.00 p.m. Special Evening Service and Farewell to Revd. Brendan Bailey

Maundy Thursday (April 1st)

8.00 p.m. Holy Communion (A remembrance of the Last Supper)

Good Friday

10.30 a.m. Procession of Witness in Pangbourne (An All Churches Together event)

2.00 p.m. The Last Hour (A quiet hour of hymns and meditation to remember the last hour of Christ's life)

Easter Day

10.30 a.m. Easter Communion for all the family

6.00 p.m. Evening Service

**JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS, BUT BROKE THE POWER OF DEATH IN HIS
RESURRECTION - NOW ALIVE FOR EVERMORE!**

We invite you to come and join us this year

Tickets (£2 adults/£1 children) can be obtained from Jean Howell, Lorna Herring or Sheila Adnett. Everyone welcome! Come and refresh yourself with a lunch to help us **spring** into action by supporting the building fund. There will also be a Bring and Buy Table to increase funds.

The appetising menu will be:

- Baked potatoes with baked beans or grated cheese
- Soup with crusty bread and butter
- Ploughman's lunch

Latest date for buying tickets - Sunday, 7th March 1999.

PURLEY PRE-SCHOOL

We are now well settled into our Spring term, having welcomed 10 new children and a new member of staff, Mrs. Ann Hatchett, to the group.

Our current theme is the alphabet, covering one letter each week. We have an interest table with objects, photos and pictures. Our 'making' table and as many activities as possible are connected to the relevant letter. The alphabet is the basis of all learning and this is a very good way of learning through play. Our 4+ group have covered alphabet and number topics and are currently working on personal and family projects.

We recently had a visit from PC Limebear. He introduced himself to the children and they enjoyed looking around his police van.

In February we had our annual Social Services Inspection. We are required by law to be inspected to ensure we are maintaining the standards set by Social Services to operate as a Pre-School Group. The Day Care Adviser from West Berkshire spent the morning with us and we passed the inspection with a good report.

Sue Slade

DO YOU PLAY BRIDGE?

If so, why not join us at Upper Basildon on a Wednesday evening. All standards welcome. For further information, contact Pam on 984 2651 or Cazzie on 984 2942 (after 15th March).

Miss G. Heemskerck

PURLEY (BERKS) TENNIS CLUB

The new season is getting under way at the Tennis Club. To find out more about membership, come to our Open Afternoon on Saturday, 10th April, 2-4 pm, or ring Trevor Plowman on 941 9864 or Jane Perugia on 984 3932.

Various coaching courses are being organised for both juniors and adults, starting in the Easter holidays and continuing through the summer, and there are matches for the more competitively-minded.

Adult club sessions are Wednesday afternoons from 2 pm throughout the year, and Thursday evenings from 6.30 pm as soon as it's light enough!

Jane Perugia

DISTRICT NOTES

Since I last wrote we have had information from the Government that they will give us another £1.1M in grant. This will be absorbed entirely by funding the teachers higher than expected pay settlement and saving services that would otherwise have had to be cut so it will have no effect on the level of Council tax.

We approved the tax base a few weeks ago - this confirms the number of houses in various categories and is used to calculate how the Council tax will be distributed. The figures are interesting because they tell you about the distribution of housing in the area:-

Parish	No. of houses in each Band								Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	
Pangbourne	13	54	151	388	228	134	180	70	1218
Purley on Thames	30	42	170	342	417	425	131	5	1562
Tidmarsh/Sulham	3	0	6	27	31	27	81	16	191
Tilehurst	274	168	1048	2506	879	478	225	12	5590

A capital scheme for Long Lane School was approved which will provide extensions to the administration area and eventually an extra classroom. Denefield also have been successful in a bid to the Funding Agency for a new teaching block which will cost about £1M. This is the last capital money to come out from the Agency as from next year it will all have to come from West Berkshire. It will mean a slight increase in the numbers of pupils admitted each year for both schools.

Within the next few weeks everyone will be getting a new A-Z of Council services through their letter boxes. Please let me know whether you think this is useful.

I have had several calls recently about failed street lights. It is very helpful if people can phone Babbie (our agents) directly and tell them when they see a street light not working properly - their number is 975 8844. Alternatively call me and I will pass the message along (942 6999).

I notice going around that many people have hedges with sharp branches sticking out over the pavement - please make sure you get these cut back lest someone's eye gets poked out.

John Chapman,
Councillor for Purley, Sulham and Tidmarsh

PANGBOURNE AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY LUNCH

16th March, 12.30 - 2.00 p.m. at The Dorman Rooms, Horseshoe Road, Pangbourne

Anyone living in the local community is welcome to join us. PC Colin Palmer, Area Beat Officer, and Sgt. Chris Clement-Green, Sector Problem Solving Manager, of Thames Valley Police are joining us for lunch and will be happy to answer any questions on policing in the area and issues that concern local residents. They would also like to discuss ways of working closer with the local community.

If you would like lunch, the cost will be £2 in cash on the day.

Please let Anne Stone, Flowers Court, Coach House, Tidmarsh Road know by the 12th March if you will need lunch. Otherwise, just come along.

Sarah Ward,
Rural Community Care Worker

HOME-START WEST BERKSHIRE

Who we are:

A local scheme, Home-Start West Berkshire is a voluntary organisation. We offer a home visiting scheme to families with pre-school children. Our volunteers befriend families, offering regular support and practical help.

What we do:

Is recruit and prepare volunteers who are then 'matched' with a family they can help. The short preparation course is friendly and informal. It covers many topics which a volunteer would make use of, such as the ethics of visiting people in their own homes, understanding relationships and child protection issues.

What you can do:

We are looking for volunteers of all ages, from all backgrounds. Are you sympathetic? A good listener? Would you be prepared to spend a few hours each week helping a struggling young family? Could you pass on your own parenting skills and knowledge? If you can answer yes, or would like more information, then please contact: Lynn Hancock or Megan Danvers on 01635 528202 or write to them at 5A The Broadway, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 1AS.

COTTAGE TO LET

Country cottage Brittany/Normandy borders, self-catering, sleeps 5/7. Half-hour from Mont St. Michel, half-hour from St. Malo, one and a half hour's drive from Cherbourg. Available June and September. Enquiries to Della Davies on 942 7919.

1st PURLEY ON THAMES SCOUTS

By popular demand 1st Purley on Thames Scout Group have an Auction of Promises on Friday, 26th March, 7.30 for 8.00 pm at The Barn, Beech Road, Purley. Local auctioneer, Simon Jones of Simmons & Sons, Henley will be selling off wonderful lots such as a trip round Wembley Stadium. All are welcome. Please come.

PURLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

The Spring Show is growing closer - and we're looking forward to lots of entries this year. So have a go. New exhibitors are very welcome and there's plenty of people to help with any queries you might have (contact me and I'll put you in touch). There's cookery and handicraft classes as well, if gardening isn't your thing. Pick up a schedule from the Trading Store and we'll see you there.

Don't forget, membership renewal is due shortly.

Events coming up:

Wed. 17th March Evening Talk - "The Flora and Fauna of the Rockies" by V.J. Scott

Sat. 10th April Spring Flower Show - schedules are available from the Trading Store

Wed. 21st April Evening Talk - "How to Win with Houseplants" by Harry Townsend

Sat. 15th May Plant Sale, 9.00 a.m. in the Memorial Hall car park

The Trading Store is open every Saturday and Sunday from 10.00 - 11.00 a.m. and is situated at the end of the Memorial Hall car park.

A ticket giving a reduction in the entry price to Wisley and other RHS gardens is available. Contact me for details.

If you have any queries about the Society, please call me on 962 4457.

Anne Stockley,
Secretary

PURLEY ON THAMES PARISH COUNCIL

At the Parish Council meeting held on the 21st January, the Council considered estimates of income and expenditure for the year 1999/2000. After considerable discussion, the Council agreed to request West Berkshire Council to collect a sum of £43,027 in 1999/2000 which is some £1,366 less than in 1998/1999.

Consideration was given to filling the casual vacancy caused by the resignation of Mrs. Denise Rees, and Mrs. Susan Kelly of 43 Beech Road, Purley on Thames, was co-opted to fill the vacancy. The Council is awaiting authority from the Returning Officer before it can co-opt to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr. Peter Farrow.

The Council considered tenders for the laying out of the new cemetery at Beech Road and resolved that the contract be placed with Agricultural and Estate Services of Reading.

The Architects have been instructed to draw up the contract documents. Since Tilehurst Parish Council have declined to contribute towards the scheme at the present time, only residents of the civil parish of Purley on Thames will be entitled to the standard rates for burial and cremation. Any person residing outside the parish who might desire to be buried in the new cemetery will be charged at three times the standard rate.

The Council agreed to make grants to Purley C of E School, Long Lane School, Purley Memorial Hall, Purley Pre-School, Westwood Farm Junior School, 1st Purley on Thames Scouts and Purley Barn Youth Club. These grants are made annually upon application to the Council and are intended to encourage local organisations.

R.D. Fullbrook

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

The February meeting was very well attended, with a lot of visitors coming to hear Mr. Callan talking about English silver. He brought a good selection of spoons, some of them copies, to show us what to look for, and then he went through the spoons brought by members, with Mrs. Ethel Brenchley's husband's Christening Spoon considered most interesting, with a pretty fluted caddy spoon belonging to Mrs. Maureen Corke second.

Plans were made for the Spring Council Meeting at the Hexagon on Thursday, 18th March, the speaker Anne Mustoe "Around the World on a Bike", Purley to do the raffle. The group meeting will be on 27th May. Three of our members have done very well at a local Flower Arranging Club, which should make things look good at the Horticultural

Society/W.I. Spring Show in the Memorial Hall on Saturday, 10th April. Lots of crafts and baking in the W.I. section and fun to enter if you like that sort of thing - and huge pots to be won!

Mrs. Irene Smith and Mrs. Mollie Riddell won first and second places in the Flower of the Month competition. Our next meeting is the AGM on Wednesday, 10th March, 7.30 p.m. at the Memorial Hall. Don't forget to bring back the trophies for this year's winners!

Sybil Pryor

THAMES VALLEY POLICE

Well firstly I'd like to say hello to you all and thank my predecessor, PC 'Tiny' Welford, for spending a few days introducing me to some of you. I will, of course, get around to meeting many more of the residents of Purley and Tilehurst (West) in the coming months. Please, however, feel free to say hello if you see me on my bicycle in your street.

A little bit about myself

I am originally from South Wales and presently living near Basingstoke, Hampshire. I have been a policeman for 10 years now and have worked in various places in the Thames Valley Police Area, High Wycombe, Marlow and a couple of years with the Underwater Search Unit as a Police Diver up until July last year. Then I arrived at Pangbourne and have been working on shifts as a Patrolling Officer since. I have previously worked as an Area Beat Officer, both in High Wycombe and Marlow, two very different towns. I am a keen rugby player and represent my village team (unfortunately some of you will suffer my rugby talk occasionally, so I apologise in advance!).

Future Newsletters

I intend to inform you of the crimes that are committed in our area, but I propose to reduce the number of crime categories/offences that previous newsletters have included, i.e. only the most common day to day crimes will be included in the newsletter, such as Burglary, Thefts, Criminal Damage and Violent Crimes. Should anyone have views on this, then please contact me. I will, however, mention any crimes that have occurred that I feel will be of interest/value to you or are unusual.

In the near future I hope to get around and meet an array of people, Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators, Parish Councillors, Shopkeepers, Schools and many more! So please bear with me - it will take a little time.

If you wish to contact me, then I can be reached at Pangbourne Police Station on 953 6605. You can leave a message and I will get back to you as soon as I can.

Just a quick reminder - please be vigilant!

Keep your garage/shed locked when not using it. Don't leave mountain bikes around in your garden or out the front of your house - they will be stolen! If you are not using it, put it away or someone will take it! If you see someone acting suspiciously, please report it to us. Obtain as much detail as possible, such as clothing etc.

A reminder from the DVLA, **car tax dodgers!** If your vehicle is untaxed, then take it off the road. Otherwise, offending vehicles will be reported to the DVLA. If your vehicle is in a dangerous condition, or parked on the pavement, then please remove it. Well, that's all for now.

Best wishes, PC209 Limebear, Pangbourne

PURLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

In the Autumn of 1995, the Committee of Purley Women's Institute started making plans to celebrate the Institute's 60th Birthday in 1996. I was secretary of Purley W.I. at the time and one thing puzzled me; although the members were adamant the Institute was formed in 1936, the date in the W.I. Yearbook was 1937. I thought I had better do some checking, so I telephoned the Berkshire Federation office at Mortimer to clarify the matter. The secretary there was a bit put out, as she thought we really should know the year our Institute was started but, when I explained that the Yearbook date was different from our records, she said she would investigate and ring me back.

When she rang, she was quite excited because she had found the original minutes of the first meeting of Purley W.I. and, apparently, it is very rare to find such documents. The confusion over the date had arisen because, although the first meeting was held in September 1936, the papers setting out the formation of the Institute and the notification of the Officers were not sent to the National Federation until January 1937. The formation date is always when the N.F.W.I. receive this information.

The Federation Secretary promised to send me copies of the documents and these duly

arrived a few days later. I learned that, in March 1936, Lady Rucker saw Miss Palgrave, who was against organising a preliminary meeting as the Rector, Mr. Skuse, felt the formation of a W.I. in the area would kill off the Mother's Union. However, a number of residents who had been W.I. members in other areas were keen that Purley should have its own Institute and, in June 1936, Lady Rucker met Miss Palgrave and Mrs. Hodgkin, who agreed to be President if nominated. On July 17th a preliminary meeting was taken by Mrs. Trench and Lady Rucker and several Pangbourne members now living in Purley attended. The formation meeting was arranged for September 16th and Mrs. Hodgkin was elected President.

In 1940 the Institute's minutes record a number of difficulties:

- 1) No black-out - offers were made of a committee of three to do it
- 2) No money - balance was £3.11s.0d.
- 3) No transport for speakers

The President, still Mrs. Hodgkin, said it was unfair for members to pay another 2s. but all said they were willing. Various members spoke in favour of carrying on, everyone was nominated for Committee and eleven were elected! Despite the problems at that time, the Institute survives to this day, although on March 15th 1941, a report on that meeting stated "sleepy President, not too helpful but nice members."

Incidentally, Sybil Pryor, who was President from March 1995 to March 1998, is the great-niece of the late Miss Palgrave and the niece of the late Miss Lister, who organised the games at the first meeting. Sybil's mother was President in 1962.

The subject of a banner for Purley W.I. first arose in November 1947, but it was not until 10 years later in December 1957 that Mr. Eliot Hodgkin donated £10 for a banner as a memorial to his mother Mrs. J. Hodgkin who had served as President of the Institute for sixteen years. The banner was designed by Mr. Farrah Bell and a working committee was formed to make it. In June 1958, the completed banner was on show - it had been worked by Mrs. Walden, Mrs. Annetts, Mrs. Harding, Mrs. J. Winters and Mrs. Hem. They received a vote of thanks which also went to Mr. Skidmore for the gift of the cord on the banner and to Mr. Rawlins for making the pole. In May 1959 thanks were conveyed to Mrs. Barnes who had made a holder for the banner.

Ann Betts

LAUGHLINES

Mrs Smithers, you have acute appendicitis
I came here to be treated, not admired, Doctor!

Tuner: I've come to tune your piano,
Mr. Smith: But I didn't send for you.
Tuner: No, your neighbours did.

PURLEY PARISH NEWS

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I welcome contributions from anyone to this magazine, particularly on local issues and events. Contributions can either be delivered in writing or by e-mail. 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, 6th March**. All copy for the April issue must reach me by 15th March and the magazine will be published on Saturday, 3rd April.

Editor