

UPTON NEWS

December 2010

Vol 3 No. 46

A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL

ST MARY'S CHURCH

Services for December

Sunday 5 December 9.00 am - Sung Eucharist, followed by refreshments
Sunday 12 December 9.00 am - Sung Eucharist
Sunday 19 December 9.00 am - Sung Eucharist
Friday 24 December 4.00 pm - Crib & Carol Service, followed by refreshments
Saturday 25 December 9.00 am - Christmas Day Sung Eucharist
Sunday 26 December - No service on this day
Sunday 2 January 9.00 am - Sung Eucharist

UPTON LADIES COVEN

The Upton Ladies Coven will meet for our pre-booked Christmas Meal at The George & Dragon on Thursday 2 December at the earlier time of 7pm. Contact Lesley ASAP on Tel 850308 if you would like to make a late reservation to eat with useveryone welcome!
The January Upton Coven will be held on Thursday 6 January 2011 in the George & Dragon at the usual time of 8pm. Hope to see you there.
Lesley

VILLAGE HALL DROP-IN SESSIONS

Come and join us for a mince pie on the last coffee morning before Christmas – 9 December at 10.30 in the Village Hall.

Yvonne Collins

01235 850989

SPRING LINE METHODIST CHURCH

Services for December commence at 10.30 am except our Carol Service, which starts at 3.00 pm.

5th Local Arrangements
12th Upton Rev. Martin Smithson
(Communion Service)
19th Blewbury Rev. Richard Bittleston
(Carol Service)
26th Didcot Rev. David Rankin

Special Services

Christmas Services: There are services at Didcot Methodist Church at 11.30 am on Christmas Eve and 10.30 am on Christmas Day.

Carol Service: Our Carol Service is at 3.00 pm on Sunday 19 December at the Blewbury Centre. Members of St Michael's Church choir are joining us, and there will be coffee and mince pies afterwards. We will be delighted to welcome anyone in the villages who wants to join us. Listen to the choir and sing some of your favourite carols.

Christmas Greetings

Finally, we would like to thank all the people and organisations who have used the Church Hall at Upton Chapel in the last year. This includes the Table Tennis Club, Guides and Brownies, Drop In, Dog Trainers, Morris Dancers and the Village Produce Association. Your generous donations enable this small Methodist Congregation to continue to worship in Upton and Blewbury. God bless you all, and a Happy Christmas from the members of the Spring Line Methodist Church.

Jo Lakeland

UPTON VILLAGE THEATRE GROUP

Our next outing will be again to the Watermill Theatre, Bagnor, on Saturday 5 March, for the matinee performance of Alan Ayckbourn's "Relatively Speaking". The complete package - ticket, minibus and cream tea - costs £32.75 per person.

If everyone who has requested a place pays up, then we have already sold all that I've reserved, But we do operate a first paid, first served policy, so there could be a race on. If anyone is disappointed, however, I will either put them on a reserve list in case somebody later drops out or, GIVEN THE CASH WITH ORDER, and assuming they are prepared to drive themselves to the theatre, see if I can still get more seats at the Group rate.

If there are any (new) villagers who would like to join the Group - or any currently on the mailing list who would like to withdraw, please do let me know.

Malcolm Wright 850705

RECTORS REFLECTIONS



Who's that lying in the Manger?

Picture the scene. There's the stable, with Mary and Joseph.

There are the animals, the shepherds and the kings. There is the manger, and in the manger, a figure. No need, surely, to ask who is lying in the manger. Perhaps the opening words of the Calypso Carol come to mind:

“See him lying on a bed of straw, a draughty stable with an open door;

Mary cradling the babe she bore, the prince of glory is his name”.

But this time, things are a bit different. Looking a bit more closely, we see that the figure is not a baby at all. It is a fully grown human being. So

what's an adult doing there, lying in the straw? Where's the baby gone?

It's easy to forget that at the heart of Christmas is God becoming a human being; becoming a little baby was only a stage in this process. Such was God's love for us human beings that creating us, nurturing us, and guiding us was not enough; He had to become one of us. And that's what He did. Human beings are, of course, born at a particular time to a particular mother. So God decided that He would be born at a particular time, and that He would be born to the woman we know as Mary. Ever since this time, God has never ceased to be a human being; He has also never ceased to be God!

This means that each one of us matters simply because we are human beings. Our value does not depend on what we do, on how economically productive we are, on whether we are beautiful, or successful, on whether we are easy to get along with, or even whether we are morally good people.

The problem is that we are often under pressure to treat some human beings as if they weren't human beings at all. Sometimes our own anger and fears are manipulated by others, perhaps without us even realising it, with the result that we allow some human beings start to be treated as if they weren't quite fully human. We need to be particularly careful about this at a time when the Government needs to find ways of saving public money. For example, when we are having to make tough decisions about cuts to the Welfare State, it is so easy to caricature particular categories of recipient, in a way which dehumanises them. The Welfare State should be about how we behave towards each other as human beings; it should enable us to be more truly human, not less human.

If we go back to the stable, and take a yet closer look, we're in for a bit of surprise. As we look at the face of the figure lying in the manger, the features become strangely recognisable. The human being we see lying there is not somebody else at all; the person is ourselves.

Fr Jason

GEORGE AND DRAGON PUB

As another year draws to an end we would like to take this opportunity to say Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year to you all.

We are pleased to say that the pub has been very busy of late, we would also like to say a big thank you to everyone who attended our bonfire night event. The night was a huge success, however the weather was not. Hopefully next year will be dryer. Photos will be available to view on our web site this week

www.thegeorgeanddragonpub.webs.com .

Our web site is updated every week with a full list of our current and future events. You will also find our main menu as well as our Christmas menu and opening times.

Monday night is Curry night

6.30pm to 9pm

Spice up your week with our great value

Curry and a Pint Night for just £7.99

Served with rice, onion bhaji, nann bread, poppadum, and mango chutney.

Includes a FREE drink

Any pint of your choice, soft drink or a 175ml glass of wine (for a 250ml glass of wine just add £1) or you might prefer to try our Pinot Grigio £10 per bottle (Mondays nights only)

We would like to invite you to our first Christmas Party at the George and Dragon on Sunday 12th December. We have booked a great live band from Wantage called Suede Alien, who we just know that you will want to see them again.

Did you know that we now do 3 meat draws every week, any profit made from the sale of tickets for the meat draw will be put towards improving the play equipment in the recreational ground for the children of Upton.

And finally Christmas.... yes it's here again. We are now taking bookings for Christmas parties. Our Christmas menu meals will be available from December 1st until December 31st. If you would like a Christmas menu but can not get to us to collect one just call us at the pub and we will get one to you. The Christmas menu is also

available on our web site, we would recommend that you book your table early in order not to be disappointed. A discount will apply to all bookings of 10 people or more for our 3 course festive meal.

Please note that we are fully booked on Christmas Day and Boxing Day for meals.

The Perfect Boxing Day

A morning walk on the Ridgeway followed by a

Pig Roast

From 12 to 3pm

Our Christmas opening hours are:

Christmas Eve Noon till Midnight

Christmas Day 11am till 1 pm (drinks only)

Boxing Day Noon till Midnight (drinks only)

27th, 28th, 29th normal opening hours

New Years Eve Noon till 1am

New Years Day Noon till Midnight (drinks only)

Kenny and Jo

UPTON CALOR GAS SYNDICATE –

Gas Price Held

Calor have agreed/confirmed that the Syndicate Members price per litre negotiated in May will be held until 31 March 2011. If you are a member of the Gas Syndicate and have recently received a letter advising a price increase in November this can be ignored. Please note that this only applies to Upton Calor Gas Syndicate customers. For further information /confirmation please contact Lesley Shaw.

BECCI'S MOBILE SHOP COMES TO UPTON

A mobile shop will be stopping at the Village Hall Car Park each Tuesday morning from 9.00 am - 9.30 am, selling a range of bread, home made cakes, local and organic vegetables, local meat, chilled food, pet food, sweets, cleaning products etc.

This will provide a useful service to the village.

Clare Lightfoot

UPTON WINE APPRECIATION SOCIETY

Our November meeting proved to be one of the best we have had. Kevin and Frankie Jacklin arranged for Ryan O'Connell, a Franco-American winemaker from the Languedoc, to come over to speak to us and introduce his family's wines. Ryan's presentation, whilst very informative and entertaining, was very laid back and totally in keeping with the relaxed "Village Social" format that nearly all of our members prefer. The vineyard he and his parents own, O' Vineyards near Carcassonne, is some 60 miles inland and they produce wines of both the Southern France and Bordeaux blends but with a New World taste. One of the wines tasted was 100% syrah and was very rich and spicy and certainly would have been on equal terms with many from the more prestigious Northern Rhone. Ryan also provided three wines made at the same time and in exactly the same way except one was matured in stainless steel without any oak, one was matured in new American oak and the other in new French oak; the differences between them were very interesting and quite marked. As Ryan and his parents only make red wines one white aperitif was added plus a dessert wine, both of which came from neighbouring vineyards and Ryan is very keen to act as an ambassador for the Languedoc wines in general.

For a small village wine club to receive such a visit is quite a triumph and we are indebted to Kevin and Frankie for visiting the vineyard and arranging it.

Our next meeting will be on 8th December as we always bring the December meeting forward a week to steer clear of the Christmas build-up of commitments. Fiona and William Betts will be running this one. Fiona is going to start with a tasting of champagnes and other sparklers for Christmas and William will follow with a selection of dessert or pudding wines. The meeting will be heavily subsidized by the Club and at £5 will be fantastic value as was the November meeting. The meeting is open to Club Members and Guest Members and new members are always welcome. Anyone interested in joining should contact me at Manor Lawns, High Street or phone 850989.
Mike Collins

SHORT MAT BOWLS

We had 6 total newcomers to SMB attend our first free session on Sunday, bowling a lot of bowls of various sizes which we borrowed from Harwell club members. They all found the game interesting and I hope they come along to the remaining sessions to build on their experience. It was an encouraging start, especially as it was a Sunday and also Remembrance Sunday. The remaining free sessions are Sunday 28 Nov. 3pm to 4.30pm. and Wednesday 15 Dec. 7.45pm to 9.15pm. We hope to see some additional new bowlers at our next sessions so a club can be formed in the New Year.

Contact Joan & Tony Durbin, Tel. 01235 850035 for further information.

CAROL SINGING

Upton villagers of all ages will be carol singing round our streets on Wednesday 22nd December. Anyone who would like to sing or play an instrument is very welcome to join us. We will meet at the Village Hall at 6.30pm and finish up there again at around 8pm for a welcome glass of mulled wine and mince pies. Word sheets will be provided, but please bring torches and lanterns and let me know if you would like to play an instrument so that I can provide some music for you. We aim to sing for as many households as possible and will be collecting for charity, so if you'd prefer to listen rather than sing, please get your pennies and pounds (but no missiles please!) ready for a good cause. Give me a call or drop me a line if you would like to take part.

Sarah Tenant-Flowers (Tel: 850488 or email singscape@aol.com)

Items for inclusion in the January issue to be sent to kameki39@btinternet.com. or handed in to Cathy or Mike by 27th December.

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