

Horsell Matters



**The Village Magazine from your Parish Church
February – March 2022**

HORSELL DIRECTORY

St Mary's Church	Website: www.stmarys-horsell.org.uk	
	Baptisms, Weddings or Funerals	772134
Parish Office open:	Tuesday 9am-4pm, Wednesday & Friday 9am-1.00pm	
	stmaryshorsell@btinternet.com	772134
Vicar	Rev'd Dmitry Lutsenko	755618
	vicar@stmarys-horsell.org.uk	
Church Wardens	Brian Sheriff	474975
	Michael Couper	770920
Children's Worker	Marcus Brookfield	children@stmarys-horsell.org.uk
Treasurer	David Leach	823439
Cathedral Link	Gill Saville	773799
Pastoral Assistant	Margaret Johnson	762481
	Hilary Mills	772952
	Coral Colclough	747481
JAM (Jesus and Me)	Marcus Brookfield (4+) 10am most Sundays	772134
Babies and Toddlers	Angela Murphy	832943
	St Andrew's Room, Tues 9.30am to 11.30am, term time	
Twinkle Tots	Marcus Brookfield, St. Andrew's Room	772134
	Thursdays 9.30 to 11.30, term time	
Bellringers	Avril Blagbrough Tuesday evening practice—	767421
	occasional. Please check	
Trinity Methodist Church	office@trinitywoking.org.uk	730754
Horsell Evangelical Church	Rev'd Andrew Bents	822259
To Book: Village Hall	Paul Bowyer	764047
Parish Institute	www.horsell-parish-institute.org.uk	772134
Horsell Village School	Infants Head Teacher - Mrs Reeve	714804
Horsell C of E School	Junior Head Teacher—Mrs C Wand	761531
Woking High School	Head Teacher - Mrs M Walter	888447
Horsell Care	Helpline	730740
Residents Association	Alan Taylor	ajrolyat@gmail.com
Scouts, Beavers, Cubs	Ali Stubbs 07734 424568	gsl@horsellscouts.org.uk
Explorer Scouts (14-18 Yrs)	Brian Pinto	480904
Guides & Brownies	www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-your-daughter/	
WI Horsell Afternoon	Alison Evans-Wyatt 765570	amevans705@gmail.com
	Meets on 1 st Thursday at 1.45pm in the Village Hall	
WI Horsell Evening	Mrs Sheila Tickner	760783
	Meets on 4 th Tuesday at 8.00pm in the Village Hall	
Woking Police Station	dial 101 from mobile or landline	

Review Your Way of Life

Lent is a period of 40 days during which Christians remember the events leading up to and including the death of Jesus Christ, whose life and teachings are the foundation of Christianity. It is a time for repentance, reflection and meditation. This may mean spending more time asking for forgiveness of wrong doings or thoughts.

Make time to look back on your life and readjust the ways you have been behaving. Organise a time when you can find peace and quiet to review your way of life. Yes, I can hear you're all saying 'I don't have enough time', but these 40 days make that possible. It is a time to prepare for the wonderful events at Easter.

The 40-day period is called Lent after an old English word meaning 'lengthen'. This is because of the time of year when it happens, as this is when the days start to get longer, as we approach summer. On Ash Wednesday, churches hold special services, at which worshippers are marked with ash. This is a symbol of death and remembering bad things that we have done, whence the day gets its name. Typically, the ash is made from burning special crosses made out of palm wood, which were used in church services on the previous year's Palm Sunday. It is sometimes mixed with special oil.

During Lent, as a sign of sacrifice, many people test their self-discipline; not just stopping eating chocolate but using the time to think and make decisions about the way they live their lives. It is a time of thought and preparation.

Christians believe that this is to represent Jesus Christ's sacrifice when he went into the desert to pray and fast for the 40 days before starting his ministry, later dying on the cross. While Jesus was there, Satan tempted him to turn away from God and worship him instead, but Jesus refused, which is why people might give something up, in order to test their own self-discipline too.



Lent ends with Holy Week, which leads to Easter Sunday - the most important day in the Christian calendar. This day marks the resurrection of Jesus after his death on the cross and is a celebration of his life. It also helps us to look forward to being able to deal with problems and difficult times.

Draw us closer to your heart, that we might know you better and understand you more completely. May our actions reflect our hearts, and may we worship you through all that we say and do throughout the weeks to come. Amen
Mike Couper, Churchwarden

ST MARY'S CHURCH DIARY FEBRUARY 2022

FEBRUARY 2022

Tues 1 st	9.30am-11.30am 4.00pm	Baby & Toddler Group Prayer at 4pm – at home
Wed 2 nd	11.00am-4pm 8.00pm	Private Prayer Engine Room House of Prayer
Thurs 3 rd	9.30am-11am	Twinkle Tots
Fri 4 th	9am-12noon	Pop In Coffee
Sun 6 th	8.00am 10.00am	Holy Communion (CW) Morning Worship
Tues 8 th	9.30am-11.30am 4.00pm	Baby & Toddler Group Prayer at 4pm – at home
Wed 9 th	11.00am-4pm	Private Prayer
Thurs 10 th	9.30am-11am	Twinkle Tots
Fri 11 th	9am-12noon	Pop In Coffee
Sun 13 th	8.00am 10.00am 4.00pm	Holy Communion (BCP) Parish Communion Messy Church
Tues 15 th	9.30am-11.30am 4.00pm	NO Baby & Toddler Group Prayer at 4pm – at home
Wed 16 th	11.00am-4pm	Private Prayer
Thurs 17 th	9.30am-11am	NO Twinkle Tots
Fri 18 th	10am-12noon	Pop In Coffee
Sun 20 th	8.00am 10.00am 6.30pm	Holy Communion (CW) Parish Communion Contemplative Meditation
Tues 22 nd	9.30am-11.30am 4.00pm	Baby & Toddler Group Prayer at 4pm – at home
Wed 23 rd	11am-4pm	Private Prayer
Thurs 24 th	9.30am-11am	Twinkle Tots
Fri 25 th	9am-12noon	Pop In Coffee
Sun 27 th	8.00am 10.00am 6.30pm	Holy Communion (BCP) Parish Communion Peaceful Prayer & Praise

ST MARY'S CHURCH REGISTERS

Burials & Cremations:

We offer our sympathy to the families and friends of those who have died:

Nicholas Godman, Alexander Lai-Tan, Edward Smith, Irene Trimming

Weddings:

We offer congratulations to George Wilson & Elizabeth Hiscock

ST MARY'S CHURCH DIARY MARCH – APRIL 2022

MARCH 2022

Tues 1 st	9.30am-11.30am 4.00pm	Baby & Toddler Group Prayer at 4pm – at home
Wed 2 nd	11.00am-4pm 7.00pm	Private Prayer Ash Wednesday Communion Service
Thurs 3 rd	9.30am-11am	Twinkle Tots
Fri 4 th	9am-12noon	Pop in Coffee
Sun 6 th	8.00am 10.00am	Holy Communion Service (CW) Morning Worship
Tues 8 th	9.30am-11.30am 4.00pm	Baby & Toddler Group Prayer at 4pm – at home
Wed 9 th	11am-4pm 8.00pm	Private Prayer Engine Room House of Prayer
Thurs 10 th	9.30am-11am	Twinkle Tots
Fri 11 th	9am-12noon	Pop In Coffee
Sun 13 th	8.00am 10.00am 6.30pm	Holy Communion (BCP) Parish Communion Contemplative Meditation
Tues 15 th	9.30am-11.30am 4.00pm	Baby & Toddler Group Prayer at 4pm – at home
Wed 16 th	11.00am-4pm	Private Prayer
Thurs 17 th	9.30am-11am	Twinkle Tots
Fri 18 th	9am-12noon	Pop In Coffee
Sun 20 th	8.00am 10.00am 4.00pm	Holy Communion (CW) Parish Communion Messy Church
Mon 21 st	8.00pm	PCC Meeting
Tues 22 nd	9.30am-11.30am 4.00pm	Baby & Toddler Group Prayer at 4pm – at home
Wed 23 rd	11.00am-4pm	Private Prayer
Thurs 24 th	9.30am-11am	Twinkle Tots
Fri 25 th	9am-12noon	Pop In Coffee
Sun 27 th	8.00am 10.00am 6.30pm	Holy Communion (BCP) Mothering Sunday Family Communion Prayer & Peaceful Praise
Tues 29 th	9.30am-11.30am 4.00pm	Baby & Toddler Group Prayer at 4pm – at home
Wed 30 th	11.00am-4pm	Private Prayer
Thurs 31 st	9.30am-11am	Twinkle Tots

APRIL 2022

Fri 1 st	9am-12noon	Pop In Coffee
Sun 3 rd	8.00am 10.00am 6.30pm	Holy Communion (CW) Morning Worship Contemplative Meditation

*All St Mary's Church Diary correct at time of going to press
Please do check the website before you turn up for any of our Christmas Services
For further details please look at our website: www.stmarys-horsell.org.uk*

Churchyard Cat



It gives me great pleasure to welcome a new contributor to my column this issue. I hope that readers will be as stimulated as I am to hear the voice of another, younger, village cat.

An Open Letter to the Churchyard Cat.

Dear Churchyard Cat,

I've recently undertaken a little investigation which may prove interesting to you. Just a few weeks ago, as I was perusing the variety of gardens Horsell has to offer, I came across a peculiar sight. One of the residents of our village had managed to capture a bird. Now I know to us felines this isn't an inherently odd scenario, but my curiosity was nonetheless piqued, and so I examined some rather pleasant cooing emanated from a wicker cell, which upon closer inspection appeared to be a cat basket (the irony of this did make me chuckle), and as I started to peak over the edge of the garden table upon which it sat, I was met with a surprisingly well-groomed pigeon. After a polite exchange of greetings, I enquired as to the details of her current predicament. It turns out, she's a racing pigeon! I don't know about you Churchyard Cat, but I've never met a racing pigeon before. I've never met a racing anything, actually, so I found this to be a rather exciting situation. She informed me that her race had started in Guernsey, and she'd become lost on her way home to West Bromwich. Although an unintentional detour, she did admit, between mouthfuls of the bird seed, to being relieved at the break from her normally strict regime. As someone who's just been put on a diet, I can definitely relate. She was concerned, however, about how she was going to make her way back home. After all, she wasn't familiar with the route from Horsell to West Bromwich, and her owner had no idea where she was.

Before I could offer any reassurance, the garden door slid open and, who I presume to be the resident of the house, stepped out. I watched as the door to her enclosure was lifted, and her leg examined. It was then I noticed a small yellow bracelet wrapped around it, which the resident took great interest in. After scribbling on a slip of paper, they then moved the feathered racer into the garage. Over the next few days, I snuck inside to check on her. The yellow bracelet, it turns out, had allowed the resident to get in touch with her owner, via the Royal Pigeon Racing Association. Sounds very fancy! He was on his way from West Bromwich to collect her. On the day he arrived I rushed over to say farewell to my new winged friend. After her unexpected miniature vacation, she was more than happy to be heading back home. On my way out of the driveway I overheard her owner and the resident talking. West Bromwich was not to be the next stop after all. Apparently, they had to collect another racing pigeon who'd managed to be blown off course on the way home from Guernsey and ended up in Swindon! Personally, this whole adventure makes me very glad to be a village cat, and not a racing pigeon...even if my owner does put me on diets.

I hope you enjoyed this story. As a long-time fan it would mean so much to me if you did. Looking forward to your next piece!

Yours,

Anonymous Cat

Grave Matters

The only terracotta grave in Horsell churchyard is that of Walter Strachan, who died on 3 December 1914. It is located just behind the Pares family graves, near the memorial cross and seems to be in the style used by Compton Pottery, which was established by G F Watts and his wife Mary Seton Watts at Compton, and carried out many commissions until its closure in 1956. (The classic early indent on TV of the potter's wheel was a Compton pot being thrown in 1953.) Walter Strachan was born in Reading in 1864, one of five children and the son of a bank manager who later became a stockbroker. He married Horatia Lilius Capper from Chobham in 1894 and lived in Walton-on-Thames before moving in 1905 to Hook Heath Road, where in 1911 he was living with his wife and two servants in a house with eleven rooms. Both their sons were at boarding school: John Harold, born in 1896, was at Charterhouse and the younger son, Douglas Alexander, born in 1899 was at Scitcliffe School in Englefield Green.

John was a distinguished batsman in his two years in Charterhouse cricket first XI, scoring 122 not out in an innings against the Free Foresters, with an average over the years of 48.2. On leaving school he enlisted in the King's Own Scottish Borderers as a second lieutenant in March 1915, being promoted to lieutenant in May 1917, and

awarded the Military Cross. He later played just one first-class cricket match for the Free Foresters: against Cambridge University in 1926, scoring 0 and 53. He was a stock jobber and later a farmer, and married four times, emigrating to Canada with his fourth wife and dying at Collingwood Ontario on 1 Dec 1988, where his grave bears the inscription "a good innings".

Horatia and Douglas stayed together after Walter's death, first in Hook Heath, and then in Cedar Road, Woking, until moving to York Road, Weybridge by 1934. Douglas married in 1937 and moved out while Horatia stayed in York Road until her death (in a nursing home in Addlestone) on 1 November 1946, and is buried in Weybridge Cemetery.



Photograph of the family by permission of the Strachan family.

Community Spirit

Community Champions at Morrisons

Did you know that Morrisons supermarket have a Community Champion at every store, determined to help those who are struggling with living expenses? I knew that supermarkets had donation points for food banks and that some give contributions themselves but a Community Champion? That was news to me. Before Christmas I was in looking for articles to put in the charity bags for the Christmas Fayre. All very ordinary until a smiling Morrison lady asked if I needed help. Yes, please, I replied to which I was overwhelmed by her generous response to my charity challenge. Not only did she donate a huge hamper to go in the church raffle but an enormous carrier bag of goodies to put in the charity bags. To say I was overcome with her generosity is to underplay my reactions.

Sharon Bowen has not been in the role long, only a few months, but she is embracing the Morrisons approach to charitable giving in a proactive and imaginative way. Morrisons give a weekly pallet of food to a central food bank such as the Tressel Trust who distribute it to local charities such as Woking Community Kitchen and Andy's Kitchen in Goldsworth Park. Lockdown has brought food banks to the fore but Morrisons go further. Sharon has promoted store cupboards in some local schools. The grocery items are distributed by the school to those pupils and families who need them. The Women's refuge, Your Sanctuary, also receive goods and toiletries and even clothing; all part of the traditional support for the community seen by Sharon as part of her mission to support the Woking Community.

I was particularly touched by the hampers for Christmas which are given to the Council for distribution; toys to vulnerable children

charities and especially the families of young carers. Throughout the year, Acts of Kindness hampers are also given out just to bring a smile to the vulnerable and elderly, goody bags and flowers to care homes to make workers and residents feel wanted, and clothing and nappy supplies to neo-natal and children in St Peter's Hospital.

As you can see, the support for the community is not just for Christmas, it continues throughout the year. Sharon and her fellow Champion at the Weybridge store, Mairi, have developed close links so that they can co ordinate their fund giving, overlapping so that they provide a broad spectrum of help. Future events already planned are pop-up store cupboards at food banks, pensioner coffee mornings in store (COVID regulations permitting) and a continuation of the Tuesday cakes visits for the disabled children of Freemantle school. Their delivery drivers are continuing to serve the community and each driver has a scheduled time slot to just chat to the recipient and make sure they don't feel too lonely or neglected.

I had an exciting morning talking and listening to Sharon and Mairi and hearing their plans for further community giving but what struck me most was their enthusiasm for their roles and the support that they receive from Morrisons. They had so many interesting ideas and were particularly keen to help groups with whom they had not yet been in contact. Look out for pop-ups at schools and fayres around Woking and make sure that if you need a Community Champion, you contact Sharon or Mairi. I am sure they will help and even come up with ideas you had not yet thought about.

Susan Rowlett



Community Spirit

Horsell Bowls Club Knitting & Natter Group

Horsell Bowls Club Knitting & Natter group meet each Tuesday during the closed season. We support the Dementia, Geriatric, Children and Premature Baby Units at Frimley Park Hospital. Having only reconvened post lockdown in October 2021, once again our small team have excelled and produced well over 400 items, including adult lap blankets, hats and mittens, premature baby clothes and blankets, plus have dressed in excess of 50 dolls and teddies for the Children's ward this Christmas, and knitted and filled stockings with gifts, plus knitted full sets of baby clothes and blankets for their League of Friends Shop. We donate twice yearly at Christmas and Easter.

Alison Ferries



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Lectures

The Art of State Ceremonial Music

Graham Jones

Thursday 10 February 2022

The UK provides some of the biggest ceremonial events in the world and arguably the best in the world but why is that? How do the military prepare for major events such as the State Opening of Parliament, State Visits, National Day of Remembrance, Royal Weddings or even a State Funeral?

Dr Graham Jones started his professional life as a musician in the British Army. He retired in 2012 as the Senior Director of Music, Household Division, and Director of Music, Coldstream Guards. He has recorded over 40 albums, been responsible for commissioning over 30 new works for wind band and pioneered a music education programme for military musicians. Graham was made an MBE for outstanding service to military music in 1993. Graham is enjoying a second career as a guest conductor, adjudicator, lecturer, recording consultant and educator.

For more information about how to go to this lecture and others at The Arts Society, Mayford, go to:

<https://theartsocietymayford.org.uk/AboutUs/JoiningUs.aspx>

2B or Not 2B – an Illustrated Story of Drawing

Lynne Gibson

Thursday 10 March 2022

Why is Leonardo's famous cartoon in the National Gallery no joke? What is the purpose of a 'spolvero'? How much lead is there in a pencil? Which tree produces gall nut ink? And can you spot bracelet shading, cross-hatching, stippling or stumping?

Drawing plays a key role in an artist's training. The techniques are quick and immediate. But it can also be planning a composition, presenting an idea for a large project to a client, or purely a finished product in its own right. In this beautifully illustrated Leonardo lecture we will discover the drawing techniques of the Great Masters.

Now working as a freelance lecturer in the History of Art, Lynne originally trained as a fine artist and has taught painting, drawing and printmaking in higher and adult education. She gives lectures and guided tours to a wide range of organisations including the National Trust and the National Gallery. She has worked as a professional artist specializing in oil painting and etching.

For more information about how to go to this Leonardo lecture gallery and others at The Arts Society, Mayford, go to:

<https://theartsocietymayford.org.uk/AboutUs/JoiningUs.aspx>

Girlguiding

On 22nd February ten million members of Girlguiding worldwide will celebrate World Thinking Day. Since 1926 it has been a day that Guides and Girl Scouts think of each other and celebrate with all of their Guiding friends all over the world. That date was chosen as it was the joint birthday of Lord Robert Baden-Powell, founder of the scout and guide movement, and his wife Olave, who served as World Chief Guide.

This year the Horsell Girlguiding community will all come together to celebrate the occasion and remember both our worldwide and local guiding community. This will involve all our members playing games, activities, lighting candles and singing songs. Some of our younger members will

also get the opportunity to wear their uniforms to school on Thinking Day.

This year to commemorate 22nd February 2022 (22-02-2022!) there will be additional activities so please look out for us in Horsell and Woking - This will include our members stewarding the Park Run at Woking Park on Saturday 26th February!

Horsell Girlguiding continue to look for adult volunteers to support all of our units in Horsell village. Our Wednesday Rainbow unit has closed but we will be able to reopen if we can find new volunteers – please contact us if you are interested at:

chobhamandhorsell@gmail.com
We would love to hear from you!

Rhiannon Soper, Joint District
Commissioner Horsell Girlguiding



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FOR GIRLS AGED 2-11 YEARS
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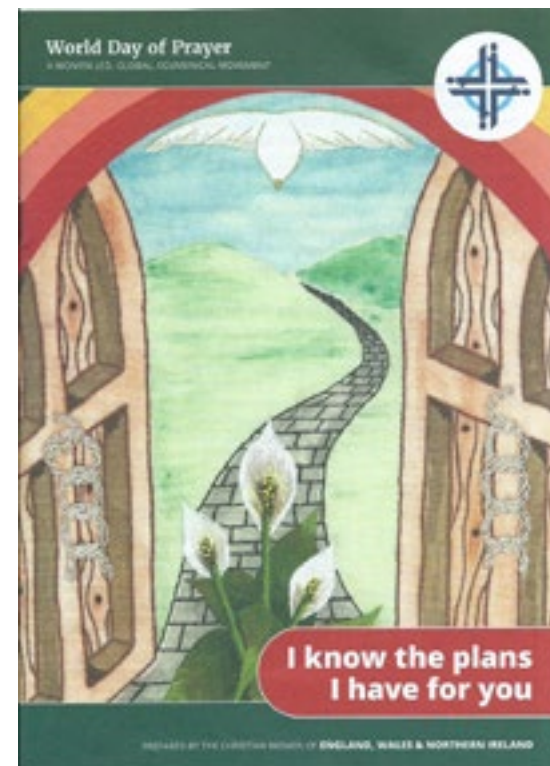
Word Day of Prayer – 4th March 2022

'I know the plans I have for you'

World Day of Prayer comes around on the first Friday in March every year, and this year the service has been written by Christian women from England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Our local service for the Woking area will be held at St Mary's Horsell at 10.00 am, and everyone is welcome to come, COVID rules permitting. We are conscious that parking is an issue locally, and are delighted that both The Red Lion and The Crown, which are close to the church, have agreed that we may use their car parks on this occasion. The service will be streamed. Search for 'St Mary's Horsell' on YouTube.

A different country is responsible for writing the service each year, and aims to focus on their own ideas and concerns, in order that we can all pray more meaningfully for one another. This year's theme is taken from Jeremiah chapter 29. We will celebrate our diversity and the contribution made to our countries by the many groups and individuals who have made their homes here, and reflect on some of the issues facing us today, finding hope in difficult situations and encouragement in the help we can give to each other.

WDP is an ecumenical worldwide organisation. Our local committee has



members from eleven churches, of five different denominations. We greatly value the opportunity to work together and build close links with one another.

It is inspiring to be part of something which begins as the sun rises in Samoa and circles the earth, finishing in American Samoa.

Gill Squibb



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Kitchen Matters



Turnip Tartiflette

This makes a great supper dish and brings back memories of holidays in France. Turnips have quite a peppery flavour which contrasts well with the cheese. Although this dish is traditionally made with Reblochon cheese, it works equally well with Camembert.

Ingredients

- 750g turnips, peeled and sliced
- 20g butter, plus extra for greasing
- 1 leek, sliced
- 200g bacon, chopped
- 1 tsp thyme, chopped
- 200ml crème fraiche
- 1 round of Camembert, chopped into chunks
- Freshly ground black pepper

Method

Heat oven to 190C.
 Bring a pan of salted water to the boil, add the turnips, and cook for 6 mins until just tender, then drain.
 Meanwhile melt the butter in a frying pan and sauté the leeks until soft. Add the chopped bacon and cook until crisp. Stir in the thyme.
 Lightly butter a medium, ovenproof casserole dish. Cover the base with half of the turnips, then spoon over half each of the leek mixture, crème fraiche and cheese. Season with some pepper then repeat the layers.
 Bake in the oven for 25mins until bubbling and golden. Leave to stand for 5 mins and serve with a green veg and some crusty bread.

J.A. garden service

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 Friday 13th May
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 February – March

Sunday Morning All-Age Worship

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On the first Sunday of the month

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Celebrate Mothers! **Mothering Sunday**
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10 am Family Communion Service

An Opportunity to say a big 'Thank you' for our mothers!

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Why not drop in for a cuppa, piece of
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Sunday 13th February
Sunday 20th March

4 - 5.30pm

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Fun Activities for all

Booking required via stmaryshorsell@btinternet.com by 7th February
 14th March

Tuesday Morning Baby and Toddler Group



Weekly during
 term time

9.30 to 11.30am

Closed for Half Term
 15th February
 Last session of term
 29th March

Pop in for a coffee, chat,
 play, and meet new friends



Thursday Twinkle Tots

Baby and Toddler Group
 Weekly in term time
 9.30am to 11.00am

Closed for Half Term:
 17th February
 Last session of term
 31st March

Come and make friends
 Enjoy play, craft, Bible stories
 and songs

For more details, contact the Church Office on
 01483 772134

Children's Corner

LENT

Match Questions and Answers

1. What is Lent?
 - A. There's no mention of the word 'Lent' in the Bible. The time of Lent is linked with the 40 days Jesus spent praying and fasting in the desert.
2. Is Lent before or after Easter? How long is it?
 - B. Christians prepare to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. They spend time in prayer, reflection and sometimes fasting.
 - D. Lent comes before Easter. It lasts for 40 days.
3. What do Christians do during Lent?
 - C. Christians reflect on Jesus' suffering on the cross and may choose to give something up as a form of fasting. Giving something up is a sign of moderation and self-discipline.
4. Is there a Bible verse about Lent?
 - E. Lent is a time of preparation for Easter.
5. Why do people give up things for Lent?
 - F. You can try to give something up for Lent to practise self-discipline. For example: sweets, chocolates or playing computer games.
6. What can You do for Lent?

As well as giving something up we can take things up for Lent. For example, spending more time outdoors, tidying your room, hanging up your clothes neatly, reading 10 pages of a book every day, helping with chores, looking for ways to help others.. What can you take up for Lent?

Put these 3 events in correct order

Ash Wednesday Lent Shrove Tuesday

No peeking, but if you get really stuck, here are the answers

1E, 2D, 3B, 4A, 5C, 6F, 1 Shrove Tuesday, 2 Ash Wednesday, 3 Lent

Book Shelf

A Town Called Solace by Mary Lawson

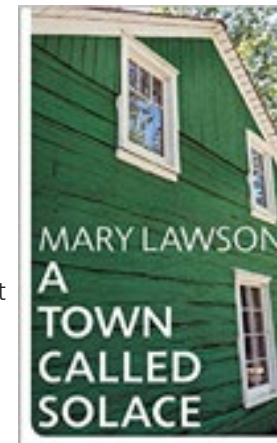
Sometimes a book catches the eye just because the title seems to resonate in ways one has never thought about. Looking for something quiet and perhaps a little more reflective that is what happened here. After all the joy and chaos of Christmas, it is the ideal opportunity in the spring to curl up with a quieter read.

Solace is a town, not a big one, and probably in a rather remote area. Frankly, it is the sort of place where nothing much happens, and the very ordinary inhabitants lead a very ordinary life. Don't be put off by the lack of excitement or plot intricacies. Everyday lives can be as fulfilling as any other.

It centres on three people: a child whose sister has run away; her neighbour, an old lady who is terminally ill in hospital; and a middle-aged man in the midst of a divorce who is a stranger in the town. Each one of them has a back-story and each one of them has to learn to live with where they are in their journey and the events around them. Each of them is facing a traumatic event in their lives and it is in dealing with these challenges that the reader learns much about their characters.

Intriguingly the stories play out in the present, but it is their back-stories which

are fascinating. The little girl is lonely and is desperately hanging on to the cat next door. The old lady, the owner of the cat, has her own murky past to come to terms with; and the man, the stranger who has been left the old lady's house, has to navigate his way forward out of a divorce. Each of them has to gain solace from others.



The central qualities of family, friendship, comfort and compassion are at the core of the story. These are the qualities which bring the disparate characters together in their search for some sort of understanding about their lives. They are not alone as the warmth of the town envelops them and ensures that they master the challenges they meet.

The joy of the novel is the joy of human nature which is displayed in the ordinary lives of the townsfolk and the sense of community. Little lives, perhaps, but no less important for that. It is easy to identify with the various townspeople, well drawn but delicately etched with just enough detail to make them come alive. What we learn of human nature is the essence of the novel and in reading it, we can curl up in our own community, recognising the strengths shown by the ordinary people.

Susan Rowlett

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Lightbox

Bridget Riley: Pleasures of Sight 18 December 2021 – 10 April 2022

'For those with open eyes, look, learn to see!'

To mark Bridget Riley's 90th birthday The Lightbox presents Bridget Riley: Pleasures of Sight, an exhibition of work by one of the most important and influential British artists of the past century. Inspired by the visual sensations of the natural world, Bridget Riley has explored colour, structure and perception throughout a career spanning seven decades and is renowned for her black and white so called 'Op Art' works created in the 1960s. This retrospective will map the fascinating evolution of Riley's working life and the relationship between her paintings and prints.

She developed an instantly recognisable abstract style, which focusses on the interaction of colour and geometric forms. Even before she began to make art, Riley felt a deep importance in the power of seeing. She wanted to bring about "a fresh way of seeing again what had already almost certainly been experienced", encouraging audiences to draw pleasure from the act of viewing her works

The exhibition features key loan works which trace the evolution of Riley's working practice from the Sixties to the present day, including examples of her infamous black and white paintings (Movement in Squares, 1961) which experimented with optics and induced intense visual reactions in audiences As Bridget Riley explains "More than anything else I want my paintings to exist on their own terms... There the paintings hang...and then, for

those with open eyes, serenely disclosing some intimations of the splendours to which pure sight alone has the key." From the Seventies onwards Riley explored colour relationships and discovered that by using universal shapes (lines, circles, squares, triangles), these pure forms carry colour highly efficiently. By manipulating colour relationships through these shapes, you can create dazzling sensations in the viewer.

The exhibition also emphasises the importance of printmaking to Bridget Riley and features a number of Riley's screen-prints (a technique which deploys a silkscreen) which she has used as part of her practice since the 1960s. These screen-prints provide a new layer of visual experience to Riley's work and a deeper understanding of her process resolving or expanding the trains of thought imbued in the piles and piles of ideas - 'fragments' – in the studio.

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Interview with Alan Rapley

How early did you realise that you enjoyed classical music?

I don't know that I ever realised it as such. If you learnt a musical instrument in those days, you learnt "proper" music, so classical music was what there was, so it was what I liked. It just happened.

Were your parents involved in starting your love of music?

Yes, through my mother, although there were organists on my father's side, so I think he was quite pleased that I was carrying on one family trait, when it became clear that it wasn't going to be cricket.

What music lessons did you have to start you off?

I didn't start learning the piano until I was ten. I initially learnt the piano with an old lady my mother and grandmother knew from the WI. She had to go into hospital, so I transferred to the organist of the village church, where I was already a chorister. The lady who played the organ for choir practices had to go into hospital (there's a pattern developing here!), and I took over, initially just to give starting chords but I was much taken with it. As it became clear that this was my instrument, I stopped piano lessons.

Sadly, they weren't replaced with regular organ lessons. As a teenager I was almost entirely self-taught. My mother signed the entry forms for the ABSM exams, but I prepared myself.

When at university did you continue with your musical talents?

My first degree is French and music, so my music certainly developed

then. It was the first time I had regular lessons! Initially I was taught by the New Zealander, Betty Black. When she returned to her homeland, John Porter from St George's Chapel, Windsor, took over.

How long have you been involved with choirs?

Since the age of ten when I joined the choir of the local village church). When I was fourteen I became organist of another local church. I've been connected with choirs in varying degrees ever since.

I know that you help at a number of churches – are their choirs similar to ours?

The choir situation in many churches is pretty similar to St Mary's church. I can only think of one church locally which maintains the choral tradition which St Mary's once had.

Do you have a favourite organ that you enjoy playing?

My own.

Are organs very different, unlike pianos?

Oh yes. That's the short answer. The long answer is very long. Every pipe organ is custom-built. Even when moved from one building to another, they'll be adapted. The measurements of modern consoles are standardised and there are conventions for the layout of the stops. Mass-produced electronic and digital organs are available, but they are still individually voiced. When I bought my first instrument, someone came out from Rodgers to set it to the room it was going

Music Man

to be used in and to my specifications. With any instrument, what you hear isn't exactly what the audience will hear, but, in the case of the organ, unless you have a detached console (i.e. one which is away from the actual pipes), the difference can be enormous. If you look at the organ in St Mary's, you'll see that there is a set of pipes (behind the shutters) almost directly above the player's head and another further up the case. The balance, from the organist's point of hearing, is, therefore, very different from that of a listener in the body of the church. In the case of some large organs, the player can barely hear some parts of the instrument, particularly if other parts are being used

We enjoy your recitals that you organise – there seems to be a good regular audience for these.

Yes, I've been pleased with the response.

Can you explain how you find the people to be involved?

Wherever I can. Often, they're people I know, or who know people I know. Others see a recital advertised on organrecitals.com and contact me to say they'd like to give one.

I also know of your involvement with Woking Music Festival – can you tell us something about its success

I got involved with the festival over 25 years ago. It provides a good opportunity for people of literally all ages and standards to perform in public to sympathetic audience and get feedback from an experienced professional. Sadly, the main exception is organists. Since

the removal of the organ from Christ Church, there hasn't been a venue with a suitable instrument. There's also a speech and drama section, so actors, readers and speakers (singly or in groups) can enter, too. We've recently added musical theatre classes and they've proved extremely popular.

People often say that it's a very friendly festival.

We're also very proud of the Woking Young Musician competition which takes place on the first Saturday of February. Some now well-known young players have come through that competition: Laura van der Heijden (BBC Young Musician, 2012), Martin James Bartlett (BBC Young Musician, 2014), Matilda Lloyd (BBC Young Musician of the Year Brass Finalist, 2014), Ben Goldscheider (BBC Young Musician Finalist, 2016) amongst others.

You can get more information about the Woking Music Festival from me, of course, or from the website: wokingmusicfestival.org.uk. We're always glad of any offers of help in running it (IT skills would be especially welcome), even if it's only a couple of hours in November to act as steward at one of the sessions.

Heads Up....

Alan is organising a musical meditation evening on Passion Sunday, April 3rd. It will include congregational, choral and organ items centring on the Passion.



Valentine Memories



A Valentine can be for life

February 14 is the Feast Day of St Valentine – a saint with a particular responsibility for people intending to be married, for people with epilepsy, and for beekeepers.

There have been more than one Saint Valentine. The one commemorated in February has rival stories associated with him, suggesting that there were two Valentines involved. Was he a priest who lived in Rome and was killed after ministering to persecuted fellow Christians about 269 AD; or was he the Christian bishop of a Roman town who was brought to Rome itself to be martyred about the same time? Either way, he has been recognised as a saint since 496.

Though the two martyrs (or one martyr) had apparently no particular connection with romantic love, Saint Valentine's Day, February 14, has been associated with courtship for six or seven hundred years. Perhaps it is because of a Medieval myth that the birds choose their mates that day. Whatever its origins, sending a Valentine is well established in much of the world, and follows unwritten rules.

On February 14, you send a Valentine – that's a card expressing your admiration and regard to someone, inviting them to be 'your Valentine' but the card, is anonymous so the recipient has to work out who it is from. This should be light hearted fun, though someone lonely, or desperately in love, just may take sending or receiving a card seriously – be careful who you send to, is perhaps good advice.

And what does being someone's Valentine mean? Is it being a companion for an evening out, or is it the start (or the continuation) of something more committed? How long does the Valentine card sender anticipate their Valentine will remain theirs?

It could be for a lifetime.

I knew a couple who first sent each other a Valentine soon after they first met and were still sending them 55 years later (by which time their grandchildren were sending Valentines of their own). The cards were still anonymous – so perhaps the recipients were wrong to assume the sender was their spouse. Maybe both had unknown admirers, even in their old age. But the still-happy couple didn't think so.

Happy couple

Remembered as a bit of fun for us as teenagers in the 50's to brighten up a dull February: a source of excitement and intrigue if you received a card 'from an unknown admirer', but also of disappointment for those who didn't, and sadly exploited by some as a way to tease the naive. I never sent or received one myself.

As a long-married couple we don't recognise it. Our courtship and early married life were spent in Uganda, where it was certainly not part of the culture. There are better opportunities, like birthdays and our wedding anniversary, for expressing affection.

Memories of my marriage

When I look back at the 43 years of happy marriage, I feel so grateful that I found the right partner.

I use the word 'found' loosely, as we met quite by chance at Goldsmith's College in 1965.

My version of how we first started to 'go out' was Valentine's Day when there was a party. I was asked by Gill if I was going to join in. I wasn't really bothered, but I did. The rest was history. Many of our friends said that it was about time!

We married in March 1967 (a bitterly cold morning) and had a wonderful honeymoon in Jersey. There it was like summer.

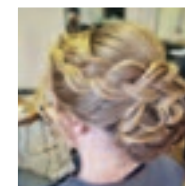
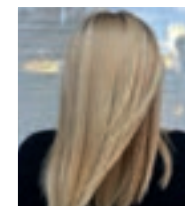
We never celebrated Valentine's Day – we were very fond of each other and could show that by the way we lived and loved.



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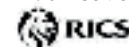
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