

Early Spring Newsletter

February & March 2023



**St Mary's, Rushden &
St Peter's, Newton Bromswold**

Who's Who

Rector: Rev Tom King

The Rectory, 36 Meadow Sweet Road, Rushden, NN10 0GA
email: revtrex@icloud.com

telephone:
07732
805443

Readers: Tony Smith, Michael Bantin

Hall Bookings: Pam & Paul Bailey
7 Kenilworth Close, Rushden, NN10 0QH

01933 313195

St Mary's Churchwardens:

Kate Woodfield, 19 Kendal Close, Rushden, NN10 0QF
Paul Adams, 19 Wymington Park, Rushden, NN10 9JP

01933 412836
01933 318770

St Mary's Church Office

Tues--Thurs: 10.00-12noon:
Pam Bailey, Marion Bates, Kathy MacKenzie

01933 412235

email: stmaryschurchoffice@btinternet.com

website: www.stmaryschurchrushden.org

facebook: stmaryschurchrushden

**Newton Bromswold Churchwardens**

Bob Lines, 25 Church Lane, Newton Bromswold, NN10 0SR:
Jenny Burt, 23 Church Lane, Newton Bromswold

01933 315864
01933 353076

Newton Bromswold website: www.newtonchurch.co.uk

Contents

Who's Who	2
From Rev Tom King	3
St Mary's News	4
Newton News	6
From the Archdeacon	7
Mission Matters	8
Belfry Gossip/ Children & Youth Activities	9
Book Review	12
Church Diary	14
Services in February	15
Services in March	16

*Items for the
April/May Newsletter
should be sent by
Sunday 12 March
to both
St Mary's Church Office
and
missjudecurtis
@btinternet.com*



An Outrageous Notion

With the production of this newsletter, and Easter being quite early in the calendar this year, it is a surprise to realise that this production will cover all of Lent, as well as Epiphany, and all the things in between. Surely, we were only just now talking about Christmas, were we not?

This does highlight some of the peculiarities of the church year: how the festivals that we celebrate are organised and how actually they skip around in the life and times of Jesus of Nazareth. We cannot celebrate the Baptism of Jesus (Ma 3:13; Mk 1:9; Lu 3:21; Jn 1:32) aged 30, and then four weeks later his Presentation in the Temple, aged 41 days (Lk 2:22-24; Lev 12:1-4), without realizing that these festivals are not rehearsing a chronological sequence. There is clearly a presumption, then, that we understand the whole story that is behind all of these festivals, since these festivals and days of remembrance are picking out only the *highlights* of Jesus' life and ministry.

This whole story is the purpose and mission of Jesus Christ on earth – as one of us, and at the same time not – that begins with Christmas, peaks at Easter, and sees its outworking at Pentecost. This is the story of salvation, the hope of God's own presence with us, the defeat of sin and death, and the outrageous notion that we the church have a part to play in bringing this hope to the whole world.

So, do we remember this whole story rightly? Certainly it is very easy to move from one festival or holy day to the next, without remembering the reasons why they were instituted. Perhaps during this Lent, we could make it a task to re-read one or more of the Gospels, all four of which build towards the events of Holy Week. And when we do, maybe these can rekindle our curiosity about why this happened, the background of Jesus' life and ministry.

When we do re-read the narratives and accounts of the life and times of Jesus of Nazareth, we rediscover their potency, with all their richness and depth of connection to the Old Testament. This, in its turn, draws us on to understand more and more of the ancient story of God's salvation of those who call on his name. I wish you an eventful exploration and encounter.

Every blessing, Tom

St Mary's News

Summary of PCC meeting held on Monday 9 January 2023 at 7.00pm

21 members were present with just two apologies. After opening with a prayer and welcome, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 November 2022 were agreed and accepted.

A grant of £5,000 has been awarded for assistance with heating costs in conjunction with our **Warm Space initiative**, although this may well need to be returned in part as the initiative has not quite had the uptake we expected.

Louise, our treasurer, gave an **update on our finances**. The deficit

is less than we budgeted for. We await responses to Stewardship Sunday. Bob and Marion will continue to assist with the collection of **Gift Aid** to support Louise. A **Thank You** to Bob and Marion was noted for their hard work over many years as treasurers.

The Administrator role will be advertised - see p5 - with a closing date of 31 January. Details can be accessed via our website.

Our Teaching series reconvened on Sunday 15 January. So far those attending have found it valuable during our discernment process, leading up to the **PCC Away Day on May 20**.

Our updated **Safeguarding Policy** was agreed and will be on display around the church buildings. **Heating** is now fixed, **South Porch door** matters continue to be addressed, a Statement of Need and Significance will be presented to the Diocese for a ramp/access and related issues.

King Charles' coronation on Saturday May 6 was noted, with an expectation that some event will be held in St Mary's.

Rosemary's retirement in July as Choir mistress will be marked, to thank her for her outstanding and faithful service.

Flower Rotas

Behind the Communion Table **February**

- 5 Ellen Inwood
- 12 Kathy & Chris MacKenzie
- 19 Julie West

All Sundays after are in Lent and traditionally there are no flowers until **Easter Sunday, April 9**

Memorial Chapel **February/March**

If you would like to give flowers in memory of loved ones please contact Brenda Dixon: 01933 358982

The PCC are supportive of **Rev Tom's PhD** studies.

Please note the **APCM** will be held on **Sunday 16 April** at 1.30pm, following a shared lunch - more details to follow.

The **next PCC meeting** will be held on **Monday 13 March** at 7.00pm in the Lower Vestry Hall.

Crafts and Coffee/Tea

The next meetings are on **Tuesday 7 February** when the group will be making **Valentine Hearts**. A further meeting will be held on **Tuesday 7 March**. For further information contact Lynne: 353655 or lynne@lateralflow.co.uk.



Children's Society

John's quiz 'Animal Kingdom' is still on sale at £1. Available from Mary, Pam, Anne, the Church Office and Joy [01933 318415]. Thank you to everyone who buys this quiz in support of the society.

Congratulations!

... to **Carole Padley** who turned **80** on **17 January**, with the love and best wishes of all at St Mary's.

Mission Quiz

Thank you to all who supported last year's quiz. **We raised £307**. Of the 161 entries, 52 were all-correct. The winners are **Dawn Odam** of

the Registers

Interment of ashes

Thursday 24 November 2022

Caroline Farr

Keyworth near Nottingham, **I Hardy** of Chesterfield and **Hilary Dore** of Higham Ferrers.

For further details and answers please contact Peter Chamberlain on cephasxwords@gmail.com or 01933 386826.

St Mary's Ladies Group

The first meeting of the Ladies Group in 2023 will be on **Wednesday 8 March at 2.15pm**. We shall be meeting in the church hall, and our speaker will be Linnet.

I am very much looking forward to the meetings this year, we have some very interesting speakers, and it will be so good to see you all again after our long break. If any one would like to join us who hasn't been before, please do come along, you will be made most welcome.

Cynthia Brown

Job Vacancy

St Mary's is advertising for the paid post of **Parish Administrator**: some detail is available on the website, but if this is something that really interests you, please contact Tom or the Church Wardens for further information. Contact details on p2.

Newton News

Confirmation

Congratulations to **Lola Stannard** who was confirmed on **Saturday 12 November** at St Martin Church, Bedford by the Bishop of Richborough. Lola was confirmed alongside her Aunt Lydia.

Lent Bible Study – Road to the Cross

Glyn Ackerley will be running a weekly session from **Wednesday 22 February to Wednesday 29 March** from **7.00-8.30pm** in **The Swan, Newton Bromswold**. Please come and join us. Tea and coffee will be available to purchase on these nights as well as the pubs normal drinks.

Quiz Night - On **Saturday 4 March** starting at 7:30pm, **Friends of Newton Church** will be hosting a **Quiz Night in The Swan, Newton Bromswold**, entry fee is £10 for a team of 4.

Mothering Sunday

A special Service for Mothering Sunday will be held on the **Sunday 19 March** at 10.00am.

Cowslip and Fritillary Day will be held on **Easter Monday 10 April** from 1.00 to 4.00pm. Afternoon Teas will be served. Plants for Sale.

Freda Godfrey

It is with great sadness that we learnt of Freda Godfrey's

Flowers

5 February 2023
June Clarke

death. Freda was a member of our congregation and used to live along the Avenue Road before she moved to live in Cornwall with her son. Freda was on the PCC and used to run a stall at the Village Fete
Helen Lines

STOP PRESS - TRAIDCRAFT

The organisation **Traid Craft** has gone into liquidation. Many of you will have supported Traidcraft over the years. It has been around since the late 1990s and is a huge loss.



Monthly event for dads, stepdads, granddads or male carers and their younger children [0-6 yrs]. Children enjoy a range of toys including bouncy castle, sit-on cars and inflatable ball pool.

Saturdays

18 February & 18 March

9.30am - 12noon

St Mary's Church Hall

Adults £5: children free

Billy

One hundred years ago this year, a famous sporting event took place in London. On 28th April 1923, the Empire Stadium, Wembley, was opened to the public for the first time and hosted the FA Cup Final between Bolton Wanderers and West Ham United. The final was preceded by totally chaotic scenes as vast crowds surged into the stadium. In those days, with most spectators standing, the capacity was a staggering 125,000.

However, an estimated 300,000 gained entrance and the terraces overflowed onto the pitch. Mounted policemen, including one on a white horse were brought in to clear the crowds from the pitch and enable the match to start. The match began 45 minutes late with thousands of spectators still standing around the perimeter. Bolton won 2–0. The pre-match overcrowding prompted discussion in the House of Commons and led to the introduction of safety measures for future finals. Not surprisingly, the match is often referred to as the "White Horse Final" and is commemorated by the White Horse Bridge at the new Wembley Stadium. An added piece of trivia is that the horse's name was Billy.

Out of the 300,000 people who attended the final, the only name people tend to remember 100 years on is Billy, the police horse. Since when has a horse played the starring role at a football match? Billy wasn't even meant to be there. Once Billy arrived, it was only meant to be a walk-on role. He was just doing his job. One horse amongst



many, surrounded by 300,000 people.

But we still remember his name. Ever felt anonymous? Ever felt invisible? (I was talking to a Big Issue seller who told me that it is soul-destroying being 'invisible', as people rush past and even avoid eye contact. Ever felt that you simply don't matter? Ever felt like you're just another brick in the wall, to quote Pink Floyd? The Bible tells us that God knows us by name. He has our name written on the palm of his hand. At every Confirmation Service, the bishop lays hands on the candidate and says, "God has called you by name and made you his own." By name. He knows you and loves you. He always has and he always will.

Richard Ormston
Archdeacon of Northampton

Diocese of Peterborough - Magazine Resource - February 2023

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Tel: 01733 887000 Email: communications@peterborough-diocese.org.uk

www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk

Mission Matters

Why?

Why does “mission matter”? Does that seem an odd question to ask you - the readers of this church newsletter? After all, we already know the answer, don't we ...?

I'm writing this a couple of weeks into January. The start of a new year always seems a good time to pause and prayerfully reflect upon how we are living our lives as followers of Jesus. And, before I continue, please understand that, first and foremost, I am applying the following challenge to myself.

Sometimes I think that we forget the most fundamental motive for mission, which John Stott explains so clearly in his exposition of Romans.* In Ch.1:5 Paul writes about the calling of 'all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name's sake.' Stott points out that Paul's supreme desire was for the glory and honour of Christ's name, and goes on to say, 'The highest of all missionary motives is neither obedience to the Great Commission (important as that is), nor love for sinners who are alienated and perishing (strong as that incentive is), but rather zeal - burning and passionate zeal - for the glory of Jesus Christ.'

What a challenge! How easy it can be to lose sight of this fundamental truth. Then how difficult it is to be consistent in our mission involvement, which can begin to feel like hard, often unrewarding, work. If this is the case then we are no longer supporting our mission partners effectively. If though, we remember the true 'Why' of mission activity: the aim of glorifying our Lord Jesus, then we begin to see things differently. My prayer for us as a church, and for myself, is that we may come to God and receive from him fresh vision, motivation, *and* zeal to play our part in proclaiming the Good News of our wonderful Saviour

Every blessing, *Sue Eagles*

**The Message of Romans:*
The Bible Speaks Today (IVP)



Belfry Gossip

We continue to ring on six of our bells each week for Sunday service, although we can often ring all eight bells on a practice night with the help of visitors - thank you all.

It was pleasurable to ring a quarter peal for the evening Carol Service before Christmas and of course for Christmas morning. We have also recently rung a quarter peal as a farewell to Bishop Donald as he retired from the Peterborough Diocese.

Four of us made up a team and entered the Wellingborough Branch Quiz in December and had some very strong competition. However we were narrowly beaten by the Bozeat team. Better luck next year!

In January there are Branch and Tower AGM's coming up so lots to look forward to.

Tintinnabulum

Children & Youth Activities

We hosted 30 plus children for our **Christmas Craft Day** this time, where we all explored 'messengers' in the Christmas story. We made Christmas cakes, snow gloves, Advent calendars and more, plus had some fun and games!



In **Bumps and Babes**, Mary and Joseph came to visit in the travelling crib. All of the families took it in turn to take them home, and look after them for the day. They had a diary to fill in with all the adventures they got up to before they came to church on Christmas Day for the arrival of baby Jesus.

The **Ready, Set, Roll**, youth group got stuck in over the Christmas period too, helping out with the Craft Day, Nativity Service and looking after the travelling crib.

To say a big thank you for all that, we had a Pizza and Bonfire Evening.

Helen Smedley

Good To Know . . .

Embrace The Middle East's Podcast is back for a second series. It launched last week and will be released **every Tuesday until 14 February**.

Go to their website [embraceme.org] to find the answers to questions like, "Is there hope for Christians in Syria?"; "What is life like for the Christian minority in Iraq?"; "How are women of both sides of the Israel-Palestine conflict coping?"

The series kicked off last week with a conversation between Tim Livesey and Archbishop Angaelos, the Coptic Orthodox Archbishop of London.

Also from Embrace, their **Lent Study Guide - The Kingdom of God is Justice and Peace** is now available for just £2 from their webshop.



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BOOK REVIEW

Richard Foster, *Streams of Living Water*, Eagle Publishing

The writer first came to prominence as a Christian author some thirty years ago with the publication of his popular book *Celebration of Discipline*. *Streams of Living Water* was published ten years later.

I suspect that all of us have heard such comments as “I hate organised religion: I’ve moved way beyond it” or “I don’t believe in communities of worship. I am strong enough to be on my own” or even “Hypocrites and selfish people invent religion to serve their own purposes”. Surprisingly, people who make such comments often also say “However, I’m very spiritual.” In this book Foster takes up the challenge of explaining what it really means, from a Christian point of view, to be truly spiritual. He offers prophetic insights into how God is at work, growing spirituality within his church, by drawing together the best of treasures that are found within the various traditional expressions of faith within the universal church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. I suggest that members of any church that feels the call to be “more spiritual” will be blessed by studying the contents of this book.

Foster identifies six streams of living water within the worldwide church; the Contemplative - a prayer-filled life; the Holiness - a virtue-filled life; the Charismatic - Spirit-empowered life; the Social Justice a compassionate life; the Evangelical - a ‘Word-centred’ life and the Incarnational - a sacramental life. He sees a vision for new, vibrant life in churches when they draw their inspiration from all six streams: a significant challenge to any church that identifies itself exclusively as being part of only one stream!

One third of this book is given over to two helpful appendices “Critical Turning Points in Church History” and “Notable Figures and Significant Movements in Church History”. These provide both balance and a springboard to the central message of this prophetic book, providing important insights into the journey that church has travelled over 2000 years, helping us to see where we have come from and why we are where we are now.

There are many quotations in this book: one that particularly stood out for me is attributed to St Augustine: “Without God we cannot. Without us, He will not.”

Tony Smith

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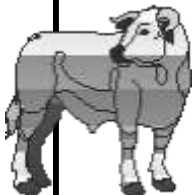
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Church Diary

Late January

- 29 **Sunday: 10.30am - Christingle Service - Joint Service in Church** - please pick up a **Children's Society** collecting tube and join us at this service.
Sunday: 6.30-9.00pm - New Teaching Series continues in the Church Hall: "The Holy Spirit & Us". Food, teaching, discussion and prayer. Please sign the list at the back of church if you wish to attend.
- 31 **Tuesday: 7.30pm - Churches Together.** A preliminary meeting to plan for a mission to young people. Contact Tom [07732 805443, revtrex@icloud.com] if you are interested or for further details.

February

- 7 **Tuesday: 10.00-12noon - Crafts Coffee/Tea** in the Church Hall. The group will be making Valentine Hearts. Contact details on p5.
- 9 **Thursday: 7.30pm - Prayer, Praise & Presence**
- 18 **Saturday: 9.30-12 noon - Who Let The Dads Out?** - details in box on p6

March

- 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 & April 5 **Wednesdays: 11.30-1.00 Lent Lunches**
- 7 **Tuesday: 10.00-12noon - Crafts Coffee/Tea in the Church Hall.**
- 8 **Wednesday: 2.15pm - Ladies' Group** meet in the Church Hall. Speaker, Rev Dr Linnet Smith
- 13 **Monday: 7.00pm - PCC Meeting in the Lower Hall**
- 18 **Saturday: 9.30-12 noon - Who Let The Dads Out?** - details in box on p5?

April

- 1 **Saturday: All Day - Easter Craft Day** - more detail in the next Newsletter
- 12 **Wednesday: 2.15pm - Ladies' Group** meet in the Church Hall. Speaker, Carol Clarke - "Guide Dogs For The Blind"
- 16 **Sunday: 1.30pm: St Mary's Annual Parochial Church Meeting - APCM** will take place after a joint service at 10.30am and following a shared lunch - more details in the next edition.

May

- 20 **Saturday: PCC Away Day**

Services for February 2023

St Mary's
Rushden

St Peter's
Newton Bromswold

Sunday 5 February - Third Sunday before Lent

9.30am	Holy Communion	10.00am	Family Service
11.15am	Morning Prayer		

Sunday 12 February - Second Sunday before Lent

9.30am	All Age Service & Baptism	10.00am	Morning Prayer
11.15am	Morning Prayer		

Sunday 19 February - Sunday next before Lent

9.30am	All Age & Parade Service	10.00am	Family Service
11.15am	Holy Communion		

Sunday 26 February - First Sunday of Lent

9.30am	Informal Service	10.00am	Holy Communion
11.15am	Morning Prayer		

Midweek Services in St Mary's Church

Thursdays - February 2, 9, 16, 23
at 10.30am - Holy Communion [BCP]

If you would like to continue to receive this Newsletter in place of Grapevine then talk to St Mary's Church Office and your copy will be delivered as before unless you normally collect it yourself. For those receiving their copy by post there will be a small charge of £5 per year: if this applies to you, a note will be included with this edition

Non-subscription copies will be routinely made available at the back of church. If you would like to contribute towards their printing costs please put whatever seems appropriate into the old Grapevine slot by the Hymn Books in St Mary's Church.

Services for March 2023

St Mary's
Rushden

St Peter's
Newton Bromswold

Sunday 5 March - Second Sunday of Lent

9.30am All Age Holy Communion 10.00am Family Service
11.15am Morning Prayer

Sunday 12 March - Third Sunday of Lent

9.30am All Age Service 10.00am Morning Prayer
11.15am Morning Prayer

Sunday 19 March - Fourth Sunday of Lent - Mothering Sunday

9.30am All Age Parade Service 10.00am Mothering Sunday Service
11.15am Holy Communion

Sunday 26 March - Fifth Sunday of Lent

9.30am Informal Service 10.00am Holy Communion
11.15am Morning Prayer

Midweek Services in St Mary's Church

Thursdays 10.30am on March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 - Holy Communion [BCP]

Live-Streaming

St Mary's Sunday Services at 9.30 will continue to be live-streamed and can also be found later through our website on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/stmarysrushden>.

