

Upton News



Vol 5 No.20 March 2018

St. Mary's Church Services

- Sun 4th March 9.00am Sung Eucharist.*
Sun 11th March 9.00am Sung Eucharist for Mothering Sunday, posies
will be distributed after the service.*
Sun 18th March 9.00am Sung Eucharist
Sun 25th March 10.30am Palm Sunday All Age Service.*
Sun 1st April 9.00am Easter Day Sung Eucharist.*

* Followed by refreshments

The church is open every day from 10.00am to 4.00pm for personal prayer.
Please see porch notice for weekday services.

June Churchman

It is with sadness that we report the passing of June Churchman at the age of 84. June and Gordon married in 1954 and moved into Lonicera, a bungalow that was built for them next to the Village Hall.

June trained as a seamstress when she left school, a skill that became a life long passion. Her sewing room at home became a cottage industry, curtains, dresses and trouser alterations. The list was endless, including the making of bridesmaid dresses for the weddings of both of her children.

June immersed herself into village life and the church and regularly attended Sunday morning service. She had many friends and would often disappear for a cup of tea and a natter and of course she would regularly return home with a bag of sewing for someone in the village.

In June's later years she was diagnosed with Dementia which sadly saw a slow decline in her health, however she enjoyed every opportunity to re-call her early lifetime memories and never failed to take an interest in her growing family of two children, five grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Drop In

The Drop-In is an informal gathering to enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and a pleasant chat. Meetings take place in the Village Hall on Thursdays from 10.30am to 12.00pm. Dates for March are the 1st and the 15th.

Rectors Note



The Gift of Freedom

However you define it, freedom is a truly precious thing. For men and women who are literally enslaved, it means a new dignity. For men and women bowed down by debt or pain or hopelessness, it means release from burdens and a new start.

There are many references to freedom in the books of the bible. One of the defining experiences for the Jewish people was their rescue from slavery in Egypt. A leader known as Moses arose, who led the

Jewish people through the Red Sea, across the Sinai Peninsula, to a land of their own.

The Jewish people were convinced that they had not achieved their political freedom by their own efforts alone. It was God who had led them to freedom.

The idea that God is at work to bring about freedom runs throughout the Bible. God is a God of love and justice, who hates to see oppression. He is therefore at work to bring freedom to all who are oppressed, and he calls men and women to join with him in this work. This thought has been a source of inspiration to men and women down the centuries, as they fight against all that imprisons and enslaves humanity.

The bible recognises that questions around slavery and freedom can be complex. Sometimes we are ourselves responsible for our own enslavement. Our own attitudes can enslave us, and what we need to do is to break free from these attitudes.

In our own culture, one of these enslaving attitudes is the feeling that we can have everything: we can have a successful family life, a successful career, have physically perfect bodies, and be completely happy and fulfilled all the time. As a society, we assume that we can have unimpeded economic growth and consume more and more of everything.

But the reality is that we can't have everything. We need to make choices. If we try to fool ourselves into thinking that we can achieve the impossible, either as individuals or as a society, we will find that one day our world collapses around us.

I wonder how God might give us his gift of freedom, in the particular circumstances of our own lives? Might it be that we need to abandon the idea that somehow, we can have everything, and instead prioritise that which is most precious to us?

Fr Jason

Theatre Group

All tickets are now sold for our next outing to The Watermill to see “The Rivals”.

For later in the year I’ve been enquiring about a trip to Stratford again, but at the moment there seems not to be much interest. Do let me know if anyone would like to see “Troilus and Cressida”, an apparently very bloody “Tamburlaine”, an updated version of Moliere’s “Tartuffe”, or Kathryn Hunter playing “Timon of Athens”. I’d also like to know if we should try for the minibus as we used to, or whether there are drivers enough prepared to go there and back in one evening.

Malcolm Wright 850705

The Play that Goes Wrong

On 23rd January the Theatre Group visited the Oxford Playhouse to see The Play that Goes Wrong.

The mayhem started even before the play itself; the theatre displayed a sign for the wrong play, a frantic cast member trawled the auditorium for a missing dog and an audience member was prevailed upon to help fix the collapsing scenery in a taste of what was to come. The scene was further set by an introduction from the play’s ‘Director’, who described a previous history of theatrical catastrophes. When the play did get going, it quickly became evident that the title is a gross understatement. The plot is ridiculous, the cast are shambolic and miscast over-actors and the set has a malevolent life of its own. Every single thing that could go wrong goes wrong.

The performances were extravagantly awful, but they were supposed to be. The cast played their parts with a bemused but energetic determination to finish the performance, regardless of what was happening around them. The gags were fired out in such a scattergun manner that it was impossible to not find something in there to appeal to every sense of humour. There is comedy in every minute, if not second, of the play, some of it traditional physical farce and some of it in more subtle actions and wordplay. One scene was played with the lines in the wrong order; one scene trapped the actors in an increasingly manic loop of repeated lines; props got mixed up and cast members substituted for each other and bits of furniture. The script is crammed with gag after gag after gag; it is literally aching funny.

The star of the night, however, was the set. It started out being held together with duck tape and ended up literally in pieces. The action in the second half of the play was almost entirely directed by its gradual disintegration. It was absolutely ingenious, and a delight to watch, as the cast attempted to continue with the play despite the mortal peril posed by collapsing pieces of set.

‘The Play that Goes Wrong’ makes for an incredibly enjoyable evening; brilliant writing, award-winning set design and laugh-out-loud comedy. I’d see it again in a heartbeat... and a hard hat.

Jane

Village Produce Association

As my last newsletter gave everyone the dates of our forthcoming meeting and events, in this newsletter I would like to highlight our Annual Summer Show.

Our Show for 2018 is to be held on Saturday 7th July and will take place in the Blewbury Village Hall.

Anyone, no matter where they live, can enter. In fact, a couple of years ago we had an entry from Canada!!

The VPA committee prepare the Show Schedule which gives details of the fruit, vegetables, roses, cut flowers, container plants, cookery, handicraft, informal floral art and photography which anyone can enter into the Show. Especially important is the Children's Section which allows youngsters, in different age categories, to display their skills in gardening, cooking, together with arts and crafts. There are trophies and certificates to win.

Bring your entries on the Saturday morning between 8.30am and 11.00am and then judging takes place between 11.15am and 1.00pm. The Show is open to the public between 2.30pm and 4.00pm when the prize giving takes place.

We would love to see more people entering the Show - it really isn't difficult. If you have some lovely fruit, vegetables or flowers - give it a go! If you enjoy photography - give it a go! If you enjoy cooking - give it a go! If your hobby is handicraft - give it a go! Just take a look at the Show Schedule to see what the Classes are for each Section - it's so simple!

The Show Schedule will be available from Blewbury Post Office or you can receive it online by emailing Eileen on yva.in.bl.up@gmail.com or ring Margaret in Upton on 01235 850126.

We are looking forward to a bumper crop of entries this year!!

DID YOU KNOW ? Broad beans should not be eaten in the evening because they are difficult to digest and have been known to cause nightmares. In the Middle Ages it was thought that the souls of the dead lived inside the humble broad bean because it disturbed people's sleep. The Greek philosopher and mathematician Pythagoras would not eat broad beans under any circumstances, so convinced was he that they were possessed by evil spirits.

Happy Gardening

Eileen

Swop Shop

19) Greenhouse - Free - Gill Jones Springside Cottage, Stream Rd.

07971440219 or gill.jones7@icloud.com Interested parties will need to be prepared to dismantle it from its current site.

Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting

The Parish council is moving rapidly towards the end of its financial year. This means that as well as regular and planning meetings, the council will hold its Annual Parish Meeting on Monday 15th April, in the village hall, 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start. All villagers are welcome to come along, for a chat, drinks and nibbles.

Planning Applications

The Parish Council continues to meet to discuss planning applications as they arise. Recent planning applications included:-

Planning Application P17/S4097/FUL

Retention of public house (Horse & Harrow, West Hagbourne) and largest outbuilding, demolition of remaining outbuildings and reconfiguration of parking. Construction of 3 dwellings (Use Class C3) together with associated access, parking, refuse/cycle storage and landscaping (as amplified and amended by drawings and information received 24 January 2018).

The council voted 'No Strong views' on this application, with the following note:-

'The Parish Council remains concerned about the turning circle given to each of the new houses and the potential hazard if backing out on to the main road. The council also appreciates that this is probably a concern on this road throughout the village.'

Planning Application P18/V0230/FUL

Gatehouse Garage. Variation of condition 1 (approved plans) of Planning Permission P17/V1059/FUL re-position the garage by 3.5 metres to the south of approved location and increase the height by 1.5 metres.

The council voted to 'Object' to this application on the following grounds:-

The resulting building will be too large, overbearing and entirely negates all the original mitigating factors (such as burying the lower storey) in the original design statement. This amendment represents a very different proposal to the original (P17/V1059/FUL) and now proposes a two storey, high roofed, fully above ground, second property on the site.

This exacerbates the overbearing development on the whole site.

Insufficient attention and detail has been given to the following extremely important factors:-

Flood risk and run off. Rain water run off already affects the access drive and causes standing water on the main road.

Foul water drainage. There is no scheme of foul water drainage provided with this application.

Tree protection. Tree protection on the site is already a major concern and does not appear as a consideration for this application.

The planning history of this site to date indicates that very close attention should be paid to changes to the developments on this site.

Your Parish Council Needs YOU!

Due to personal commitments, two Parish Councillors will be stepping down at the end March, and one in May 2018. The Parish Council serves the

community of Upton and the role is interesting, varied and an important one in maintaining village integrity. Activities include:

Ensuring the Recreation grounds are well tended for all to enjoy.

Ensuring the Recreation Ground play areas are fully equipped and safe for your children to enjoy.

Coordination of volunteer efforts to keep the village looking beautiful

Working with village societies such as the Film Club.

Liaising with the Upton Village Hall trustees on events, for example Bike Night.

Applying for grants to support village amenities and maintenance.

Reviewing planning applications.

Attending regular meetings to ensure that all of this happens.

In terms of time commitment, the council meets every two months with ad hoc planning meetings as required. The current situation is that if we don't have a quorum of councillors, parish responsibilities will default to the Vale of White Horse District Council and the village will lose the very local representation Upton Parish Council provides. Please do get involved and consider representing your community. If you are interested, please contact the parish clerk at: parish.clerk@uptonvillage.co.uk.

Next Parish Council Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Parish Council is on Monday 19th March at 6.00pm in the village hall meeting room. Please see the village noticeboard and web site for agendas of upcoming meetings and for minutes of previous meetings when they are approved for publication.

Parish Clerk 23.2.18

Didcot U3A

The U3A aims to encourage and enable people no longer in full time employment to help each other to share their knowledge, skills, interests and experiences; the word 'University' is used here in it's original sense, as a group of people coming together to learn for the pleasure of learning. What could be better for anyone who is newly retired, or semi-retired, who still wishes to Learn, Live and Laugh than to come along and join your local U3A!

Useful Contact: <http://u3asites.org.uk/didcot>

This month's meeting is on 20th March at 1.45pm in the Didcot Civic Hall. The talk will be about The Story of Music - Middle Ages to the Present Day!

The Speaker is Mike Hurst, an original member of The Springfields and a record producer.



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Wine Appreciation Club

For the sixth (pretty full) meeting of the season, it was our unique opportunity to discover wines from Brazil. I have to confess I didn't even know there was such a thing until our meeting, as I've never seen Brazilian wine in the supermarket. We normally associate Brazil with coffee or maybe sugar or chocolate, not wine, but not anymore!

We met Nicholas Corfe from Go Brazil Wines www.gobrazilwines.com. He was a very engaging and amusing speaker and with much enthusiasm gave us a run through of some really interesting and unusual wines across a spectrum of different types, producers, vintages and grapes.

The whites included a champagne method fizz, a Riesling, a Moscato, and a Chardonnay. Although quite different from their European counterparts, with some really interesting aromas and flavours, there was definitely evidence of European influence.

The reds included a Teroldego and two Pizzatos, one a riserva that was 13 years old and one a very special gran riserva that was a mere 9 years old. Nicholas described the Teroldego as very "gluggable". He wasn't wrong, I found my glass empty within a matter of minutes and I don't think I was alone.

Maybe some of these wines divided the room. Some people loved some of them and some loved others but they were all worthy of great respect: Classy wines, well balanced and with some unusual and subtle flavours.

Nicholas also talked us through pairings with food and so we tried our selection of nibbles against each wine reserving some of our cold meats for the final two weighty reds. The star of the food though has to be Frankie's Brazilian cheese bread - absolutely delicious. Frankie said it was not difficult to make although I suspect she was being modest!

For more details of the wines sampled, please go to Twitter @UptonWine.

Go Brazil Wines is offering each wine to Upton residents at a discount for any orders in the near future. If you are interested in placing an order please speak to any member of the Wine Club Committee.

Another great night! Thanks to all involved in the organisation of a very enjoyable and fun evening.

If you would like to come along to the next meeting on 21st March 8.00pm, we will have another hopefully inspiring evening. Please don't forget to book! Everyone is very welcome. If you've never been before, please give it a try.

We would love to see you!

Any enquiries, please contact Ian at ian.langley@yahoo.co.uk

Ros

Blewbury Post Office

Old £10 notes (Charles Darwin) go out of general circulation on 2nd March, so either spend or bank them quickly, or bring to us for swapping! We are still swapping old £5's and £1 coins!

We have the new issue of 'Votes for Women' stamps on sale, along with 'Game of Thrones' and some 'Star Wars' ones too!

I am expecting the price rise from Royal Mail to be announced this month, so buy your 1st and 2nd class stamps before April, to beat the increase!

We will be closed for two Saturdays in March, 3rd and 17th, as well as on Good Friday 30th!

We have tickets for the two sustainable Blewbury talk's, and the Duck Race on Easter Sunday (April 1st)

Nat West Bank are closing several nearby branches, but you can still get money out at the post office, and make deposits, most other banks services are available too, all free!

Normal opening times have resumed, I am feeling so much better now!

Karen and Maggie

Blewbury W.I.

Although there are carpets of snowdrops, aconites and daffodils all around, the weather tells us it definitely is still winter. Hopefully March will bring us some signs of spring. Blewbury WI will be holding the following events during March, and any new Members will be made very welcome.

Friday, 2nd March at 7.00pm. Craft Evening at Liz's. Please ring beforehand.

Wednesday, 7th March at 9.30am. Lyn's Walk. A local walk meeting in the Village Hall car park.

Wednesday, 7th March at 7.30pm. Scrabble at Babeth's. Please ring beforehand.

Friday, 9th March at 1.30pm. Talking Science lecture at RAL Harwell. Fizz, Bang, Zap! Musical thunder to explore the Universe. Dr. Scott. R. Lawrie.

Tuesday, 13th March at 10.30am. Coffee at Style Acre.

Wednesday, 28th March at 7.30pm. WI Annual Meeting and Social Evening in the Vale Room.

Mah Jong every Monday at 2.30pm. Please phone Judy in advance.

For more details of any of our events, or if you wish to join us, please ring Karen on 850219 or visit our web page, <http://blewburywi.wordpress.com> where you will find more information.

Cilla.

Friends of St. Marys

Skittles Evening

It cannot go unmentioned, an excellent village evening, when 50 gathered in our hall to play the old English country game of skittles, a game that is more popular in Somerset and the West Country. A sporty competition kicked off at 7.00 sharp, there were prizes for the top competitors. Massive congratulations to the food ladies, the prime mover being Gloria, who had organised a superb fish and chips supper to arrive spot on 8.00 o'clock, some of the best I've ever tasted, supplied by Churchills from Great Western Park Didcot. The main course was good, but we then moved on to sweet. Who said the ladies of England make good puddings but nothing to match the ladies of Upton, there were so many to choose from, the cheesecake went like snow in the sun. I would like to say those villagers who missed out missed a real treat. Let's have more of these evenings. We have a superb village hall and what better place to share an evening with like-minded folk. See you all at the next one.

John Lightfoot

Good Friday Walk

The annual Good Friday walk will be held this year on 30 March starting at St Mary's church at 2.00pm. The route will be 5 to 6 miles in total and will perambulate gently over the downs before returning to the church where walkers will be rewarded with tea and hot cross buns.

It's being organised by the Friends of St Mary's but the walk is open to all, and there's no charge. Just come along and enjoy yourselves in the fresh air.

It's not essential but if you could let me know in advance

(pjsbatho@btinternet.com or 851251) so we can get a rough idea of the number of buns required!

Paul Batho

Congratulations

Congratulations to Gordon Churchman who celebrated his 90th birthday on 26th February. Gordon has spent his entire life as a resident of the village and has great memories of life at school and of wartime experiences in the village and helped me with the facts when I wrote the note on the night that Upton was bombed.

Congratulations to Hampstead Norreys (my home village) on finishing one of the three runners-up in the National Village of the Year Competition recently shown on BBC television. I know we are too small to take on a competition as massive as that but it is a shame that the Oxfordshire Village of the Year competition no longer takes place as I feel our village is even better placed to do well in such a competition than we were back in 2007 when we came very close to winning our category.

Upton 50 Club

Prize winners in the January draw were:-

1st	£25	No 26	Neil Davis
2nd	£20	No 129	Lesley Shaw
3rd	£15	No 79	Ben Amos
4th	£10	No 85	Pauline Stewart

We will be coming around to see you soon to invite you to participate for the period April 2018 to March 2019 at the same subscription of £10 for 12 monthly Draws The UVHAT Trustees would like to thank everyone in advance for their continued support

Lesley Shaw

What's on at Earth Trust

Lambing Weekends on Saturday and Sunday 17-18th and Saturday and Sunday 24 -25th March, 10.00am-4.00pm

Join us at Earth Trust for some farmyard fun during our popular Lambing Weekends: there'll be lambs, piglets and goats to meet, plus bale climbing, tractor and trailer rides, craft activities and more. Refreshments available. £8 adult, £5 child; £22 family (2 adults + 2 children); discount for online tickets - see www.earthtrust.org.uk/whatson.

More information can be found on our website www.earthtrust.org.uk.

Hedgehogs

At least half the population of our native hedgehogs has been lost from the British countryside over the last two decades and our farmers are getting the blame due to the loss of hedgerows and permanent grasslands, increased field sizes, and the use of pesticides reducing hedgehog food.

If you want to help the hedgehog you can become a Hedgehog Champion and find simple advice on making your garden and neighbourhood more hedgehog -friendly. You can make a small hole - no bigger than a CD case - in your garden fence, wall and other barriers so that hedgehogs can access different gardens in their search for food, shelter and mates and you can log your 'hog sightings - dead or alive - on The BIG Hedgehog Map

For more information go to www.hedgehogstreet.org

Litter Pick

It is intended that the annual Litter Pick will go ahead as usual towards the end of March but the date has not yet been agreed. Further information will be sent out by email in the next two weeks. This year the litter appears to be very bad particularly on Chilton Road probably due to the big increase in its use and the type of traveller now using the road.

Film Club

Unfortunately 'Darkest Hour' and 'The Greatest Showman' cannot be shown in March but they are now planned for a future showing. This has left 'Murder on the Orient Express' to which we would like to add 'Dunkirk' and take a second vote on one of these two.

You can register for emails and voting by following the link on the Upton Web Site. Upton Village - Organizations - Film Club - Subscribe

The next showing is still planned for Friday 23rd March and we will inform you all this coming weekend which film has been chosen - so vote quickly.

Rob Traynor

Upton Village

A fire ruined the village
They say, many years ago
With its unspoilt beauty
Of thatch and hedgerow.

Alive with wild birdsong
And streams that overflow
Now they cut the trees down
We wait for the saplings to grow.

As I walk out in the country
And breath in pure sweet air
I am content that there is
An Upton Village still here.

So if the tears pass swiftly
And change comes o'er the scene
I shall always be thankful
That the past was not a dream.

Written by Elizabeth Manwaring (formally Greenfield) who was resident in the village for many years including the early 80s when all the stately elm trees in and around the village were being felled due to the Dutch elm disease

Submissions for *Upton News* should be sent to

kameki39@btinternet.com

Deadline for the April edition is

Monday 26th March

Note the change of address due to the continuing failure of the link between the Upton News address and my home computer.