

St Mary's Monthly Message

January 2024



A Note From David

BY THE RECTOR

Dear Church Family,

With a New Year come new opportunities. Thomas A. Edison once said, “Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work”, so I wonder what opportunities are going to come your way this year and will you grasp them or let them pass you by?

We live in a world where there are many uncertainties that can cause us to be anxious and cautious. There are, rightfully, the concerns for our planet, then there’s the cost-of-living challenges, wars and conflict...the list is endless. Yet throughout the Bible we find examples of those who didn’t allow themselves to be overwhelmed by the problems and instead they chose to be courageous and to do something, no matter how small it was, that would make a difference. Likewise, when faced with the prospect of uncertainty and war breaking out, it was King George VI in his Christmas broadcast in 1939 who quoted Minnie Louise Haskins’ famous words: ‘And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: ‘Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown’. And he replied: ‘Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way’. On our website you will find ways of helping resource yourself through this coming year, but my prayer is that we will grasp the opportunities that God sends our way and embrace the blessings God wants to pour out upon us!

Every blessing, David

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*Pete Wynn talks
about faith and
hopes for the new
year*

*Clare Bellini and
caring for
ourselves in the
new year*

In Other News...

Dates for your Diary

*Prayers for this
month*

Pete Wynn on Faith and 2024 Plans

Pete is married to Hazel, a specialist cancer research sister, and they have two grown up children: Gareth, who is an airline captain, and Heather who works for Hearing Dogs. They have been members of St Mary's since they moved to Risborough in March 2010. Pete worked in paper manufacturing for 30 years followed by 10 years in the events industry, which he is still involved in, whilst also pursuing a property maintenance career.

Q. Can you tell us about your Christmas-themed role?

A. I'm sorry, that's classified. My reindeers and I have signed a confidentiality agreement.

Q. What do you the rest of the year?

A. As one of the assistant church wardens, I try to help the church wardens in a practical way: find it, fix it, mend it. For example, I am trying to keep church warm by looking after the precarious boiler as well as tracking down draughts and fixing them.

Q. You have a background in events management; is anything on the horizon for 2024?

A. I am hoping there will be a number of events in this year's church calendar, with something for everyone. There will probably be a couple of social events for later in the year, a mid-Lent Saturday morning fundraiser for Lighthouse and a *first of its kind* weekend event for the whole church in early September.

Q. Can you tell us about your faith?

A. My mother suffered from severe mental illness, and I found myself being brought up by the church family, and a very active youth group. I became a Christian at 16 at a church youth weekend; I was baptised at 17 by my late father-in-law, who was senior minister at Leigh Road Baptist Church and married his daughter when I was 21. I have a very simple faith: I liked what I saw in other Christians and wanted what they had; excellent youth leaders helped me achieve it.

Clare Bellini on the importance of Nutrition

Most Christians would agree on the importance of caring for God's creation, as it is a gift from God, but what about our bodies? 1 Corinthians 6:19 says "Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?". Many start New Year hoping to lose a few pounds. The trouble with diets is that they require lots of willpower and actually work against our brain's evolutionary programming which is to avoid pain, seek pleasure and stay alive. Dieting tricks our brains into thinking we have entered a famine, in order to conserve energy it slows down our metabolism and secretes hormones encouraging us to seek food. Eventually our brain succeeds and we end up breaking our diet, eating all those 'forbidden' foods, disappointed in ourselves and eventually gaining even more weight due to our slowed metabolism.

This year I encourage you to consider how you could serve God better if you were fitter, healthier and had more energy. Set yourself up for success by making small manageable changes. Ensure you eat real, whole foods, count nutrients not calories, replace refined carbs with complex carbs, eat a palm-sized portion of protein with every meal, include healthy fats and avoid added sugar and sweeteners.

Take some time to pray and ask God what He would like you to achieve in 2024. Has God put a missionary idea on your heart? Do you want to spend quality time with Him at the start of your day? Keep praying for God's power to make change, enlist your church family to join you and remember "God can do anything... far more than you could ever imagine..by working with us, his Spirit deeply and gently within us". (Ephesians 3:20 MSG)

Clare Bellini, Registered Nutritional Therapist, BSc (Hons), DipION, CNHC, mBANT



Pete Wynn with
granddaughter Bethany

Many are
the plans in
a person's heart,
but it is
the LORD's purpose
that prevails.

2024

Proverbs 19:21



Clare Bellini

In other news...

You are invited to read **the Bible in a Year**. Find out more on the new St Mary's Discipleship website <https://discipleship.stmarysrisborough.org.uk>

At each of the four Sundays in January, there will be a **sermon series on Going Deeper in Worship**.

Please pray for **the recruitment of a new team vicar**, which will be advertised on 5 January in the Church Times and the Diocesan website.

The **Pioneering Parishes Course** is delivered by Church Mission Society and provides tools to help parishes become more outward looking, enabling parish priests to extend the care of souls of people into all the parish. Would you consider taking part with David Williams in January 2024.

There will be four 90 minute webinars on these dates: 9 and 23 January, 6 and 20 February, at 2pm covering. Contact the Parish Office if you are interested.

There will be a **ladies' breakfast** on Saturday 6th January at 9am in the Church Hall. It will be a review of the year and please let Rose Williams know if you would like to come on rosewilliamsgp@yahoo.com

The next **men's breakfast** will be on Sat 13th January at 8.45am in St Mary's Church Hall. Our speaker will be Sir David Lidington PC who will talk about what it was like going to the Coronation as a representative of the Privy Council. As usual there will be a full English breakfast. The cost is £7 payable on the day. Contact mensbreakfast@stmarysrisborough.org.uk or 01844 274225.

Our next **Alpha Course** will run for 11 weeks, starting on Tuesday 16th January. It's a chance to discuss life and the Christian faith in an informal, fun and friendly way. It is a course for anyone, whether you are exploring questions about the Christian faith, or you are already a Christian, but want to want to learn more. If you are interested, or have any questions please email curate@stmarysrisborough.org.uk. Show your love for a friend and bring them along!

On Sunday 21 January at 3pm, we have a **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** service at Kimble Baptist Church. All welcome.

There will be a service in **Christchurch Cathedral** on 27 January at 6pm, to which you are invited, for the **new Canons**, including, Rev. Canon David Williams.

There will be a **Newcomers Lunch** on 28 January after the services. It will comprise a simple meal of soup and sandwiches. Please come along and bring someone.

Risborough Area Community Bus is recruiting new drivers. If you think this sounds like something you would like to do, contact Jim Stevens (jstvns07@gmail.com)

Lighthouse is a children's holiday club which provides a week of fun, faith, crafts, games, singing, drama, and sport Over 300 children and over 100 volunteers are involved each year. The dates for 2024 are Monday 29th July to Friday 2nd August. For more information check out the Lighthouse website: <http://www.lighthousecentral.org/lighthouses/princes-risborough>

Don't forget you can still donate to **One Can** in the wheelie bin by the Chapter House door. Only items with a long use-by date, please.



Starts 16 January



Newcomers Lunch



One Can Trust



Hosts for Ukrainian refugees

Sign up for our weekly e-news by going to the homepage on our website. Receive all the news from St Mary's direct to your phone!

Dates for your Diary

Bereavement Drop-in Group in the Chapter House, 3pm 8 January.

Ladies' breakfast Saturday 6th January at 9am in the Church Hall.

The **Alpha Course** starts 16 January .

Men's breakfast Saturday 13 January at 8.45am in St Mary's Church Hall.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity service Sunday 21 January at 3pm, Kimble Baptist Church.

Newcomers Lunch 28 January after the services in church.

There will be **no Lunch Club** in January. The next one will be on 7 February.

Youth Alpha: every Tuesday from 7.30pm to 9pm in the Cafe, Elim Church.

Play Cafe: every Tuesday during term time from 9.30am to 11am in church.

Services at St Mary's and St Peter's

Holy Communion at 8am (*said*)

Parish Communion at 9.30 on Sundays in church and live streamed to your home. See the St Mary's website for the link to our YouTube channel.

Live@St Mary's all age service at 11.15 in church. Kid's Church welcomes children to join them for activities during this service - contact the Parish Office for further info on sessions.

Mid week Holy Communion is on Wednesdays at 10.30 followed by coffee.

3rd Sunday in the month (21 January) at 6pm, Evensong & shortened HC

St Peter's Church, Ilmer,

For your Prayers this month

A Blessing for this new Season

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make His face shine on you
and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn His face toward you and
give you peace.

The Aaronic Blessing
(Numbers 6:24-26, NIV)

A Prayer for a Peaceful 2024

Creator of all life, help us enter the
New Year reverently, aware that you
have endowed every creature and
plant, every person and habitat with
beauty and purpose. May we regard
the world with tenderness. May we
honour rather than destroy.

Amen.

We remember these families in our prayers following the deaths of: Tony Sheppeck, Raymond Lunnon, John Powers, Audrey Smith, Peter Rainbow.

We uphold in prayer: David Coleman, Jane Dyson, Elaine's granddaughter Emma, Jackie Powell and her daughter Lisa, Leonora Priestley, Pete and Hazel following the death of Hazel's father, Zoe as she goes into her new job, Kelly May, and all those bereaved, suffering ill health or facing operations.

Please remember Athena Ball in your prayers, for her baptism in January.

Please pray for:

- all those in the world and in our own community entering the new year with fear and trepidation
- those in our community returning to work and school after the Christmas break
- for our elderly and those living on their own over winter.

Copies of this newsletter are available in Church for you to collect and pass on to friends and neighbours.



Join our weekly prayer meeting on Zoom every Wednesday at 9am – Zoom invite available from the Parish Office .

We encourage everyone to pray for one another. Ask the Parish Office if you would like to receive details of prayer requests.

Prayers for Ukraine: are held weekly on zoom - Fridays @ 9.00am. Zoom Link - Meeting ID: 714 5146 5358 Passcode:262GY9

*Contact the Parish Office
parishoffice@stmarysrisborough.org.uk*

*Telephone: 01844
273300*