

Upton News



Vol 5 No.29 December 2018



We wish you all a very
Merry Christmas!

St. Mary's Church Services

Sun 2nd Dec. 9.00am	Sung Eucharist*.
Sun 9th Dec. 9.00am	Sung Eucharist.
Sun 16th Dec. 9.00am	Sung Eucharist.
Sun 23rd Dec.	No Service.
Mon 24th Dec. 4.00pm	Christmas Eve Crib Service*.
Tue 25th Dec. 9.00am	Christmas Day Eucharist.
Sun 30th Dec. 9.00am	Morning Prayer.

*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.

Upton 50 Club

Prize winners in the November draw were:-

1st £25	No 99	David Beckles
2nd £20	No 81	Mary Hetherington
3rd £15	No 144	Sarah Tenant-Flowers
4th £10	No 45	Debra Paul

Lesley Shaw

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 12.00 noon. Dates for December are the 6th and the 20th.

Rector's Note



What's the Message?

Well, before we know it, Christmas will be upon us. I don't think I've heard any carol yet, and I'm yet to sample my first mince pie, but I'm sure this will change within the next week or so. Then there will be Christmas cards to think about, Christmas presents, and Christmas decorations. And not forgetting carol services. I do enjoy a carol service - which is fortunate in my line of work!

The celebration of Christmas is a major feature of many people's lives, whether or not they would consider themselves "religious". Is it simply a tradition, or is it something more? Does Christmas have a message?

If it does have a message, I wonder what this message might be? For some, Christmas is about the importance of family and community. In a pressurised and busy world, finding time to be with the people we love can be hard. Christmas is a time to prioritise the relationships which matter most.

For others, Christmas provides us with some much-needed cheer as the days get shorter and the weather gets colder. The prospect of winter without the cheeriness of Christmas would dampen anyone's spirits. It cheers us up to sing some carols, to light candles, and perhaps to visit a Christmas Market.

For some, the key message is the message of peace - God's gift of peace in a world of war and conflict. Many of the traditional bible readings refer to peace, as do several of the traditional carols.

"All glory be to God on high, and to the world be peace!

Good will henceforth from heaven to earth begin and never cease!"

And for me - what would I say is the message of Christmas? Yes, it's about family and community, it's about challenging the weariness of winter, and it's about proclaiming the message of peace. But as a Christian I would add that at its heart, Christmas celebrates the conviction that God cares for us human beings. He cares so much that he became one of us, taking human flesh as Jesus Christ. God is not some far distant entity living a billion miles away in a galaxy yet to be discovered. God is not some philosophical theory. God is one of us - a human being, sharing the excitement and challenges of our life.

Father Jason

Poppy Appeal

Thank you so much for your very generous donations to this year's Poppy Appeal. This year marked the centenary of the Armistice and the village responded by donating the magnificent sum of £690.42, the highest total we have ever collected.

My grateful thanks to the collectors for braving the cold and dark weather to raise this record amount.

Helen Weston

Poppy Appeal Organiser.

Village Hall

The AGM of the Upton Village Hall Amenities Trust (UVHAT) took place in the Village Hall Meeting Room at 7.30pm on Tuesday the 20th November. There were apologies from three of the trustees who were unable to attend. The minutes of the 2017 AGM were approved.

The Chairman Brian Rippon, reported that the hall was working well, fulfilling its purpose and providing a valuable and effective service to the village. The kitchen refurbishment is continuing to operate very well, and with the addition of various types of tables, a stage, a PA system, and a projector and screen we have managed to continue offering an excellent service to the village and its various users.

John Haworth, the treasurer, presented the financial statement. The hall is in good financial strength and has good solid reserves. Rental was 3% up (broadly the same as the previous year) regular hirers down 5%, but there was a substantial increase in party and other hires. The 50's Club generated £915 for hall funds and a huge thank you to Lesley Shaw for organising it, modernising it, and providing a valuable and continuing source of income. This year's fete also helped further with more funds raised.

The chairman concluded, that the hall was in good shape, and he felt that it was time to step down as chairman as he no longer had the time to spend which he felt was going to be necessary in the forthcoming year. He has however agreed to remain as a trustee and continue to handle hall bookings.

John Haworth then thanked Brian Rippon for his excellent contribution on behalf of the trustees. Graham de Wilde agreed to take over as Chairman, Rob Traynor as vice chairman. John Haworth agreed to remain as Treasurer and Kieron Humphrey agreed to continue as Secretary, all the other trustees also agreed to serve again. There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.00pm. The next AGM will be on the 14th May 2019 at 7.30pm.

Graham de Wilde

Christmas Carols

Carols, festive tales, mince pies, mulled wine....just in case you had missed it, the Christmas season is, by popular request, back for the 2018th time!

And there's no better way to get into the Christmassy mood than by coming along to the Upton Carols and Readings event in St Mary's on Saturday, 15th December at 4.00pm. All the above, plus excellent company, will be there and we look forward to seeing as many Uptonians as possible to start the Christmas celebrations in style.

The event is organised by the Friends of St Mary's and there is no charge - just come along and enjoy the atmosphere, the carols, readings (for old and young) and refreshments.

Happy Christmas all! *Paul Batho*

The Wine Club—Taste the difference?

So often we go with what we know when it comes to selecting a bottle of wine. This month we challenged Derek Whitmell, one of our club members to present 8 wines that were all unlikely to have been tried before and he did not disappoint! Selecting some quality wines, all from the Wine Society (an on-line retailer who have experts recommend wines for us to try), he took us around the world to some different countries and some different grapes from countries we knew well.

Our first white was **Vacqueyras Blanc les Chefs d’Or 2016**. White Vacqueyras is rare yet this white Clairette blend is a speciality at Domaine Le Clos des Cazaux down in Rhone, a blend of clairette, rousanne and white grenache. This example is described as “Crisp, dry and perfectly balanced”, which goes well with oysters or fish.

Next was a Greek wine called **Tetramythos Roditis Natur, 2017**. A whistle-clean Greek white. Slightly pink skinned variety of grape, commonly grown in Greece. For those who were trying to pick out the flavours, they were looking for soft pear and pepper! The Greeks helped spread wine to the rest of Europe so we have a lot to thank them for!

Our third white was **Mtsvane Georgian Dry White Schuchmann, 2017**, (mtsvane is pronounced ‘*ma-ts-vay-nay*’), a fresh herbal white made from the mtsvane grape. It has a zesty freshness which would work well with your fish starter this Christmas!

We finished the whites with **Tuercebomas Tempranillo Bianca, 2017**, Rioja. Many people will have tried Rioja, but few will have had a white Rioja made from the tempranillo grape (normally used to make the more common red variety). This was a great alternative and it was nice to try a crisp white from a grape most recognised.

Reds were all equally intriguing and to save space I have briefly listed them below for reference:

Naoussa Jeunes Vignes Thymiopoulos, 2016, from Greece. The grape was xinomavro pronounced “*tsi-noh-mavro*”. This one is worth trying chilled.

Hochar Chateau Musar 2015, from Lebanon. This is a blend of Cinsault, Cabernet Sauvignon and Carignan. The premier wine is normally around £28 per bottle so at just under £13 this is a good value wine (try it with a chicken tagine and apricots).

Novac Sec, Prince Stirbey, 2015, from Romania. This had ripe but fresh and juicy flavours which make it a very attractive red.

Lagrein Alto Adige, Hofstatter, 2016, from Italy. Described as having a “bright vibrant, fresh, black-fruited bouquet and naturally sweet juicy flavour, with an appetising salty finish; and “A delightful example of this local north-east Italian speciality”. Lagrein is related to the more common Pinot and syrah grapes.

All wines provided plenty of discussion and mixed with a very “sociable” evening made it another enjoyable meeting at the Upton Village Hall. We are there every month, so if you are interested in coming and trying an evening of tasting (no experience needed!) then have a look at our website or send our chairman a note (ian.langley@yaoo.co.uk)

Hope to see you all at our special Christmas meeting on the 12th December!
Ian

Parish Council

The Parish Council held a regular meeting on Thursday 29th November.

Amongst the topics discussed were:-

White road markings in the village.

Stream Road flood drainage.

Recreation ground repairs to play equipment.

Buses and bins.

Please watch out for the minutes on the web site and if you have any comments to make, please do so via parish.clerk@uptonvillage.co.uk.

The next Parish Council Meeting is on Monday 14th January 2019 (TBC) at 7.00pm in the village hall meeting room.

Please see the village noticeboard and village web site for agendas of upcoming meetings and for minutes of previous meetings once they are approved for publication.

And finally, it's never too early to wish all residents of Upton a very happy and peaceful Christmas.

Parish Clerk 30.11.18

Blewbury W.I.

Autumn has gone, Winter is here. Short days, long, cold nights. But at Blewbury WI we have lots of events during December, and we would love some new Members to join us. All would be made welcome at the following events.

Monday, 3rd December at 2.30pm. - Mah Jong at Graeme's. Please ring beforehand.

Wednesday, 5th December at 9.00am. - Lyn's Walk. Meet at Village Hall for a different walk to Didcot. Bring pennies for coffee and your bus pass if you have one. The walk will be possible even if it has rained in the days before.

Wednesday, 5th December at 7.30pm. - Scrabble at Rosemary's. Please ring beforehand.

Friday, 7th December at 7.00pm. - Craft Evening at Liz's. Please ring beforehand.

Friday, 14th December at 1.30pm. - Talking Science lecture at RAL Harwell. "The Star of Bethlehem - an astronomer's view" with Dr. Barry Kellett.

Monday, 17th December at 10.30am. - Mince pies, coffee and a raffle at Maggie's.

Mah Jong is held every Monday at 2.30pm.

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

Blewbury Post Office

Over the Christmas period payments for tax credits, child benefits and other allowances will be paid into accounts on the previous working day if your payment day is on a bank holiday! We will be closing at lunchtime on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, and closed on Saturday 29th December. Otherwise we are open as usual in the run up to the big day! Emergency top ups for gas/electric may call my mobile 07825154842. Don't get cold please! Postal Services to Libya and Somali are suspended, while postal services to Canada are disrupted at the moment by strike action, we recommend extra early posting! Here are the last recommended December posting dates for Christmas mail:-

4th to Africa and Middle East.

7th to Cyprus, Malta, Asia, Far East and Eastern Europe.

8th to Caribbe, Central and South America

10th to Greece, Turkey, Australia and New Zealand.

14th to Canada, Czech Republic, Italy, Poland, USA and static BFPO's.

15th to Finland and Sweden.

17th to Austria, Denmark, Germany, Iceland, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, and Switzerland.

18th for 2nd class inland and to Belgium, France, Ireland and Luxembourg.

20th for 1st class inland and parcellforce 48.

21st for parcellforce 24.

22nd for Special Delivery.

All non EU parcels need a customs label on, all international airmail items need a blue airmail sticker on, all parcels and recorded items need the senders address on them, please do this BEFORE you get to the counter, the people behind you will appreciate that, we do not have time to stick all your stamps on for you, nor do we wrap or address your parcels unless you have a valid reason! Please don't moan at us about the price of stamps, we know!

Santas post box is up and running, (Father Christmas, Santa's Grotto, Reindeerland, XM4 5HQ) by 7th December, you will need a stamp!

We have several 'elf on a shelf' ready for adoption, (in hiding for obvious reasons), lots of xmas cards, paper, sticky tape and packaging supplies!

We have had a broken HTC phone handed in, and some money, if either of these could be yours, please pop in and give a description/amount to claim them!

Karen and Maggie



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Local Authority Food Hygiene rating 5



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Tel. 01235 850549 or 07753635038

Email: uptondogdays@hotmail.com

Facebook: Upton Dog Days



Free Car Parking

Motorist in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse can enjoy free parking in district council car parks on certain days up to 24th December.

Local concessions are:-

Didcot on Mondays from 3rd December.

Wallingford on Thursdays from 6th December.

Abingdon on Saturdays from 1st December.

Wantage on Fridays from 30th November.

On the above days there is no need to display a ticket.

In addition to the above most of the car parks in Abingdon will be free every Sunday during Sunday shop open-hours.

Walking Netball

Come along and join in a very friendly game of Walking Netball for over 55's. Sessions organised by Go-Active-Gold are held at Chilton Village Hall every Monday morning from 10.30 to 11.30. No previous netball experience is required just come along with comfortable shoes and a water bottle and have a fun session with some gentle exercise.

Late News—Unfortunately due to low numbers the sessions are likely to be stopped in the next two weeks. If you want to join but can't make Dec. 3rd please ring Cathy on 850135 to register your interest.

Didcot U3A

The University of the Third Age (U3A) offers the opportunity to share your knowledge, experience and talents with other like-minded individuals with over 35 Interest Groups to choose from! In addition, and to whet your appetites further, we always have a guest speaker to give an interesting presentation.

This month's meeting is on 18th December— Christmas Lunch and Christmas Music with Keith Harris and Lesley Morris; A Merry Christmas to all our members!

The meeting starts at 2.00pm, early arrival is recommended.

Unfortunately due to lack of space a thank you note to all the volunteers who have kept our Recreation Ground and several of our footpaths in such good order again this year has been held over to next month.

Submissions for *Upton News* should be sent to

kameki39@btinternet.com

Deadline for the January edition is

Thursday 27th December