

UPTON NEWS

December 2009

Vol 3 No. 34

A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL

ST MARY'S CHURCH

St Mary's Services for December

6 December 0900 - Sung Eucharist, followed by refreshments

13 December 0900 - Sung Eucharist

20 December 0900 - Sung Eucharist

Christmas Eve 4.00 P.M. - Crib and Carol Service - children might like to come dressed as shepherds, sheep or angels.

Christmas Morning 0900 - Carols and Communion

27 December 0900 - Sung Eucharist

3 January – No Service at St. Mary's, we will be joining the Blewbury Methodist Church at 10.30 for their Covenant Service.

Collection for GAP

St Mary's will be making a collection of non-perishable foods, toiletries, warm hats, gloves and scarves. Please leave your donations in the box in church or at Thimbles, Newman's Close. The collection will be delivered to The Gap, a shelter for the homeless in Oxford, around 20th December. Thank you

UPTON METHODIST CHURCH

Services commence at 10:30am except 20th

6 December Dr. Paul Williams (at Upton)

13 December Peter Hemmings. (at Upton)

20 December Rev. Helen White (at Blewbury)

Carol Service at 3PM.

27 December Terence Adams (at Upton)

3 January Rev. Helen White (at Blewbury)

Covenant Service

St. Mary's and St. Michael's will be joining us.

VILLAGE HALL EXTENSION

The managing architect has just reported that "works are proceeding well and currently on programme. Workmanship is good."

Now we have to start paying the bills. In the last few weeks over 40 local residents have responded to requests for the money they promised last year. Over £6,600 has been contributed so far. A few more donations are expected.

Other promises include:

£50,000 from the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment and the Waste Recycling Group through the Landfill Communities Fund. (This includes £5,500 contributed towards TOE's expenses by the District Council).

£27,000 through Southern Oxfordshire LEADER, half from the European Union and half from DEFRA.

£8,750 from the County Council

£9,020 from the Parish Council.

B R Simpson.

DROP-IN

Village Hall Drop-in Sessions

Come and join us in the Methodist Hall for the last session before Christmas on 10 December 10.30 until 12.00 noon. Enjoy a cup of coffee and a mincepie – a bargain at 50p.

The first session next year will be on 7th January 2010

Yvonne Collins

01235 850989

GEORGE AND DRAGON

Sorry for the lack of update last month. Our Halloween Party which was last month's highlight had to wait until this month to be reported because it happened too late to make it to the newsletter's November deadline. A local band, Mew and Wooster, provided the music. Once again, thank you to all who came to celebrate with us. The pictures will be up on our website soon.

Next and last big event for this year will be the New Year's Eve party. This year, we're going to have live music by The Triple A band performing covers from the 60's onwards. They're popular in the local pub scene and they've done a couple of gigs for us. We are looking forward to seeing them again. It's free admission so we hope to see you revelling with us on the 31st of December, from 9pm!

For the Sunday lunch on the 20th of December, we will be serving a traditional Christmas Turkey Dinner! Bill does an excellent Christmas Dinner and he could do that any day, not just a Sunday! If you're thinking about having a family do why not leave the cooking to Bill. What an excellent idea! For a minimum of ten people, we will do all the cooking, serving, cleaning and washing up for you. We'll even throw in the Christmas decorations and crackers for free. All you have to do is sit and enjoy the family chin-wag! It's not even going to cost you more than a regular Sunday roast, £7.75 adult and £4.50 child.

Also, if you haven't noticed yet, we have started closing on a Monday. Trade has been very slow since the summer season finished and so we have opted to have a much deserved day off that day. The only exception would be Christmas Bank Holiday Monday.

Finally, please take note of our opening hours and activities for the Christmas Season.

24 Dec Christmas Eve
Open from 12noon until midnight
Regular menu available at lunchtime only
25 Dec Christmas Day
12noon-2.30pm Open for drinks only
26 Dec Boxing Day
Open from 12noon for drinks only
28 Dec Bank Holiday
Open from 12noon for drinks only
31 Dec New Year's Eve
Open from 4pm drinks only Party from 9pm
1 Jan New Year's Day
12noon-3pm Open for drinks only

This past year has been difficult for many, not least the pub. Here's hoping that 2010 will bring us all good tidings. We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

See you at the pub

THE THEATRE GROUP

Our last trip was, as you may recollect from Austin's amusing account, was very enjoyable, but it was our smallest group ever, and we did wonder whether the Group had outlived its usefulness.

We soldiered on optimistically, however, and it is good to announce that there has been considerable interest in our next two ventures. I'd like to have sold the last two tickets for

MOSCOW STATE CIRCUS

**Wyvern Theatre, Swindon on Sunday 7 February
2010 at 5pm**

before I have to pay for them on 6 December. Minibus transport is included for £24.20 a head. Please rush!

And don't waste time - although it's a long way ahead - to book for

ANTONY and CLEOPATRA

**Courtyard Theatre, Stratford on Monday 21 June
2010 at 7.15 pm.**

We are thinking of going early enough to have a picnic again, but this can be agreed later. Meanwhile I'm anxious to be reassured that I should buy the tickets. The minibus is also reserved, and the total cost is £37.50 per person.

Do get in touch if you are interested in either or both of the shows - you don't have to be on the mailing list to come. If you would like advance information, though, please tell me.

Malcolm Wright (850705)

POPPY APPEAL

Yet again we broke all previous collections for the Poppy Appealthis year we raised £383.50. Thank you very much to all the collectors and to everybody who gave so generously.
Helen Weston.

RECTOR'S REFLECTIONS



Poems at Christmastime

Do you have a favourite piece of Christmas poetry? Whether serious or humorous, a poem can

do so much to sum up the spirit of the season, and perhaps especially so if the words have been set to music.

One of my favourite poems at this time of year was written some 1600 years ago, by a Spaniard with the impressive sounding name of Aurelius Prudentius Clemens. He had been a lawyer and civil servant, and in his retirement he turned to writing Christian poetry. He wrote in Latin, but subsequent generations have felt that he should be read more widely, so his poems have been translated into English (which is jolly fortunate!)

The first verse of the poem reads:

“Of the Father’s heart begotten,
Ere the world from chaos rose,
He is Alpha: from that Fountain
All that is and hath been flows;
He is Omega, of all things
Yet to come the mystic Close,
Evermore and Evermore”.

This verse refers to God the Son, who is the beginning (“the Alpha”) and the end (“the Omega”) of all things. There are at least 6 other verses, and the poem is often sung as a hymn, to a simple but majestic melody. For me, this poem sums up so much of what Christmas is all about. It tells how God, who creates and sustains the universe, willingly became an ordinary human being, so that we human beings could be reconciled to God and be given the power to live the lives that God wants us to live – lives of love, of generosity and mercy, of peace and deep fulfilment. Hundreds of years prior to Jesus’ birth, God spoke through the Prophets, promising that He would send someone to rescue His people, and to bring them new life. The birth of Jesus was the fulfilment of these ancient promises. There is something profoundly wonderful about the birth of Jesus, and all that it means for us and our world. Its meaning cannot be adequately summed up in a few words, or a quick phrase. It is something that people have been reflecting upon for the last two thousand years. Even today, the celebration of Christmas is not without its mystery and its otherworldliness. God still lets us glimpse this mystery – perhaps through the beauty of a carol, or the smile of a child, or a message of love, given or received.

And what is the mystery of Christmas? It is nothing less than the mystery of God’s love for us in Jesus Christ.

Let Aurelius Prudentius Clemens have the last word:

“This is he, whom seer and sibyl
Sang in ages long gone by;
This is he of old revealed
In the pages of prophecy;
Lo! he comes, the promised Saviour;
Let the world his praises cry!”

Fr Jason

VPA

I have planted up my winter pots, and have found a way of keeping Dizzy the old doggy, away from eating the potting compost, I used to put the bark shreddings from the buddleia that had I shredded up, but she used to eat some of that too, now I have hit upon putting a thin sprinkle of sand on the top, not so tasty apparently!!

The AGM was well attended; the Garden Surprise quiz was devilishly difficult, thanks Mary!! Eileen announced the prospective programme for next year, paper copies are available at the Post Office in Blewbury, the card ones are being printed up.

If you would like a ticket for the VPA Christmas social evening, to be held on Friday 4th December, £3.50 each, there are a few left as I write this, if you would like to book one or more, or if you need a lift, please call Maggie on 850126. This is always a nice way to kick start the Christmas season, mulled wine and hot nibbles, plus a quiz and maybe a silly game or two!

The committee would like to wish everyone a peaceful Christmas and a happy new year.

Happy Christmas
Karen Brooks

50's CLUB WINNERS for October 2009

£10	Mrs U Amos	95
£7	Mr J Abbott	168
£5	Mrs J Napper	70
£4	Mrs G Churchman	150

WINE CLUB

November Meeting

The wine club had a change of venue for this event, very different and extremely cosy, we had more people attend than at any other time so thanks for your support. The evening was entertaining and informative as ever. Ian Hewson attended with his annual presentation of wines for Christmas. He began with a Picoul de Pinet 2008, from the Languedoc, this was an extremely pleasant white, refreshing and light, good with seafood especially crustacean. The Champagne that followed was equally well appreciated, although some felt that it did not last long on the palate and the bubbles disappeared rather too quickly to make it a classic. We then compared the Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2008 Southern Lights with the Jean Reverdy Sancerre 2008. There was a pretty even split among the members, as to preference if it helps the Sauvignon was £3 dearer. The next revelation was a very nice Cabernet Sauvignon from Castilla Spain, I personally liked this wine, but in a blind tasting I do not think I would have recognised it as a Cabernet, very smooth more like a merlot, but very nice none the less. The piece de resistance was the Ribera del Duero Reserva Bodegas Valduera, in my humble opinion, the best wine of the evening, delicious, but a little pricey at £23!!! - but you get what you pay for as they say. The final wine was a desert wine from Australia very spicy and wintery but very popular, a few of us decided to purchase this Seppeltsfield Rutherglen Muscat Cellar No 9. Hope to see you all next month on the 9th for Williams take on Champagne.
Chris Traynor

PARISH COUNCIL

Bus service timetable alterations

The road bridge over the railway between South & North Moreton is to be rebuilt necessitating long term closure from 14 December to 12 March, causing a diversion to bus route 95. The Parish Council is awaiting confirmation of revised timetable for this period which upon receipt will be posted at the Upton bus stop and on the village notice boards.

Local Transport Plan 3 for period 2011 - 2030

Over the next year Oxfordshire County Council is determining a set of objectives to decide which improvements are to be made to the county's transport network and how these are prioritised. There are a series of Consultation periods and the

current consultation provides opportunity to suggest schemes for inclusion in the Local Transport Plan. This phase of the consultation ends 18 December. If you would like to take part in this part of the process please notify your views to Geoff Summers, our Passenger Transport Representative, who will coordinate this on behalf of the Parish Council. Geoff can be contacted at Winterset, Newmans Close or by email geoffrey@hartleysas.co.uk Details of the process can be viewed online at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ltconsultation Those without internet access can obtain details by telephoning the Local Transport Plan Team on 01865-815546.

If you do wish to participate please ensure Geoff receives your input by no later than Monday 14 December so that any responses can be conveyed to the Local Transport Plan Team by the deadline.

FLETCHER FAMILY CYCLE RIDE

On Saturday 12 September the Fletcher family, aged five to "no longer counting", cycled around our local villages visiting as many local churches as we could, in order to raise money for our small ancient church – opposite our house in Upton – and the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust. We cycled 21 miles in total in a figure of eight – coming back to Upton for lunch. We were very grateful for the generous sponsorship from the village and Kathryn's colleagues, and raised about £250 (including GiftAid) in total. Thank you all our sponsors. Pictures of the route we cycled and of each of the 16 churches we visited can be seen here <http://www.sine-nomine.co.uk/album/index.html>

NHW

The following dates are police NHW Drop In surgeries at the Methodist Hall, Upton from 5.45 - 6.45pm. Feel free to call in and discuss in confidence any neighbourhood issues or concerns.
Thursday 24th December 2009
Monday 4th January 2010

Celia Davies

Items for inclusion in the January issue to be sent to kameki39@btinternet.com. or handed in to Cathy or Mike by Monday 28th December.

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