

St Mary's Monthly Message

November 2023



A Note From David

BY THE RECTOR

Dear Church Family,

How do you handle the disappointments of life and how is it that in this 21st century we are still experiencing wars and such dreadful conflict between people? Well, the one thing we can be sure of is that challenges will come our way. On his final night with his disciples, Jesus was very clear: "In this world you will have trouble" (John 16:33). And Luke summarised Paul's message on his first missionary journey as: 'we must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God' (Acts 14:22). However, thankfully, Jesus also confidently said: "But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Following Jesus doesn't mean we won't face challenges or suffering or disappointments, but it does mean these will not have the last word!

As we approach Remembrance Sunday, there is plenty to pray for. But how can the Christian faith help us? Well, the first thing to say is that faith is not an escape from the realities of everyday life. Jesus faced unfair trials and suffering, but throughout his life he continued to trust in his heavenly Father, who always has the last word. Another important clue is found in the opening words John writes to his readers in Asia: I am 'your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom...that are ours in Jesus' (Rev 1:9). Even though he was physically distant from them, they were a community on a journey together and could help one another to stay strong and be faithful. We all need each other, which is why our Church has Life Groups. We believe in the importance of 'Doing Life Together'. Through faith and the support, prayer, and encouragement we can give each other, may we flourish rather than flounder!

Every blessing, David

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***Beka Sharrock
shares what she is
doing on Diocese
Comms***

***Matt Sharrock and
Remembrance
Sunday***

In Other News...

Dates for your Diary

***Prayers for this
month***

Beka Sharrock and Diocese Comms

Hi I'm Beka, I live in Walter's Ash with my husband Matt, our seven-year-old son Jenson and our (very) bouncy Pointer puppy Remy. Matt and I have been married for 13 years. We met at university in Lancaster and remained friends throughout our 20s before romance blossomed (aka I wore him down and he finally agreed to a date).

We've been attending St Mary's since 2013 when we were posted to RAF High Wycombe following two years living in Canada. We had a two-year break when we were posted to RAF Odiham and living in Hampshire but we've been back since 2019.

My new job is Communications Officer (Media and Content) at the Diocese of Oxford. I am responsible for telling the stories of the diocese to the media, sharing the good news of the work churches and congregations are carrying out in their communities and how the diocese supports that work.

I'm also here to support clergy and ministers when things don't go to plan, to help with breaking unexpected news to congregations and responding to media enquiries from national and local outlets. In addition to this, a lot of our work involves communicating with the clergy, ministers and church membership via the eNews, our many print publications like Pathways, our website and social media platforms.

Storytelling is what I love! It can take time to find good stories to tell but it's always worth it. From a diocesan perspective, the Comms team are there to support all clergy and parishes, but it can be a balancing act.

I was excited to take on this new role because, having worked as a journalist and for several national charities, I had been looking for an opportunity to put my faith into action and use my gifts for God. I didn't grow up in a Christian family, we didn't go to church but I was always curious about what it all meant. My faith journey began with an outdoor performance of the Christmas story which a friend was appearing in – playing the main man, Jesus! It stirred something in me and when we moved to Canada I joined an Alpha course. We became regular churchgoers and the rest, as they say is history!



Beka Sharrock

I lift up my eyes to the hills –
from whence will my help
come?
My help comes from the Lord,
Who made heaven and earth.

Psalms 121: 1-2

Wing Commander Matt Sharrock - RAF

I often think of a scene of a soldier and priest sitting upon two upturned ammunition tins in the desert of Iraq and taking communion. The memory however is not mine and comes from having heard my grandfather recall his meeting with his priest on a Sunday afternoon in 1945. Stealing a precious moment to be with God should happen anywhere but we may find ourselves doing it most frequently in our most challenging of times.

Fast forward almost 80 years, I too have served in our Armed Forces. Having joined the RAF in 2001, I have also experienced my own versions of that moment from 1945 during my own tours in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria.

Beka, Jenson and I have been attending St Mary's for several years now and Jenson was also christened by David. We are fortunate to enjoy a relationship with the Church community in and out of Sunday worship. I have been proud to represent the RAF and at the annual Service of Remembrance in the last couple of years. These occasions remind us of the historic and ongoing sacrifice provided by the Armed Forces and wider Defence community. Importantly, it is also an opportunity to reflect on the sacrifice and impact upon the families and communities affected by conflict. It is right to pause at the eleventh hour each November but for me, challenging myself to find that moment of faith with God as part of my every day service is equally as important.



Matt Sharrock -
Remembrance Parade 2021

In other news...

There will be an **All Hallows Light Party in St Mary's** on Tuesday 31st October from 4.30 to 6.30pm. Dressing up optional. There will be fun, games, treats and food. All the family welcome. Sign up at this link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/st-marys-light-party-hallows-eve-tickets-732390518757?aff=oddttdtcreator>

Ladies Breakfast on November 4th at 9am in the Hall. The speaker is Kaye Lillycrop telling us about the Fistula Hospital. All ladies and friends are welcome. Contact Rose Williams on 01844 274225 or sign up at the back of church to book a place.

Can you donate **a shoebox of Christmas gifts for a child this Christmas**? Please pick up a leaflet from Church that tells you what to do and what to include in your shoebox. Then just pack your box and **bring it into Church by November 5th** so that Zoe can pick them up and take them to the collection depot.

On Wednesday 8th November at 6.30pm for 7pm, there will be **a lecture at St Mary's by architectural historian John McNeill**. John is a lecturer at Oxford University's department of continuing education. The lecture is entitled **'Things to look for when you first go into a Church'** and is a must for all who enjoy visiting Churches and want to get the most from their visits. Tickets are £12 on the door which includes a drink on arrival.

The next **men's breakfast** will be on Sat 11th November at 8.45am in St Mary's Church Hall. The theme will be Remembrance and Kevin Caplin-Jones who is an RAF Chaplain and our MP Greg Smith will be speaking and there will be a short time of remembrance. Full English breakfast; £7 payable on the day. Contact Steve Williams on mensbreakfast@stmarysrisborough.org.uk or 01844 274225.

There will be a performance of **Handel's dramatic oratorio Samson at Holy Trinity, Bledlow** on Saturday 11th November at 7.30pm. Tickets £15 from www.aylesburyopera.org.uk, 07725 868092 or Michael Graham Estate Agency, PR.

One Can sends thanks **to those who donated generously for Harvest**. Please continue to use the wheelie bin near the Chapter House door for further donations, remembering that items need to have long use-by dates.

Good Neighbours is a Risborough based charity that provides transport to medical appointments for people unable to drive themselves or to use public transport. There is team of coordinators and drivers (who receive compensation for their mileage and parking costs) and **they urgently need to recruit more volunteers**. If you can spare a few hours once a fortnight please contact Good Neighbours on 01844 342600 or text 07751 592337.

Could you **host a couple who will soon be coming from Ukraine**, for a couple of months? Their daughter (already here) is looking to rent an apartment for all of them, but they need a stop gap until that is set up. Contact details: Pauline Aries on 07718 135055 or paulinearies@btinternet.com



All Hallows Light Party



Shoebox Christmas Gifts



Good Neighbours
volunteers needed



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

Monthly Lunch Club: Wednesday , 1 November 10:00am to 3:00pm.

Ladies Breakfast: Saturday, 4 November at 9am in the Hall.

Men's Breakfast: Saturday, 11 November at 8.45am in the Hall.

Bereavement Drop-in: 3:00pm 13 November in the Chapter House.

Tea for All: Sunday 26 November, 2.30pm in church.

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

Remembrance Sunday: Procession leaves the Library at 9:30, Service commences at 10:00, followed by 2 minutes' silence at the Market Square at 11:00, and the laying of wreaths.

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 (12 November at the winter time of 3pm), **Evensong & shortened HC, St Peter's Church, Ilmer.**

For your Prayers this month

A Prayer for Remembrance

O God of truth and justice, we hold
before you those whose memory we
cherish, and those whose names we will
never know.

Help us to lift our eyes above the torment
of this broken world,
and grant us the grace to
pray for those who wish others harm.

Amen

We remember these families in our prayers following the deaths of Pat Cook, Michael Long, Maria Robinson, Timothy Edwards and Norman Gillman.

We uphold in prayer: the Seward family, David Coleman, Malcolm Cloutt, the Rolfe family, the Drewett family, Elaine Needham's granddaughter Emma, Jenny Ogilvie and Joyce Finlay and all those bereaved, suffering ill health or facing operations.

Please pray for James, Freddie, Johnny, and Tommy King who will all be baptised on 11 November.

Please pray for:

- all those suffering as a result of the Israel/Gaza conflict
- world leaders to give direction in the Middle East
- For all children and families suffering as a result of conflict in the world
- For those suffering as a result of the shootings in Maine.

A Prayer for Peace

O Lord; grant us peace
in our time and a longing for the
day when

people of every language, race,
and nation will be brought into the
unity of Christ's kingdom. This we
ask in the name of the same Jesus
Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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*