

ST. MARY'S CHURCH - PURLEY ON THAMES

**

SUNDAY SERVICES FOR THE COMING MONTH

See page 4 for full details.

RECTOR

Rev. Roger B. Howell,
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Tel: 941 7727
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HONORARY CURATE

Rev. Jean Rothery,
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LICENSED LAY MINISTER

Wally Watkivs
Tel: 942 6170

CHURCHWARDENS

Jackie Benstead
Tel: 942 9116

David Jordan
Tel: 941 5994

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR & CHURCH HIRINGS

Sally Robertson
Tel: 962 5978

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,

Restoration Project

The Restoration Project at St. Mary's began on 26th April. The first phase of the work will include:

- *Removal of the six 17th century bells and installation of a new steel bell-frame.
- *Repairs to the Tower roof, and stonework.
- *Repairs to the Chancel roof.

This will cost in the region of £111,000. In order to do this work, we have taken out a sizeable loan (£50,000) which has to be repaid over five years. We do not have all the cash required at this stage, so we could do with some help from any interested friends. Last Autumn we held a Gift Weekend for the Purley community which brought in around £8,000. If you missed that and would like to help us, it is not too late. Gifts can be sent to the Rectory, or brought to church any Sunday. Cheques should be made payable to "*St. Mary's Purley PCC*". If you can covenant your gift, so much the better, for then we can reclaim the tax you have paid on that amount. The second phase of the work will deal with the conservation work on the East and West windows, provision of a lightning conductor and the required work on the Listed churchyard monuments. At this stage we don't know when this will be tackled, but we hope to have the whole project completed within the five year period.

The Millennium

Few people seem to know what the Millennium is all about. What comes to mind when **you** hear about it? The Dome, Street parties etc? **The Millennium is a Christian event - celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ 2000 years ago.** OK, I know it is not precisely 2000 years since He came, but that is a minor detail. Twenty centuries ago something happened whose effect on the world has been greater and more far-reaching than any other event in history. God entered the world of time and space. Why? So that we could understand Him and discover the meaning of our existence. The world has seen many great men and women and we rightly remember them. But have you ever thought of the difference between our memory of such people and the reason for remembering Jesus? The great characters of the world are remembered for their lives. Jesus is remembered for His **death!** Why should that be? Because it is through His death on the cross that we can be put in direct touch with God and find the fulfilment God intends for us. None of us will see another Millennium. It would be a great pity not to know the real meaning of it, and a massive loss not to discover in our own lives, the reason for the coming of Christ whose birth we celebrate.

Every day the Millennium draws closer. My prayer for every reader is that you may also get nearer to discovering the reason for the celebration.

P.S. Joining an *Alpha* course is an excellent way of making this discovery. Contact Sally Robertson on 962 5978.

INDUCTION SERVICE AT NETTLEBED

Rev. Brendan Bailey, former Curate of Purley, will be inducted into his new post as Rector of Nettlebed with Bix and Highmoor on Tuesday, 4th May. The service begins at 7.30 p.m. in St. Bartholomew's Church, Nettlebed. If you would like to attend, please contact the Rector.

ASCENSION DAY

On Thursday, 13th May we shall be joining in with the Bradfield Deanery Service at Englefield at 7.30 p.m. in the evening, but there will also be a service of Holy Communion in St. Mary's at 10.00 a.m.

SUNDAY SERVICES FOR MAY

2nd May	9.30 a.m.	Family Worship
	11.15 a.m.	Morning Worship
	6.00 p.m.	Holy Communion

9th May	9.30 a.m.	Family Worship
	11.15 a.m.	Holy Communion

16th May	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
	11.15 a.m.	Morning Worship
	6.00 p.m.	Evening Worship

23rd May	9.30 a.m.	Family Worship
	11.15 a.m.	Holy Communion

RESTORATION WORKS AT ST. MARY'S

By the time you read this, work will have started at the church. You will see that scaffolding has been erected for the renewal of the tower roof and the chancel roof, the six bells dating from the 17th century are being removed and taken away to the Whitechapel Bell Foundry in London for re-tuning.

With building operations in progress, there is danger in the churchyard. We do not want to see any accidents. This can be avoided completely if children do not go into the churchyard. Parents - please help us in this matter. It is of little comfort to be sorry after the event!

PARISH REGISTERS

Baptism

28th March	Francesco Luca Perryman
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Funerals

17th March	Thomas Tanner, aged 75 years (cremation)
29th March	Sandra Rosemary Bradley, aged 57 years (ashes)

ARCHDEACON'S VISITATION

The annual visitation by the Archdeacon of Berkshire will take place at St. Mary's this year on Thursday, 20th May at 8.00 p.m. On this occasion the Churchwardens of the

Deanery are sworn in. We shall be joined this year by the Churchwardens of Newbury Deanery.

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. Selling fast - get your copy now!

100 CLUB

How about joining the 100 Club to help St. Mary's Church with the Restoration Project? The idea is that you organise an event for us to raise at least £100. We need your help to maintain this historic building and get the long-silent bells ringing again in time for the Millennium. Let us know what you are going to do please. **SUPPORT OTHER 100 Club events as they happen!**

Rector

WHAT IS A READER?

It is a question that I have been asked many times. If I had a pound for every time I have answered it, I suspect it would amount to a considerable figure.

The office of Reader has existed in its present form in the Church of England since 1866 and is the only nationally accredited voluntary lay ministry which is governed by Canon law and episcopally licensed by the Bishop.

About four years ago the Oxford Diocesan Readers Association was asked by the Bishops Council to prepare a report on the future of Reader ministry. One of the things that came out in the report was the confusion among congregations and some clergy who only have a vague understanding of the name Reader and the reader's role. In the report it was recommended that readers should be known as Licensed Lay Ministers, a title that would indicate that readers are ministers but not ordained. It would also fit the same pattern of titles currently used, i.e. Non Stipendiary Minister and Ordained Local Minister.

The Bishops Council agreed with this view and Bishop Richard has now notified all Readers in the Diocese that they can, for all purposes in the Diocese, use the title Licensed Lay Minister.

Hopefully this lead by the Oxford Diocese will be taken on board by other Dioceses through the Central Readers Conference which have prevaricated about changing the title

for many years. So, from now on I will be known as

Wally Watkivs, Licensed Lay Minister

MILLENNIUM PANTOMIME

Now the curtain has fallen on the successful St. Mary's Old Tyme Music Hall evenings, it is time to consider raising it again for another show.

This event will be the production of a pantomime, to be staged in The Barn, Beech Road, from 4th - 8th January 2000 inclusive. It is hoped that all the groups and societies within the village will be represented. The profits from this "spectacular" will assist in the restoration of the large east window over the altar at St. Mary's, the repair cost of which is estimated at £8,500.

Already offers of help for the pantomime have been gratefully received, and a number of people have expressed an interest in acting parts, of which there will be approximately fifty. Auditions will take place on 6th September at 7.30 p.m. in St. Mary's Church Hall for adults wishing to participate. Young people with specific talents will be auditioned at a later date, to be announced in a future edition of Purley Parish News.

Purley Parish Council has kindly agreed to the provision of The Barn for the production, free of all charges, as its contribution towards the Church Restoration Fund.

ARTHRITIS RESEARCH CAMPAIGN

Mr. & Mrs. Verey will be opening their gardens to the public at Little Bowden, Pangbourne on Sunday, 23rd May from 2.00 p.m. As usual, they are kindly allowing the Pangbourne ARC Branch to serve teas. Please do come and join us, and enjoy the magnificent rhododendrons and azaleas and, of course, our home-made cakes.

I would like to make an appeal for members of the ex-service community to join the soldiers, sailors, airmen and families association and help us in its work to serve ex-services people in time of need.

Our volunteers are getting fewer and older and, unless we can bring new blood into our Division, inevitably it will wither and be unable to carry out its mission. Anyone interested in joining our ranks would be sure of a warm welcome. Please call Flight Lieutenant K.S. Tipping RAFVR on 957 3393 (Tuesday and Thursday 1000 - 1200) - S.S.A.F.A. Brock Barracks, Oxford Road, Reading RG3 1HW.

Anne Bolam (942 1020)

WOMEN WALKERS WANTED

Do you like walking during the week?

Would you like to walk with others for company/safety?

Would you like to meet with a group regularly to walk a variety of walks in and around our beautiful area, and sometimes further afield?

Would you sometimes like to share lifts to the starting point?

Would you sometimes like to end a walk with an optional pub lunch or picnic?

Have you answered Yes to many of these questions?

Then ring Nicki Woodward on 941 3197 who would like to start such a group based in

Purley.

ROTARY CLUB OF PANGBOURNE

Summer Paintings Exhibition and Sale by Local Artists

For only £1 you could support local artists and local charities!! The Rotary Club of Pangbourne will be holding the second exhibition and sale of paintings by local artists on Saturday, 5th June from 10 am to 6 pm and Sunday, 6th June from 10 am to 4pm at Pangbourne Village Hall. Admission is £1. Refreshments will be available.

Last year the event was a resounding success, being very well supported by the local artists and the general public. Over 300 paintings were on display by more than 80 local artists, mainly from West Berkshire and South Oxfordshire. There was a good representation from the Reading Guild, Newbury Art Club and also from Mortimer, Pangbourne, Purley, Goring, Tilehurst, and Wallingford.

About £1,800 was raised, which was donated to local charities, such as the annual Senior Citizens' Christmas Party and the mentally handicapped. The proceeds from this year's event will again be donated to local charities.

Paintings on display were generally of a high standard and included watercolours etc. More than 70 paintings were sold during the exhibition to a value of about £4,500. A number of artists exhibiting for the first time were successful in achieving sales.

For further information about this event, please contact Harry Lloyd on 984 2820 or Cliff Meredith on 984 3721.

Cliff Meredith, Public Relations Officer

PANGBOURNE CHORAL SOCIETY

Our 25th Anniversary concert is on Sunday, 23rd May at 7.30 p.m. at Pangbourne College. We will be singing Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's "Hiawatha's Wedding Feast", Borodin's Choral Dance "Prince Igor" and Parry's "Blest Pair of Sirens". Advance tickets will be available, as usual from the college and Percy Stone Ltd. in Pangbourne.

John Talbot (932 3476)

BARGAIN CORNER

Two sapele doors, 78" x 30", good condition. Free for collection.

Tel: 942 9630

PURLEY ON THAMES PARISH COUNCIL

At the recent meeting of the Parish Council, the meeting co-opted Mr. Richard Farrow of Long Lane, Tilehurst, to the Council to fill the casual vacancy. There is now a full complement of thirteen councillors.

The Council was pleased to welcome PC Limebear, the new beat officer for the area, to a Council meeting. PC Limebear explained just how his duties would apply to Purley on Thames and he reminded members that all incidents of vandalism etc. should be reported. He also explained that certain changes were to take place in the organisation of police in this area.

The Chairman reported on a meeting he had attended on the future of the Social Services Day Centre at present located in Theale. With these premises now no longer available, West Berkshire Council had approved the development of a Day Centre in the eastern part of the District. It was possible that Tilehurst Parish Council would be making land available for such a development.

The Council was pleased to learn that Mapledurham Estate had given permission for a "kissing gate" to be erected at River Gardens. The order for the work had been placed and the gate will be erected shortly.

The Council would shortly be dispatching a draft booklet to local organisations in which each organisation would be asked to outline its proposals for celebrating the Millennium. A final booklet will be published by the Council. It was agreed that The Barn and Beech Road Recreation Ground would be made available to local organisations over the weekend of 16th - 19th June 2000 for the purposes of presentations, exhibitions, fund raising etc., and there would be no charges for the use of these facilities.

It is anticipated that work on the laying out of the new cemetery at Beech Road would commence in early April with completion scheduled for early June. The Parish Council is currently considering draft rules for the administration of the cemetery and a set of fees and charges. If the work proceeds according to programme, the cemetery would be consecrated at the end of June.

The Council has agreed to locate 'dog litter bins' at a number of sites in the parish and it is hoped that dog owners will co-operate by appropriate use of the bins.

R.D. Fullbrook

PURLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

The Spring Flower Show took place in April - this year's cup winners were:

Springs Farm Perpetual Cup - **Mr. J. Armstrong**
(awarded for most points in Flowers & Floral Arts Section)

Springs Farm Perpetual Cup - **Mrs. J. Fagan/Mr. G. Critchell**
(awarded for most points in Cookery & Handicrafts Section)

The annual plant sale is on Saturday, 15th May starting at 9.30 a.m. in the Memorial Hall car park.

The annual coach excursion this year is on Sunday, 11th July to Brook Cottage and Coughton Court. Details and application forms are available from the Trading Store.

A ticket to allow entry to RHS Wisley at a 30% discount is available to members. Please contact me for details.

The Trading Store is open every Saturday and Sunday from 10.00 - 11.00 a.m. If you have any queries about the Society, please contact me on 962 4457.

Anne Stockley, Secretary

HOLIDAY APARTMENT TO LET

Our apartment is on Menorca, the quieter of the Balearic Islands. The island is beautiful and unspoilt. The apartment is centrally located in well established gardens, sleeps five and is well equipped. It is on the lower floor with only one apartment above. There is a large swimming pool. If you would like more details and photos, please call me on 0966 44 8445 or tel/fax 984 4504.

PURLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

We were more than happy to welcome new members to our meeting and delighted to see the return of those who had been unwell. We congratulated ourselves on the many prizes and places we gained at this year's Spring Horticultural Show. Thanks go to the helpers for setting up and assisting the judges. Children and grandchildren of our members proved very successful and bowled us over with their inhibited designs. The Horticultural Society are holding their yearly Plant Sale and we will double up with a stall - "Cakes-are-Us". See you there (Purley Memorial Hall car park) on Saturday, 15th May, 9 am - 12 noon.

Our speaker last month, Judy Heath, spoke on Chiropractic - The McTimoney Way. John McTimoney, an engineer, one hundred years ago felt that we should treat the body as a whole. With gentle working over the body by hand, pain can be relieved. The aim of chiropractic is to maintain the correct alignment of the spine, thus ensuring that your body's nerve supply works efficiently.

The Flower Competition was won by Edna Bint with Marion Dabbs and Pam James in second place. The Three Biscuit Competition was won by Kath Hodge (thanks for your amusing poem that accompanied the biscuits) with Mollie Riddell in second place.

This month's meeting will be Resolutions. The competition will be "Paper Hat" and there will be a plant stall. It will take place at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 12th May at Purley Memorial Hall. Visitors always welcome.

Sylvia Conquest

P.S.I dare say many of you read in the national newspapers of the 'calendar' that W.I. ladies in the Midlands had promoted. I "barely" know how to talk about it! Can I say that the Jam & Jerusalem reputation has been severely knocked on the head! Thank goodness.

The Friends of the Pang and Kennet Valleys has been set up to represent all the people who care for the countryside of the Pang and Kennet Valleys. The events below are co-ordinated by "The Friends" and give you an opportunity to come out on practical conservation tasks, walks and talks, meet new people and, above all, enjoy yourself.

For all outdoor events please wear suitable footwear and clothing. Practical tasks start at 10 am and usually finish around 4 pm, unless otherwise stated, so bring a packed lunch. All tools are provided. For more details, contact Heather Campion on 930 5335.

For events at Rushall Manor Farm - off Back Lane between Stanford Dingley and Bradfield, take the gravel track north off Back Lane to the west of Scratchface Lane, Grid Ref. SU 583723.

Tuesday, 11th May

Kissing Gate

Stanford Dingley

We will be helping Simon Barnett, Parish Paths Officer, to install a new kissing gate in Stanford Dingley. Meet at the Black Barn, Rushall Manor Farm, Bradfield at 10.00 a.m.

Sunday, 16th May Guided Walk Ashampstead

Enjoy a 3-mile walk learning about the history and conservation management of Ashampstead Common, with the author of "The Commons of Ashampstead", Dick Greenaway. Meet at the car park to the east of the common, at the junction of the Yattendon, Bradfield and Pangbourne roads (SU587751) at 2.00 p.m.

Sunday, 23rd May Barn Owl Boxes Hamstead Marshall/Kintbury To help with the KVCP Barn Owl come and help us erect a number of boxes to encourage this magnificent bird to breed. Meet at Kintbury Railway Station at 10.00 a.m.

Thursday, 27th May Flyfishing Talk Newbury

A walk along a stretch of the River Lambourn with experienced flyfisherman, Ian Hockley, looking at all aspects of flyfishing including river management, the best places to find fish and the wonderful variety of flies to use. Meet outside Shaw Social Club off Dolman Road, Newbury at 7.15 p.m.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Are we the only people living in Purley who are absolutely DISGUSTED by the amount of dog excrement that is to be found around the highways and byways of the local area? Going out for a family walk is no longer an enjoyable experience but instead has become a constant round of instructing your children to dodge the numerous amounts of mess that have been dumped by the dogs of irresponsible owners.

It would seem that, very often, the only people who actually pick any mess up are those who find themselves in the public gaze! Geographically, there are many areas around Purley that are out of view and, in turn, they become suitable dumping grounds for owners who have no thought to the footwear and health of the general public.

Therefore, as a community, are we simply prepared to put up with this anti-social behaviour and continue to turn what should be pleasant and enjoyable walks into prolonged bouts of HOP-SCOTCH?

Julie Fox, 22 Park Walk

GARDENER'S CORNER

With modern gardens becoming much smaller these days, container gardening is becoming increasingly popular. Plants in containers can also feature in larger gardens where a collection of more tender or ornamental plants can be used to brighten up a patio or act as a centre piece to any garden design.

All sorts of containers can be used. However, it is a good general rule of thumb to initially decide whether the principal attraction is to be the container or the planting. An elaborate urn may only require quiet trailing plants, which will complement, but not obscure its attractiveness. However, a simple plastic container may require planting which almost obscures its shape to form a more pleasing display.

The type and composition of the planting in your containers will depend on their winter hardiness. Plastic, polypropylene, imported earthenware or pottery is best taken indoors in winter and can, therefore, only be used for summer display. Winter hardy concrete, stone or metal containers can be left out all year and, therefore, have a more permanent planting scheme. These pots can have a backbone of small shrubs, conifers and foliage plants with space left for seasonal planting to provide all year round colour.

1. Summer Containers

The container opposite is taken from my garden. It is based on a wooden wheelbarrow which provides a good soil depth.

I have used a brilliant red double begonia as a centrepiece and underplanted with pastel impatiens, trailing lobelia (mixed shades) and small flowered trailing fuschias.

Patio planter using a wooden wheelbarrow

I like to have a dramatic centrepiece to my pots such as begonias, fuschias or canna's for example. This next picture, again from my garden, shows a planter using a tall fuschia in this role.

This triangular container, again with good depth, uses a tall orange fuschia "Thalia"

underplanted with a pale yellow variegated abutilon, trailing lobelia and pastel impatiens to give a good dramatic colour effect.

A triangular planter in a patio corner

Fuschias are ideal for these containers as they will flower from soon after planting to the first frosts. Use John Innes No.2 or a good potting compost incorporating slow release fertiliser. Place the containers where they will get some shade during the day.

2. All Year Round Containers

Hardy plants such as dwarf conifers, especially the golden and blue forms, can be used to give the containers height and structure while the evergreen foliage of variegated ivy and winter flowering heathers will provide colour. A few winter flowering cyclamen will add a delicate touch. For spring colour add some crocus and dwarf daffodils or tulips. In the summer, low growing annuals will enhance the container's display such as impatiens, or use trailing geraniums etc. In larger containers, hardy plants such as Bay (trained as a standard), Japanese maples or other shrubs can be used.

If you have an area of deep shade, then brighten this up with a container planted with mahonias, hostas and hellebores.

Happy Gardening,
Colin Graves

You can contact me at my E-mail address: colin@graves2.freeserve.co.uk or at 2 The Hydes, Tilehurst RG31 6GD.

For more gardening information, see my website: graves2.freeserve.co.uk

PSALM 23 FOR BUSY PEOPLE

*The Lord is my pace-setter, I shall not rush
He makes me stop and rest for quiet intervals.
He provides me with images of stillness, which
restore my serenity.*

*He leads me in the way of efficiency through
calmness of mind;
And His guidance is peace.*

*Even though I have a great many things to
accomplish each day*

I will not fret, for His presence is here.

*Its timelessness, its all-importance, will keep me
in balance.*

*He prepares refreshment and renewal in the midst
of activity*

*By anointing my mind with His oils of tranquillity,
My cup of joyous energy overflows.*

*Surely harmony and effectiveness shall be the
fruits of my hours.*

*For I shall walk in the pace of my Lord,
And dwell in His house for ever.*

LAUGHLINES

Somerset amateur actor John Bliss said "I leave my skull to the Crewkerne Players, in the hope that its appearance on stage during public performances may attract more favourable criticism than I did while appearing alive."

A Kent man said in his will "To my first wife, Sue, whom I always promised I would mention in my Will Hello Sue!"

A London woman requested that her hearse stop outside the local pub while her husband went in for a drink `so that I can wait outside as I have always waited'.

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.

This magazine is published on the first Saturday of each month (except August) and the subscription Price is £3.00 for eleven issues. If you are new to the area and would like to subscribe to Purley Parish News, please contact the Circulation Manager, Les Jamieson, on 941 2342.

This month's magazine is published on **Saturday, 1st May**. All copy for the June issue must reach me by 15th May and the magazine will be published on Saturday, 5th June.

Editor