

St Mary's Monthly Message

November 2024



A Note From David

BY THE RECTOR

Newsletter editor: Louise Fell
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Dear Church Family,

As we brace ourselves for the shorter and colder days of winter, I'd like to share with you some warmth and encouragement. For recently, I have had to make some journeys that have involved driving over various roundabouts, and found myself reflecting on how stressful roundabouts can be. With the prospect of weaving your way through what can seem like a race with other, less considerate, drivers, and looking out for signs of ever greater number and complexity, how many of us would admit to having gone round some roundabouts several times before we finally veer off onto what we hope is the right road?! And this image of a busy and bewildering roundabout strikes me as a powerful picture of life today.

Living in an age of perplexing confusion and troubling uncertainty, it's not always easy to give answers to those big decisions about what we should believe and how we should live. However, above all the claims that society says will lead us to a fulfilled and happy life, there are Jesus' powerful and comforting words that "I am the way" and if you follow me, you can be 'People of the Way' (Acts 9:2; 24:14). Now, as the early church spread and grew, the word 'Christian' was used increasingly, but I do wonder at times whether we are missing an important of our faith when we no longer see ourselves as 'People of the Way'. For with this original phrase, there is more of a sense of being on a journey, committed to a life where we are continuing to learn and grow in our faith. So, let's look to Jesus. Journeying through life is not a case, as some will have us think, of believing that whatever road you choose, you'll get to your destination somehow. Let's make the decision to follow Jesus rather than endlessly driving round in circles until the fuel of life runs out. And let's be encouraged because, as that phrase 'People of the Way' suggests, we don't need to travel alone.

Every blessing, David

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Averil Stephenson on 30 years of Ministry

On 17th November, in the 11.15 service, Averil will come to the end of her time as LLM (Licensed Lay Minister) and will receive an Emeritus Certificate in recognition of long service. An Emeritus Certificate is signed by the Bishop and will be presented by the LLM Adviser for Buckingham, Peter Flory, whom Averil met at her previous church in 1977, and with whom she and David have been good friends ever since.

Averil gave up her secular career when she and David moved to Buckinghamshire. She felt that the local church was very important to the national picture. They led a house group for new Christians, and she led, with the Rector's wife, a women's bible study for several years. She also developed her interest in prayer at that point. When their new Rector came in 1993, he suggested she train to be a "Reader", now called Licensed Lay Minister. She prayed about it and then began a 3-year training programme with Oxford Diocese. It involved writing essays which she hadn't done at that stage for 20 years. (She had studied Joint Hons in Modern History and Politics at Reading University and went on to work in the Greater London Council.)

She went through all the assessments and at the end of the 3 years, in 1997, she decided to go forward with licensing in Oxford. She then joined the staff at St Leonard's, doing a three-day week, alongside raising her family. God gave her a heart for funeral work, and she loved the combination of bringing the Gospel to people would not necessarily have heard it, as well as the pastoral side. In addition, she was involved in the formal Sunday service, and then the informal service, preaching and leading. She led a team of 32 in prayer ministry. She also took communion at a local residential home, Chesham Bois Manor. She also did post-Alpha training courses and she designed a course in this area. She was also a mentor for the Diocese for new readers, and a vocations adviser for the diocese.

Then, she was seconded to St John's Ashley Green in Chesham when their vicar retired, and she continued in that role for four years.

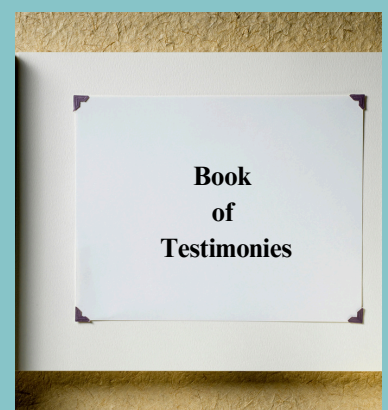
At that time, she and David decided to downsize, and that's how they came to St Marys, finding the church before the house. It gave her the opportunity to spend more time with her elderly mother, whilst being involved as a regular preacher in the 11.15 service.

Although Averil's mother sadly died last year, aged 101, she has a grandson of 18 months, Benjamin, and she is keen to create space for him and to support the family. Both her children live fairly locally, and she and David are able to spend time with them. She is looking forward to this time as an opportunity to sit and listen to what the Lord has to say.

David and Jo have asked if you would like to be included in a special book of testimonies for them to have as a 'keepsake', which tells your own story of what God has done in your life over the years of being part of St. Mary's family. Two books will be produced so we will have a historical 'time capsule' for the Williamses and for St. Mary's. It will bring them much joy and encouragement for their new chapter. Please send your story to jomarywilliams@gmail.com before 12th December.



Averil Stephenson



In other news...

This year's **Time to Remember service** will be on Sunday 3rd November at 3pm. This is a reflective service to remember recently departed family and friends. If you would like a loved one's name read out please either sign the list in Church or email the Office.

On Sunday 10th November there will be a **civic remembrance service** at 10am in Church. At the same time, there will be a family service in the Church Hall. The services will be followed by the 2 minute silence and laying of wreaths in the market square at 11am.

Alex Rees' licensing is at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford at 11am on the 2nd November. Anyone is welcome to come and support him.

Friends of Bucks Historic Churches Annual Lecture 13 November 6.30pm for 7pm in St Mary's Church. This year's subject will be 'Heralds and Heraldry: The Picturesque World of Coats of Arms, Chivalry and Ceremony'. Tickets £13 on the door, complimentary drink included.

There will be a **Ladies Breakfast** at 9am on Saturday November 2nd in St Mary's Hall. Our speaker will be Sally Prendergast, Priest and stole maker! Contact Rose Williams 01844 274225 or rosewilliamsgp@yahoo.co.uk

The next **men's breakfast** will be on Sat 9th November at 8.45am in St Mary's Church Hall. The speaker will be Matt Sharrock who will talk about his role in the RAF. Full English breakfast. The cost is £7 payable on the day. Contact Steve Williams on mensbreakfast@stmarysrisborough.org.uk or phone 01844 274225

Dedication of East Window and plaque to commemorate Gos and Di Home, **Sunday 17 November, 4.30pm** with Bishop Steven. Refreshments served.

Glitter Ball 22 November 7.00 for 7.30 start, carriages at midnight Celebrate with David and Jo at this formal ball with buffet and dancing to the Sound Force Band. Tickets available from Pete Wynn: peterwynnis@btinternet.com

Glitter and Pizza Party 23 November 12.00-3.00 for everyone All are welcome to this event, especially children. There will be a non-alcoholic bar, games and a lot of fun! More ticket details available soon.

DIARY DATE: A farewell bring-and-share lunch for David and Jo will be held after morning services on **Sunday 8 December**. David's final service is on Dec 25th.

Risborough Youth Club: Volunteers Needed! For over 50 years, Risborough Youth Club has been a cornerstone for the young people of the Risboroughs and surrounding villages, providing a safe, fun, and positive environment for young people aged 11-17. Club sessions are every Monday evening, regularly welcoming over 25 young people each week. While they employ a professional Youth Worker, these sessions thrive thanks to the dedication of community volunteers. . If you're interested in volunteering, please contact at volunteer@risboroughyouth.club or visit the website at risboroughyouth.club.

Psalm 28:7-
The Lord is
my strength
and my
shield; my
heart trusts
in Him, and
He helps me.



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

Ladies Breakfast at 9am on Saturday November 2nd in St Mary's Hall.

Time to Remember service Sunday 3 November at 3pm in church

Lunch Club Wednesday , 6 November, 10am-3pm in church

Men's breakfast will be on Sat 9th November at 8.45am in St Mary's Church Hall.

Remembrance Service Sunday 10th November at 10am, laying of wreaths in market square at 11am

Remembrance Service at St Peter's, Ilmer- Sunday 10th November at 3pm

Bereavement Drop-in Group in the Chapter House, 3pm on 11 November

Bucks Historic Churches Annual Lecture 13 November 6.30pm for 7pm in church

Dedication of East Window & plaque for Gos & Di Home, Sun 17 Nov, 4.30pm

Glitter Ball 7.00 for 7.30, 22 November, in church

Glitter and Pizza Party 23 November, 12.00-3.00 in church

Tea for All in the Chapter House, 2.30pm on 24 November

Prayers at the Yurt: Mon & Fri mornings, 7.30am to 8am

Maker & Fixer @ Culverton Farm: Sun 17 November from 3-5pm

Play Cafe: Tuesdays 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.

Third Sunday in the month - 17 November - at its winter time of 3pm, Evensong & shortened HC **St Peter's Church, Ilmer.**

For your Prayers this month

A Prayer for World peace

O God of the nations, as we look to that day
when you will gather people from north and south, east and west,
into the unity of your peaceable Kingdom, guide with your just and gentle wisdom
all who take counsel for the nations of the world,
that all your people may spend their days in security, freedom, and peace,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Amen.

We uphold in prayer: Dennis Scourfield, Kathryn's sister Heather, Pete Wynn, Elaine Needham, Paula Knall, Geoffrey and Joy John, Jenny Deverill, David Coleman, the Rolfe family, Carl State-Claridge, Kelly May, and all those bereaved, suffering ill health or facing operations.

We give thanks for: Alexandra Grebinnyk-Pereira was baptised on 20th October and Ella Kerns who is being baptised on 17th November

Please pray for:

- the families of those killed and injured in conflicts around the world
- a swift resolution to the many current conflicts in the world
- that world leaders may show justice, kindness, and humility.

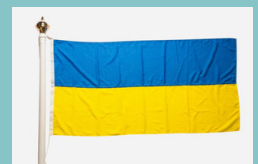
Copies of this newsletter are available in Church for you to collect and pass on to friends and neighbours.



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*

Tel: 01844 273300