

UPTON NEWS

February 2010

Vol 3 No. 36

ST MARY'S CHURCH

St Mary's Services for February

Sunday 7 Feb 0900 - Sung Eucharist, followed by refreshments
Sunday 14 Feb 0900 - Sung Eucharist
Sunday 21 Feb 1000 – All Age Family Service, followed by refreshments
Sunday 28 Feb 0900 - Sung Eucharist
Sunday 7 March 0900 - Sung Eucharist, followed by refreshments
Sunday 14 March 1000 – All Age Family Service for Mothering Sunday. Flowers will be distributed at this service. Refreshments will be served. Everyone welcome.

THE THEATRE GROUP

The minibus for our trip to see the Moscow State Circus in Swindon will leave the Village Hall at 3.30 pm on Sunday 7 February.

The minibus for "Antony and Cleopatra" at the Courtyard Theatre, Stratford in June is also fully booked. I'm happy to add to a list of reserves if anybody is interested, and we're still very open to suggestions for later in the year, about October time.

If you would like to be added to - or even removed from - our mailing list, please let me know.

Malcolm Wright (850705)

SPRING LINE METHODIST CHURCH

Services for February 2010

7 Feb St. Michaels Blewbury 10.30 am
14 Feb Upton 10.30 am Rev. Helen White (Holy Communion)
21 Feb Blewbury 10.30 am Mark Sandels
28 Feb Upton 10.30 am Rev. Richard Bittleston

Church Council: a reminder to Church Members that the first Spring Line Church Council will take place on Monday 1st February at 7.30 pm at the Upton Centre.

Colour or monochrome?

As I write, there are only little patches of snow (mostly the remains of heaps from cleared paths). I'm not used to snow being around for so long. I really noticed the difference the day the snow started to clear. My garden was in colour again – green grass, red-stemmed plants, brown earth, different coloured paths and gravel. After 10 days of white and shades of grey and black, it was great to see. I'd never particularly thought of winter being a colourful time in the garden, but after 10 days of snow, I appreciated the colours (quite apart from the easier journeys). I wonder how often we go through life not noticing the colours, the variety that's there – taking it for granted until something wakes us up to what's all around us.

We begin Lent later this month – traditionally a time to give something up. How about taking the time until Easter to notice what's around us, those things (and people) we so often take for granted? Let's appreciate the beauty and variety all around.

Helen White (Methodist Minister for the Spring Line Church)

RECTORS REFLECTIONS



A Ring of Snowdrops

The other day, I experienced a moment of sheer joy. Quite unexpectedly, as I walked past a local churchyard, I saw a ring of snowdrops. They were the first wild flowers I had seen in bloom this year. After all the snow that we had earlier in January, their presence was particularly welcome. For they were not only beautiful in themselves, but also beautiful in what they signified - that Spring was on its way, that before we knew it, there would be buds on the trees and daffodils in the hedgerows. In short, that ring of snowdrops shone with the beauty of hope.

Of all God's many gifts to us, I often feel that the gift of hope is among the greatest. What a difference hope can make to our lives as human beings, and to our communities! It can give us the strength to go on, in the face of illness, grief, and deep disappointment. It can encourage us to persevere, and so often in life, perseverance is the key to achieving success.

The Bible is full of teaching about the value of hope. Indeed, it is probably the profoundly hopeful book that has ever been written, because it grounds hope on the surest of foundations: God Himself. The writers of the Bible are convinced that nothing - absolutely nothing - can separate us from God's love for us, and for all creation. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is proof that even death itself cannot separate us from God's love.

For St. Paul, writing to Christians in the Greek city of Corinth, the virtue of hope is closely connected with faith, and above all, with love. It is because we love, that we can hope; or, to put it more fully, it is because we can know God's love for us, that we can receive God's gift of hope, in all its fullness and all its joy.

Let me finish with the words of St Paul;

“Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth, It bears all things, believes

all things, hopes all things, endures all things.... And now faith, hope, and love abide; and the greatest of these is love”.

And so the next time I walk past that ring of snowdrops, I shall give thanks to God for His gifts of faith, hope, and love. And I shall pray that at times when life is hard, and the world around us seems dark and wintry, we shall not forget God's great gift of hope.

Fr Jason

DROP-IN

We will soon be able to move back into the Village Hall for our Drop-in sessions but as yet we do not have a date for this. So until further notice we will be meeting, as usual, in the Methodist Hall. The next three sessions will be held on:

4 February – 18 February – 4 March
10.30 until 12.00 noon

Yvonne Collins 01235 850989

50's CLUB WINNERS

December 2009

£20	Mr Donoghue	14
£20	Mrs Miller	6
£10	Mrs Hammond	22
£7	Mr Lightfoot	48
£5	Mrs S Dawson	83
£4	Ms Powel	98

January 2010

£10	Mrs Summers	49
£7	Mr J Abbott	168
£5	Mrs Morris	64
£4	Ms Shaw	129

UPTON LADIES COVEN

The next meeting of the Coven will be on Thursday 4th February at 8.00 at the George and Dragon.

WINE CLUB MEETING JANUARY 2010

Hello and a happy new year to every one at the wine club and thanks again to the tremendous support, nearly 50 of you signed up for this months meeting, nice to see a few guests as well. The wines this month were from South Africa, and presented by Frankie and Kevin with aplomb, and plenty of vigour. We had 9 wines to taste from a Petit Blanc to a wonderful Shiraz. The first Wine of the evening was the Vondeling Petit Blanc, made by Mathew Copeland a very nice pleasant to drink white, unwooded and at £5.99 a bargain, followed by a wonderful Viognier, a good example of this grape but Viognier is not to everyone's taste, and has a more complex taste, dry and fragrant but with a bitter after taste at times. I love it but not everyone does, but an excellent example of the grape variety.

The reds started off with a good Pinotage, an excellent example of the wine, not a complex wine but a pleasant taste, and I venture to say could even be served slightly chilled, for the summer similar to some Beaujolais's.

The most expensive wine of the evening was the Sterhuis Astra Red at £21.99 this is a dear wine a blend of Merlot and Cabernet, I did not feel this was worth the price tag, expensive as so little is produced only 125 cases, but the general opinion was not worth the money.

The best wine of the evening by far in my opinion and several other peoples was the Manley Shiraz, produced in the Tulbagh region of the Cape, this is a deep complex wine with good lasting flavours and should be savoured, and at 14.6% a very alcoholic beverage. All the wines where sourced from the Naked Wine company, which is an online organisation, if you need to know more please speak to Kevin and Frankie.

See you all next month when Simon will be running away with the budget with Californian wines, hope to see you all there.

Chris Traynor

VPA

I have heard lots of villagers complaining about the snow, but I like it as it makes my garden look very lovely, and I can't see all the bits that I should have cleared away in the autumn, which I had left as "over wintering places for small creatures", my excuse and I'm sticking to it! I did go and look, very briefly, at the veg plot, my onions are still hanging in there, but I was inside again with a cup of tea a bit smartish!! Brrr!

Our first talk of the New Year is on Wednesday 3rd Feb, in the Vale room, Blewbury, 7.30pm, when Robert Longstaff will be giving a talk on "Vegetable Growing in Containers". I am a great fan of growing carrots in containers as the dreaded carrot fly can't get to them, and tomatoes in a pot on the patio are much easier to pick!

The programme for the coming year is available in the Post Office, we are a very informal group of gardening enthusiasts, please come and join us for a cup of tea or coffee, and enjoy a talk when we can't actually get out on the garden yet. We have a varied programme of talks and outings planned for the year, no membership forms to fill in, and free to join! Ring for a lift if you need one, Maggie 850126, as my phone doesn't work at the moment!

Our love and best wishes go to our Chairman, Eileen, on the sad death of her mum.

Happy Gardening
Karen Brooks

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

The next police surgery in Upton will be on Monday 8th February 2010 in the Methodist Hall from 5.45pm - 6.45pm.

Please feel free to call in and discuss any neighbourhood issues with the police in confidence.

Celia Davies

PARISH COUNCIL

Finance

At the meeting on Wednesday 27th January the Council decided to maintain the annual precept at the same level for the fifth consecutive year. When your council tax increases later this year please don't blame your parish council.

Planning Applications

UPT/21068 – Double storey rear and side extension with garage and front porch for Dr R Lott at 5 Fieldside.

UPT/4960/04 – Proposed new dwelling at Maslina, Reading Road for Mr and Mrs B. Arnold on the site of garage/studio that was recently given planning permission but has not been built.

BLEWBURY W.I.

The next Blewbury WI meeting may provide an answer to all your aches and pains (OK maybe not ALL of them)! Sue Huart is kindly giving us a talk about "Homeopathy" on Wednesday 24th February at 19.30 in The Vale room of Blewbury Village Hall. You can come for a "taster" as a visitor, make new friends and have lots of things to while away these dreary winter months - Theatre visits, pub lunches, walks, etc. If you need a lift please call Mrs Gettings on 851579. See you there!

THANK YOU

Guy and I have been overwhelmed by the kindness of friends and neighbours, checking to see that all was well at Owlscote during the recent spell of cold weather.

We were inundated with offers of help - shopping done, paths swept etc.

These good people know who they are, and we can only say a big "Thank-you"

Edna Napper

DIARY DATES

Saturday 20th February at 7.00 pm

A Gala Concert at the Jacqueline du Pre Music Building, St Hilda's College, Oxford. The Concert features the Young Lions Jazz Group, Marion Flanagan's School of Irish Dancing (including Riverdance) along with other young musicians and dancers.

Tickets cost £15-00 and include light refreshments.

Saturday 27th March at 7.00 pm

Kenny Ball and His Jazzmen in Concert at 7.00 p.m. on Saturday 27th March at Radley College Theatre near Abingdon. There will be a bar and tickets at £20-00 will include a light supper.

Both the above events are being organised by The Rotary Club of Oxford Isis to raise funds to support the immunisation campaign to eradicate polio

Tickets are available for both events and more information from Robert Fitchett at Upton Fruit Farm (01235 850808) or e-mail fitchettupton@ukonline.co.uk

Saturday March 27th 10.30 until 3.00

Didcot Twinning Association is holding a French Day at Ladygrove Park Primary School. Come along and learn/improve your French language skills.

Cook and learn, sing and learn. GCSE oral coaching. All ages and levels catered for. Cost - £15 per person with reductions for more than one person from the same address.

More details: www.didcottwinning.org.uk

Or call Sue Totterdell 01235 850080

Sheralyn Hares 01491 837718

Items for inclusion in the March issue to be sent to kameki39@btinternet.com, or handed in to Cathy or Mike by Tuesday 23rd February.

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