

PARISH

MAGAZINE



From the Editorial Team

I know that we're barely into March, but with an early Easter this year, we shall be featuring articles written by members of our congregation of their experiences of celebrating Easter around the world.

You will read of differing traditions as to how people celebrate Easter in other countries. I imagine this as viewing a mountain from the various sides; the mountain might seem quite different, depending on our perspective, but we are all looking at the same mountain. Wherever we are, geographically and spiritually, we can still see the towering achievement of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

On behalf of the Magazine team, we wish you all a Happy Easter!

Mark

MARK PUDDY | MAGAZINE EDITORIAL TEAM

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magazine@wargravechurch.org.uk

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BURNS NIGHTS

Burns Night at St Mary's by Sue Witney

On the 26th January, St Marys held its second Burns Night Supper. Joy Potter led us in the Selkirk Grace, and our first course of 'Granny's Soup', made by Patsy was served. We were grateful to have the help of Sophia Monte and two of her friends serving for the duration of the evening. The procession of the haggis around the room was piped in wonderfully by Colleen Scott and a main meal of haggis, neeps & tatties was served followed by Cranachan, a traditional Scottish pudding – cream, raspberries, whisky, honey and oats – ably made by Steve Witney. Cheese and Bannocks (biscuits), Scottish shortbread and coffee brought the evening to a close.

Throughout the evening we were led by Bill in the 'Immortal Memory about the Man', brilliant responses were given to the Lassies (Doug Clark) and Laddies (Lesley Bell) and a poem was delivered by David Thomas. Sheila Williams led us ably in The Loyal Toast. We ended with the singing of Auld Lang Syne, again accompanied by Colleen on the bagpipes. Whisky was available to all those who wanted it and weren't driving! A special thanks goes to the celebrating team for all their hard work, in particular Helen Perry, Chris Wood, Joy Potter, Barbara Ratings, Patsy Roynon, Chris Bookless and of course, Bill himself, without whom we would not have managed to have the key people taking part and running this event. Overall £238 was raised.



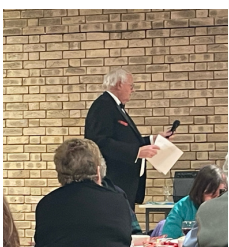
Blood and Bagpipes: A Murder Mystery by Lesley Bell

It was the annual Burns Night Supper hosted by Lord and Lady Donald McTrouserless. Lady Elspeth welcomed their guests and Donald then recited the Selkirk Grace. Everyone upstanding Robbie Burns was toasted. However, during a rousing chorus of Auld Lang Syne, Donald stumbled and died. He had been poisoned!

Dr Ewan Campbell (bottom left), one of the party and family doctor, immediately examined the body, confirmed death. The police were called and Inspector Tony Taggart (top left), with Elspeth conducted the investigation into Donald's untimely death. Various witnesses were called, all very suspicious characters: his business partner Angus McCracken who was in dispute with Donald over a whisky deal; Moira Fokker, the housekeeper who had been threatened with dismissal; The ghillie, Archie Woodcock who had been heard arguing about a pay rise; Isla McTrouserless, Donald's estranged daughter from his first marriage; a local poet Hamish Boyle who is very envious of Donald's success, his Burns Night and of his published works of poetry. Even the family doctor Ewan Campbell was not above suspicion.

But who could have committed the dastardly deed. After much discussion and emergence of clues, it transpired that it was his estranged daughter, Isla, who with ready access to Wolf's bane (aconitine) which was growing in her herb garden, had poisoned her father after discovering she had been cut out of her father's will.

Whilst all this intrigue was afoot, the guests continued to enjoy their fully catered dinner. Many thanks to Skew Whiff and Chris Burns Catering without whom the evening would not have been a success.



EASTER AROUND THE WORLD

We hope to see you at some, or all, of our services and events taking place over Holy Week within the Parish, and we are delighted to share with you how Easter and Holy Weeks differ yet remain similar in some of our congregation's families and friends abroad.

BRAZIL by Jubi da Silva

This is not what happens during Easter time in Brazil, but it is what happens in a capital city by the seaside of Northeast Brazil. A local megachurch invites a popular gospel singer and church members perform a play of the Passion of Christ on stage. Amazingly, tens of thousands of people show up to enjoy the music, the performance and a short talk. Well, it is a public event, free entry! Ten years ago when I was there, 80,000 people showed up. It was quite spectacular to hear the voice of my pastor then reverberating in waves via the speakers reaching a sea of people. Photo shows last year's event.

CYPRUS by Andy Ferguson

We are looking forward to being in Wargrave on Good Friday 29th March for the Walk of Witness and the celebrations of Easter Day on 31st March.

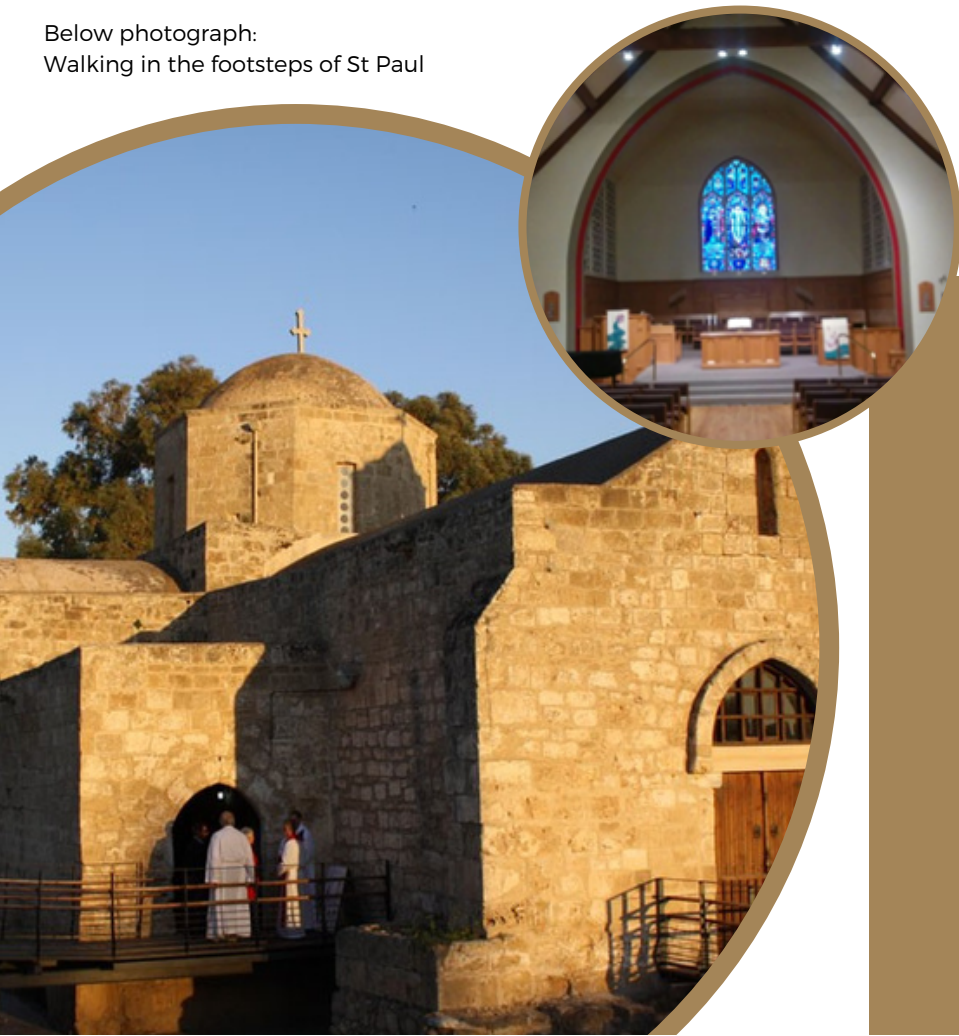
On 27th April we set off for three weeks in Cyprus. I suspect that our guests will be surprised that in Paphos there will be large displays of eggs and chickens four weeks after Easter Sunday.

It's not that the Cypriots are lazy or late in taking down their decorations. The main religion in Cyprus is Orthodox Christianity which follows the Julian Calendar (in Western Europe we use the Gregorian Calendar), so this year Easter Day is on 5th May.

We are looking forward to the double celebration!

Interestingly, when we are in Cyprus, we worship in a Greek Orthodox Church building which is used by the Anglicans and Roman Catholics. The Church of St Kyriaki is over 600 years old and, on the site where St Paul was taken captive and persecuted in 45AD.

Below photograph:
Walking in the footsteps of St Paul



CANADA by Jane & Bob Austen

Our eldest son John moved to Canada in 2008. He married his Canadian wife Melissa in 2010 (here in Wargrave) and over the years we have been blessed with 3 lovely Canadian grandchildren. They live happily in Mississauga which is a large suburb of Toronto.

In answer to prayer, the family has found a spiritual home in Lorne Park First United Church, which has an active all-age congregation and hosts many activities and groups for children and adults throughout the week. Easter commences with an Ash Wednesday lunch and service, and a Lenten Study course which can be accessed in person or remotely. Easter Sunday will see a packed church with children's groups and an Easter Egg hunt!

Jane and I join the family in worship when the opportunity arises and we enjoy the lively and friendly atmosphere. It is especially lovely to see the children engaging in Church – a reminder of the wonderful times when our 3 boys enjoyed their times here at St Mary's Sunday Club, especially the outings!

PALM SUNDAY

24th March

8am - Holy Communion BCP (WR)
9.45am - Holy Communion (WR) & Junior Church

MAUNDY THURSDAY

28th March

7pm - Maundy Thursday (WR)

GOOD FRIDAY

29th March

9.30am - Young Family Service (CC)
10am - Walk of Witness (WR)
2pm - Hour at the Cross (WR)

EASTER SUNDAY

31st March

8am - Holy Communion BCP (WR)
9.45am - Holy Communion (WR) & Junior Church
followed by Easter Egg Hunt
10.30am - Holy Communion (KH)

SUNDAYS IN MARCH

Guest Speakers during Lent

Exciting news! We have two speakers in March.

Sunday 3rd March

Sean will be persuading us how we can contribute financially to the work of St Mary's in the most tax-efficient way. At the APCM, we hear from church treasurer, Jane Wills, the state of the church's finances giving us either a sunny or a gloomy forecast for the year ahead. This year alas, it's going to be gloomy. Our gas bill has doubled in the past 2 years and collections in services are down. St Mary's has been reliant on the generosity of a number of parishioners over the years, which won't continue forever. We need to hope and pray, therefore, that we can attract more people to become regular contributors and for the rest of us to increase our regular commitment.

Sunday 17th March

Debbie Bruwer will be talking about Christians Against Poverty (CAP). The PCC voted to support CAP financially as one of its mission partners and we are asking people to train as 'Befrienders' to help the work of CAP. More information will be shared at the service and in the next issue of the Parish Magazine.

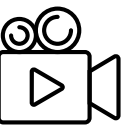
YOUTH GROUP

by Richard Eves

Amidst the many discussions of Fortnite, football, and who has the most embarrassing haircut, Monday Group (formerly Tuesday Group) continue to meet and we're having a great time being hyper competitive at ball based games and learning about what it means to be a Christian from the Bible.



Over the last few weeks we've seen God's forgiveness, love, and protection of anyone who confesses their sins and puts their trust in Him from Psalm 32, and how close the connection between Jesus and his people is from Acts 9.



We're also looking forward to an **Easter Film Club**, where over the school holidays we will be watching some modern movies and thinking about how the themes relate to what we find in the Gospel. If you or someone you know is Year 7-13 and would like to join us either on Monday evenings, or at the Easter Film Club, contact Richard.

The Youth Group is open to anyone in Y7 upwards.

Mondays 5.30pm - 6.30pm | Church Centre

ECO TIPS: GOING GREEN FOR LENT



Organised Groups

- Go Green (er) for Lent
arochoa.org.uk/go-green-for-lent
- Take part in The Big Plastic Count (11th - 17th March) thebigplasticcount.com



NEWS FROM THE JANUARY PCC

by Sheila Williams, PCC Secretary

- A new RE programme is being delivered to primary school children in Wargrave and Crazies Hill.
- Discussion: how well are the Churches in the Parish fulfilling their commitment to 'Teaching' as detailed in the Parish Roadmap for Ministry?
- Knowl Hill has had LED lighting installed and hopes for a contribution from the Deanery for this.
- Wargrave Festival plans were locked in with the view to keep St Mary's 'At the Heart of the Community'.

JUNIOR CHURCH



Liz Hobden

At Junior Church we continue our gentle stroll along Luke Street popping into various homes Jesus visited as recorded by Luke in his gospel. Each week, as well as having fun and getting to know one another better, we are learning more about who Jesus is and what he is like - rather like fitting pieces into a jigsaw puzzle. We've seen him heal Peter's mother-in-law in The Sick House; cure a paralysed man and forgive his sins in The Crowded House; welcome sinners and eat with them in Levi The Taxman's House and praise a Centurion for his faith in The Roman House.



We're beginning to build up a special Luke Street display which will be ready to view very soon.

Thank you for your prayers and encouragement. If you'd like to be a Junior Church helper occasionally, do talk to Lis Hobden.

THE EGG THAT SHARES THE EASTER STORY

The Meaningful Chocolate Company's milk and dark chocolate Easter eggs go on sale from 25th February until Easter, as long as stocks last.

The eggs are plastic free, palm oil free and Fairtrade costing £4.50 milk, £5.50 dark. And unlike all other eggs in the UK, each box contains a booklet that tells the real Easter story and has puzzles. As ever, we expect demand to exceed supply and recommend that you pre-order from Mike Buckland, the parish Fairtrade rep, at stewarding@wargravechurch.org.uk.



ELECTORAL ROLL 2024

by Helen Vonka, Electoral Roll Officer

On behalf of the PCC, I am writing to you to encourage you to join the church's Electoral Roll. The current roll was fully renewed in 2019, and so we only need anyone who would like to be added to the list to apply now. You may have recently moved into the Parish or started coming regularly to services. There is a copy of the current list pinned up at the back of the Churches, and application forms are also available there.

When you apply to enrol, you identify yourself as a member of the Church at Wargrave and Knowl Hill and show that you are willing to join fully in its life through corporate worship, prayer, giving, service, fellowship and sharing the Gospel, so that the Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified. The minimum age for membership of the Electoral Roll is 16, but young people who will reach that age in the next year can apply now and will then become members on their birthday.

The Electoral Roll is the nearest thing we have to a "Membership List", and is the basis for many official sets of statistics. It is also the list of those who are entitled to vote at the Annual Meeting, being held this year at St. Marys on Sunday 14th April, to stand for election to the PCC or Deanery Synod, or to be appointed as a Sidesman/Sideswoman.

Please return completed applications by Sunday 24th March to the Church Office.

VICAR'S LETTER

Dear Parish Family



As we approach Good Friday and Easter Sunday I have been struck afresh that these events anchor us: they anchor us on a global and personal level.

First, **Good Friday means we have a friend in the darkness.**

The Lord Jesus plumbed the depths of human despair and suffering on Good Friday. The Bible tells us that Jesus was forsaken, rejected, a man of sorrows familiar with pain, who suffered every temptation. On the night before his death the Lord Jesus went to the Mount of Olives, overlooking the city of Jerusalem. Here Jesus opens his heart to the disciples and his heart to God. 'Jesus began to be deeply distressed and troubled' (Mark14:33).

The Greek verb 'troubled' means to be overcome with horror. What Jesus felt, sensed and saw shocked the normally unshockable Son of God.

He bore the weight of false accusation and the stress of knowing what lay ahead. The word Gethsemane 'place of the olive press', is very apt as a description of those crushing hours of the Lord Jesus' suffering on our behalf. Luke records 'being in anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground' (Luke 22:24). Medically, hematidrosis is the condition that occurs as a result of great emotional stress: blood vessels rupture in the sweat glands and produce a mixture of blood and sweat.

Our Lord understands darkness like no one else. Darkness filled the land that first Good Friday (Mark 15:33) as Jesus willingly took our misery and judgement on himself. Here is a friend in the darkness who not only suffers with us, he also suffers for us. What a friend we have in Jesus!

Secondly, **Easter means we have a future in the light.**

As the sun rose at dawn that first Easter Day, the light banished the darkness in more ways than one. The global Coronavirus pandemic cast a long shadow, which in our minds has receded, but the shadow of death

still hangs over each one of us.

As clergy our responsibility at funerals is to remind those present that if Christ was raised from the dead we can be too, and it need not be our final destination.

Jesus' last words were "It is finished" (John 19:30). No more striving or pain is needed to pay for sin! Of course, our suffering in this life continues but is part of the old order which is passing away. If we believe and trust in Jesus, our future is secure.

The hymn writer Phillips Brooks (1835-1893), who also wrote 'O little town of Bethlehem', summarises well what Good Friday and Easter Sunday mean:

*'Tomb, thou shalt not hold Him longer;
Death is strong, but life is stronger,
Stronger than the dark, the light;
Stronger than the wrong, the right.
Faith and Hope triumphant say
Christ will rise on Easter Day.'*

John

John R.M. Cook
Vicar of Wargrave with Knowl Hill

SUNDAY SERVICES

ST MARY'S CHURCH, WARGRAVE

8am	Every Sunday	Holy Communion (A said service in traditional language)
9.45am	3rd March	Morning Worship - Guest speaker
	10th March	Holy Communion - Mothering Sunday
	17th March	Morning Worship - Guest speaker
	24th March	Palm Sunday Holy Communion
	31st March	Easter Sunday Holy Communion

JUNIOR CHURCH

9.45am	Every Sunday	0-3 yrs Bell Tower (Crèche) 3-16 yrs Church Centre
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Mothering Sunday: Sunday 10th March

A short, informal service thanking God for our mothers and celebrating all who care for and nurture us. There will of course be daffodils! Everyone is invited to stay on for coffee and cake in the Church Centre. Bring the whole family.

ST PETER'S CHURCH, KNOWL HILL

10.30am	3rd March	Holy Communion
	17th March	Holy Communion
	31st March	Easter Sunday Holy Communion

ST PAUL'S CHURCH, WARREN ROW

9.15am	10th March	Holy Communion
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PARISH REGISTERS : WEDDINGS, BAPTISMS & FUNERALS

Funerals at St Mary's, Wargrave

31st January	Jean Dunbar, 86, Cremation Service at Reading
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March

DIARY EVENTS

Saturday 2nd

9am - Ladies' Breakfast (CC)

Wednesday 7th

11.45am - Monthly Prayer (CC)

Wednesday 13th

7.30pm - Butterflies: A Mother's Day Dinner (CC)

Saturday 16th

7am & 9am - St Mary's Spring Clean (WR)

Thursday 21st

2.30pm - CAMEO: Cards (KH)

WR = Wargrave | KH = Knowl Hill | CC = Church Centre

CHURCH CENTRE BOOKINGS

Looking to hold an event in the Church Centre?
Contact Lucy in the office to discuss your requirements

LIFE EVENTS

If you are interested in holding your wedding, baptising your child or getting baptised yourself, or need to discuss funeral arrangements, please contact Lucy in the Parish Office or alternatively contact our Vicar, John Cook.

THE PARISH OFFICE

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Office Hours: Monday 9.30am - 12 noon
Tuesday - Thursday | 9.30am - 1pm
Vicar - 0118 940 2202 | johnrmcook@btconnect.com
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