

St Mary's Monthly Message

September 2023



A Note From David

BY THE RECTOR

Dear Church Family,

This month's newsletter has the wonderful theme of Thankfulness, and why not take a moment now, before you read any further, to reflect on the things you are thankful for in life. As we prepare for Harvest Festival on 1st October, with its Old Testament roots that share this theme, I must say that I am so thankful that August came to a close with the launching of a new Chilterns Pilgrimage walk, on which we took time out to delight in the Chiltern countryside and God's presence with us. And towards the end of the walk there was this very special moment, as we made our way across a field with St Mary's spire in the distance, when a rainbow appeared in the sky, signifying God's presence and having one end of it shining on the Church spire. It was a truly amazing moment!

Another thing I am thankful for has been the opportunity to travel to Ireland and walk in the footsteps of St Patrick, for I have come to believe that there is so much we can learn from St Patrick. I appreciate the world in his day looked very different from our own. As far as he was concerned, he saw the Irish as living on a remote island, inhabiting the edge of the world 'beyond which nobody lives'. It was tribal, rural, and family-centred, as distinct from the more urbanised, fragmented, individualistic society of our time, but Patrick shows us how you can confront any challenges with faith. He was someone who was prepared to go where God called, even if this meant travelling to a situation in which his life would be in constant danger. And by doing this, Patrick came to know that God's presence is greater than anything we confront. As the years passed, Patrick learnt to listen to God's promptings and to trust in God's love, care, and guidance. May we do likewise.

Every blessing, David

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*John and Heather
Hardy and life on
the move*

In Other News...

Dates for your Diary

*Prayers for this
month*

The Interview: Heather and John Hardy

John and Heather Hardy have lived in Risborough since moving here from Fareham in 2013. Heather is one of our hardworking churchwardens, and John spends much of his time keeping our churchyard looking lovely. They have four children: Simon a families and child protection social worker in Northern Ireland, Kayt, a teacher in Lane End, Emma also a teacher in Burton Bradstock in Hampshire and James who is with the Foreign Office, currently in Japan. John worked as an aerospace engineer, including in Japan and China; Heather was a radiographer and later worked in various charities including the Lantern Club and Abbeyfields, as a personal coordinator as well as a caring role.

They met through Crusaders (now Urban Saints) in Birmingham where he was at University doing a student apprenticeship with Lucas. "I was training at a hospital in Birmingham, and we were both Crusaders leaders," says Heather. "We stayed in Birmingham after we were married, until we went to Japan in 1974, with a three-year-old and an eighteen-month-old. We were there nearly three years. We left with two children and came home with three." They were able to attend church in Japan: "We shopped around and went to the Episcopal Church where we were very happy. There were lots of nationalities and denominations, which made the PCC very interesting!"

They came home so that John could take up the role of "Licence Project Manager, China", which often left Heather back in Birmingham with the children whilst John spent a lot of time in China. They moved down to Gt Missenden in 1984 as John had moved to a position in Hemel Hempstead. They moved back to Japan in 1991, when it was much more difficult juggling older children as they were at different stages. John went out first with James, who was 13, so James could start school there, while Heather waited at home for Kayt to come back from a year in South Africa before she could join them.

"Later when we were in Yokohama, it was much more cosmopolitan, we went to Christ Church on the Bluff and again it was a mix of people" says Heather

They moved to Risborough when John retired. "We wanted to be closer to family, and we had been very happy in this area. We almost bought a house in Great Missenden, but that door closed and we came to Risborough. Initially we didn't have any furniture, but we borrowed camping chairs and made do."

Heather was brought up in a Brethren family, a strict, non-conformist Bible-based sect which became increasingly reclusive, ("although I was never aware of it because my parents always had an open house") she says. Her family moved away to join a local Baptist Church. Hospitality was key in their home, and there were always people for meals on Sunday. John followed a different path: "I was brought up in a church-going family and was a choirboy." His elder sister encouraged him to join the Crusaders bible class at age nine. "I enjoyed the membership at various places as we moved across the country. Camps and House parties great experiences as was learning to sail on the Norfolk Broads and attending the Billy Graham Crusade several times in Manchester."



John and Heather Hardy

And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest."

Luke 10:2

In other news...

Congratulations and thank you to **all the volunteers who helped to make Lighthouse** a great success again this year. It takes an awful lot of people with energy, talent and faith to bring Lighthouse to life. We thank you all and pray that our young people will discover the 'light of life' for themselves.

The next **ladies breakfast** is on the 2nd September at 9am in Church. Our speaker is Rose Williams. To book a place, sign the list by the door or contact Rose Williams on 01844 274225 rosewilliamsgp@yahoo.co.uk

Starting 12 September at 7.30pm, **Youth Alpha** will be running in the Connexions Cafe. Aimed at young people who are keen to explore life's questions. Contact Sue Hughes for more information (pioneercurate@stmarysrisborough.org.uk).

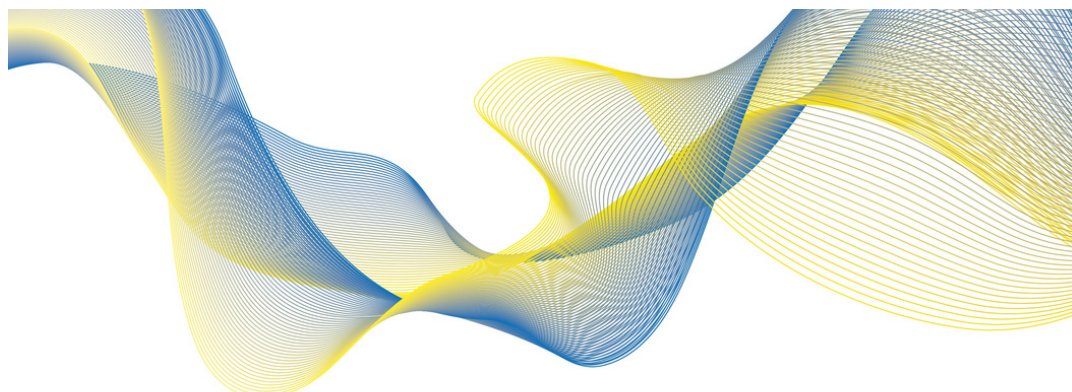
The next **men's breakfast** will be on Sat 9th September at 8.45am in St Mary's Church Hall. As usual there will be a full English breakfast. The cost is £7 payable on the day. Contact Steve Williams on mensbreakfast@stmarysrisborough.org.uk or phone 01844 274225 if you would like to come so that we can control the catering and avoid waste.

The **Bucks Historic Churches Ride and Stride**, 9 September 10.00am to 6.00pm is an annual sponsored walk or bike ride around local churches: you can visit as many or a few churches as you choose. Money raised goes half to the Bucks Historic Churches Trust and half to St Mary's. More information and sponsorship forms will be available in church. For more information contact Debby Cadwallader 01844 343394.

Could you serve drinks and biscuits and chat to, and possibly pray with, teenagers as they come out of school on a Wednesday afternoon for an hour? If so, contact Lisa Dollery at **Wycombe Youth for Christ**: lisa@wycombeyfc.org.uk or speak to Louise Fell.

Would you be interested in **confirmation or adult baptism**? If you are curious about how to take your faith further in one of these ways contact Andrew Walmsley (curate@stmarysrisborough.org.uk)

Hosts are still needed for **Ukrainian refugees**, both for new arrivals and for those who are ready to move from their original sponsor. Also, if anyone has or knows of property that could be let to Ukrainians, please contact **Lizzie Thomas-Davies, Trustee of the Ukraine to Chilterns Charity**. The Ukraine to Chilterns Charity and the council are working together to support the landlord, Ukrainians and their sponsors to enable the move to independent accommodation. Contact details: lizzie@thomas-davies.com or phone 07879420264.



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: 2 September at 9am in Church

Play Cafe: starts again 5 September and then every Tuesday during term time from 9.30am to 11am in church.

Monthly Lunch Club: Wednesday 6 September, 10:00am to 3:00pm.

Men's breakfast: Sat 9th September at 8.45am in St Mary's Church Hall.

Bereavement Drop-in: 3:00pm 11 September in the Chapter House.

Tea for All: Sunday 24 September, 2.30pm in church.

Youth Drop-in: at Baptist Lower Hall Thursdays in term time 5:30-7:00pm.

Services at St Mary's and St Peter's

Holy Communion at 8am (*said*)

Parish Communion continues 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 (17 September at 6pm), **Evensong & shortened HC, St Peter's Church, Ilmer.**

For your Prayers this month

A Prayer for our Harvest

God of abundance,
the author and giver of all good things,
grant us a gracious and humble heart,
that we may give you glory
through offering
the First Fruits of our lives,
and grow more into the likeness
of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

A Prayer for Peace

Peace go with you.
God's quiet within the noise.
God's hope within uncertainty
God's rest within the toil
God's presence within your soul.
Peace go with you.

Amen.

We remember Barbara Vince and family following John's death in August .

We uphold in prayer: The Seward Family, Kaye Watters, Erica Killoh, David Coleman, the Rolfe family, Claire Barbary, the Drewett family, Ann Trollope and all those bereaved, suffering ill health or facing operations .

Please pray for:

- our wedding couples: Terrie Williams and Francis Obeten getting married on Sat 2nd Sept at St Mary's and Isabella Sacco and William Skillen getting married on Sat 9th Sept at St Peter's
- Luna Wheable and her family following her baptism on 20 August
- The young people in our town as they embark on the next step in their journey
- Our Clergy and members as church life swings back into action after the summer
- Those in our church family and community who struggle with their mental health

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