

GRASS

THE NEWSLETTER AT THE ROOTS OF THE GRAND UNION BENEFICE OF BLISWORTH AND STOKE BRUERNE/ SHUTLANGER, WITH GRAFTON REGIS, ALDERTON AND MILTON MALSOR

Letter from the Rector

Alleluia Christ is risen. He has risen indeed. Alleluia. These words are on the lips of every Christian worldwide on Easter Sunday as we celebrate the resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

During Eastertide we stand with Christians, who through the centuries have celebrated Christ's triumph over death when he took our sins upon himself to show how much He loves every one of us and the price that He would give for our salvation. It is a time of new beginnings when we put away our old lives and take up a new life in Christ. Easter reminds us of the importance of sharing the Good News that our Saviour lives and is at work in the world today. One of our tasks as Christians is to join him in proclaiming this message.

Some people like to tell me that Christianity is in decline, but I don't think this is true. It is just that those who have been baptised no longer proclaim their faith out loud or gather around Our Lord's table on a Sunday morning. The Church is a beacon of love and hope in a world that desperately needs it. The very presence of God among us, that has shaped the very fabric of this country of which we are so proud.

Just recently in the news, people have been talking about St George's Cross on the collar of the national football team's new kit, and the colour it should be, the very cross that our Lord was crucified upon; some people seemed to be more concerned about what the cross looks like than the price that was paid upon it for their salvation.

How can we encourage others who have been baptised but who haven't attended church regularly for a while to come to the Lord's table each Sunday? To read their Bible, say their prayers daily and proclaim the Good News in how they live their lives? The only way is through evangelisation, but we must continually evangelise ourselves before we can evangelise others. During Lent, our studies reflected on Mary Martha and Lazarus, and it was noted that people wanted to carry on studying after Easter to deepen their understanding of our Christian faith. The answer to this is that it is something we all need to be doing. There will be more information on this in the coming weeks.

On June 2 in St Mary the Virgin Church in Grafton Regis, we will be celebrating The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to her cousin Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist. Within the reading from Luke that the visitation comes from, we can see two women talking about their faith in God, an example we can all follow with family and friends. We will be welcoming Bishop John who will be preaching; we are planning to sing most of the service, and we are looking for people from across the benefice to come together and be part of the choir. If singing is not for you, then please do come along and share in what will be a wonderful occasion. One good way to share our faith is to bring a friend with you. You can always tell them that you are taking them out for a bite to eat as there will be refreshments afterwards, and then let God do the rest and speak to their hearts.

If you would like to be in the choir, please do let Sorcha Startin know. sorcha.startin@yahoo.com.

Blessings, Richard

Service Schedule for April 2024

Sunday 7 April, Easter 2

9.30 a m: Family Eucharist, Milton Malsor

11.00 a m: Family Eucharist, Blisworth

Sunday 14 April, Easter 3

9.30 a m: Family service, Milton Malsor

9.30 a m: Family Eucharist, Stoke Bruerne

11.00 a m: Family Eucharist, Blisworth

Thursday 18 April

9.30 a m: Morning prayer, Shutlanger

Sunday 21 April, Easter 4

9.30 a m: Family Eucharist, Milton Malsor

11.00 a m: Family service, Blisworth

Sunday 28 April, Easter 5

9.30 a m: Family service, Milton Malsor

9.30 a m: Family service, Stoke Bruerne

11.00 a m: Family Eucharist, Blisworth

Useful Telephone Numbers for the United Benefice of Blisworth and Stoke Bruerne with Grafton Regis, Alderton and Milton Malsor

Rector: Rev'd Canon Richard Stainer, The Rectory, 37 High Street, Blisworth NN7 3BJ, tel 01604 857619.

Churchwardens of Blisworth: Mrs Fiona McKenzie, tel 01604 859541 and Mrs Angela Cheesbrough, tel 01604 858059.

Churchwardens of Stoke Bruerne: Mrs Christine Frost, tel 01604 862561 and Mr John Brough, tel 01604 862646/07768 181598

Churchwardens of Grafton Regis: Mrs Jean Glanville, tel 01908 543463 and Mr Nieldre Laubscher, tel 01908 542979.

Churchwardens of Alderton: Mrs Margaret Hall-Townley, tel 01327 811307 and Mrs Linda Dards, tel 01327 811265.

Churchwarden of Milton Malsor: Mrs Gill Franklin, tel 01604 706545.

VILLAGE NEWS



STOKE BRUERNE

St Mary the Virgin Church *Churchyard Working Party*

When we met for the first working party on Saturday 16 March, I think we were all struck by how clear and colourful the churchyard looked so early in the season. Thanks to Robert Frost and Roger Cooper spending several mornings mowing and tidying before the event, we were able to spend more time on other areas that needed work and discussing plans for the future. On this occasion we had 15 willing helpers and as a result we achieved a great deal during this session. We were very fortunate to have a lovely sunny morning and we all enjoyed being out in the fresh air. Many thanks to all those who carried out the tasks so effectively and to Liz Hargreaves who kindly provided us with delicious refreshments. Our next working party will be on Saturday April 20th between 9.30 a m and 12.00 noon.

Spring Tidy Inside the Church

As well as the working party in the churchyard on Saturday 20 April, we felt it would be an ideal opportunity to clean and tidy inside the church. We would appreciate it if a small group of people could give of their time to help with dusting and polishing woodwork or cleaning window sills and floors. All materials required for these jobs will be provided. The church will be open between 9.15 a m and 12.30 p m, so if you can spare a little time during that period we would be very grateful.

Musical Event

Audio Vendor is presenting another evening of high quality original music in St Mary the Virgin Church on Saturday 11 May. It promises to be an enjoyable evening so please come along to support these talented artists. Further information and tickets can be obtained from AUDIOVENDOR.COM.

Exciting Job Opportunity – Stoke Bruerne Primary School

Stoke Bruerne Primary school is looking for a lunchtime supervisor to join their friendly team. Hours: Monday to Friday, 11.30 a m to 1.00 p m.

Please email: bursar@stokebruerne.northants-ecl.gov.uk for more information, or telephone the school on 01604 862872.

Green Bins

Residents across West Northamptonshire can now sign up for optional, chargeable garden waste collections from April 2024.

The annual subscription charge for the fortnightly service from April 2024 to the end of March 2025 is £58 per bin and can be made online at www.westnorthants.gov.uk/gardenwaste. Residents can sign up for an annual direct debit to save having to remember to renew every year. Residents who are unable to access the internet can subscribe to the service by phoning the council on 0300 126 7000.

Once households are signed up to the service, they will receive their new 2024/25 garden waste permit which they will be asked to stick on their garden waste bin. Any bins that have not subscribed will not be emptied after 1 April. People who do not wish to sign up to the service have the option of composting their garden waste at home, either in a traditional compost heap or by purchasing a compost bin by visiting www.getcomposting.com and typing in their postcode to see offers available in their area. People can also recycle garden waste for free at any of the Council's household waste recycling centres.

A comprehensive list of FAQs are also available on the Council's website at www.westnorthants.gov.uk/bins-recycling-and-street-cleaning/garden-waste-collection-faqs More information can be found at www.westnorthants.gov.uk/gardenwaste

Dave Weston, Clerk Stoke Bruerne Parish Council



AUDIO VENDOR PRESENTS
SAT 11TH MAY 2024
ST MARY THE VIRGIN CHURCH
CHURCH LANE, STOKE BRUERNE, NN12 7SB
ENJOY AN EVENING OF HIGH QUALITY ORIGINAL MUSIC IN AN EPIC ENVIRONMENT

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BAR DRINKS & SNACKS WILL BE AVAILABLE BETWEEN SETS. THE EVENT IS FILMED AND RECORDED.
For more information & tickets visit
AUDIOVENDOR.COM



SHUTLANGER

Shutlanger Village Hall

Website: www.shutlangervillagehall.org.uk, phone number: 01327640547, Twitter: @ShutlangerVHall
Facebook: Shutlanger Village Hall, Instagram: shutlangervillagehall, What3words: confetti.freely.exacts

Coffee Morning

Our monthly coffee, cake and chat morning was on Thursday 21 March 10.00 a m until 12.00 noon. The coffee morning was preceded by a short prayer service which started at 9.30 a m. The next coffee morning will be on Thursday 18 April, the bacon rolls are always a hit. We have free Wi-Fi and contactless payments. Our coffee mornings are always on the third Thursday of the month, put a note in your diary so you don't miss it. A very warm welcome awaits you.

Tote Draw

The latest draw was, as always, during the coffee morning. We gave out two prizes of £100. Congratulations to this month's winners. The tote has raised over £5,000 towards keeping our hall as a centre for community and celebration; we have given out the same amount in prizes. Thank you for your continued support, it is making a real difference. It's easy to join the tote, it costs just £5 a month; half the money goes to help the village hall and the other half to two lucky prize winners. The odds are much better than the national lottery!

There are application forms in the hall, you can call 01327 640547 or email secretary@shutlangervillagehall.org.uk any of these make it easy for you to join our ever-growing band of supporters.

Events

We are holding another garden party on 12 May from 2.00 p m onwards. We are celebrating the hall's 140th anniversary. Get your free tickets and read more about the event at www.shutlangervillagehall.org.uk/gardenparty

Open Gardens

Will your garden be blooming in June? Would you like to open your garden to visitors on 9 June? Then Shutlanger Open Gardens needs you!

We like to have about 10 gardens open and offer bacon rolls and cream teas at the hall. Speak to one of the committee members if you would like to join us for the third year of our open gardens. More information on the website www.shutlangervillagehall.org.uk/opengardens

Plant and Crop Swap

The plant and crop swap will be back this month. Either bring some surplus plants from your garden and take home something new or pick up a plant you like the look of and leave a donation in the post box at the hall



Fundraising

As ever we continue to raise funds to renovate the excellent facilities within our most important community asset. There are several opportunities to get involved:

Direct donations via the website homepage and by using QR codes in the hall and at events. The 'donation station' in the lobby at the entrance to the hall lets you put a cash donation in the box or use your phone to scan the QR code. You can also recycle your old ink cartridges in the hall.

We are members of Easyfundraising where you can easily make donations. Don't forget to join the tote too!

Thank you for all your support. Your help matters to us. EVERY penny counts!

Barbara Stanbridge, Secretary Shutlanger Village Hall Management Committee



GRAFTON REGIS

Grafton Village Lunch 14 March 2024

We were a week earlier this month as our chief cook would have been up to her eyes in lambing on the due date of March lunch. We all hope everything goes well and the 'about 400' lambs due all arrive safely and the weather is kind especially when they find themselves in the maternity unit on the night shift.

We were very lucky that Thursday was the one day when it was dry, so the Grafton folk could enjoy a walk to the hall.



Another lovely lunch of courgette and brie soup, chicken in a cream sauce (delicious and I need the recipe), carrots, broccoli, potatoes and peas, followed by a choice of trifle, rhubarb crumble with, joy of joys, custard or cream and cheese and biscuits, tea and coffee and the usual basket of sweets.

Good company, as always, and a reluctance of guests to leave as we were enjoying chatting.

Thank you once again to the team in the kitchen and the volunteers who set up and clear away the tables, chairs etc. or who help in any way. The hall always looks lovely and so welcoming. The lunch next month is the last one before our summer break and will be on 18 April. Doris

Grafton Regis Church Fete Saturday 18 May 2.00 p m to 4.30 p m

Please come along and help us raise money to keep the doors of our beautiful heritage church open!

As well as the usual fabulous plant sale, cakes, jams and craft stalls, this year there will also be classic cars and a vintage bus! Are you able to help us by potting up some plants, or letting us know when you are splitting plants so that we can pot them up? We would also welcome donations of jams, chutneys, marmalade, cakes, either for refreshments or the cake stall.

If you are able to help in anyway, or know anyone who would like a stall at the fete, please contact Jean Glanville on 01908 543463



BLISWORTH

Short Mat Bowls Club

The Blisworth short mat bowls club meets every Monday and Wednesday afternoon from 1.45 p m-4.00 p m every week. Stanley Tyrrell

Spring Concert

Hunsbury and Blisworth Community Choir are presenting a spring concert at St. Benedict's Church, West Hunsbury on Friday, 12 April at 7.00 p m. Entrance is free but there will be a collection and raffle for Northampton Home Start. Come and enjoy an enthusiastic performance of a broad selection of music with something to suit everyone's taste.



ALDERTON

Easter Service at Dawn

This will be the third dawn service on Easter morning and we really hope that we have a good congregation, despite the early hour and the fact that the clocks 'spring forward' that morning so in effect we lose an hour in bed. The service starts at 6.00 a m; weather permitting, we will sit in the churchyard around a fire pit, facing east and the dawn. We will then go into church for the rest of the service, which will be followed by a hot breakfast for the brave souls who get up early. This is a truly magical service; we hope this year there will be some live cello music, courtesy of Sarah from The Round House. There will be a collection in aid of church funds. Everyone is welcome.

Plant Sale

We will be holding our annual plant sale on Saturday 20 April from 10.00 a m in the churchyard of St Margaret's. There will be plants to buy as well as cakes, preserves and assorted pretty household things. Sandwiches will be available as well as homemade soup and bread. We look forward to seeing you there. We would be grateful for your support. The proceeds will be split between church funds and the knight. Alderton PCC

Annual Parochial Church Council Meeting

The APCM for 2024 will take place on Saturday 27 April at 10.00 a m in St Margaret's Church. This is the formal meeting to present the accounts for the year to 31 December 2023 and to review church activities. All villagers are encouraged and welcome to attend. It will be a short meeting.

An Evening of Readings by Crime Writer Rev'd Graham Brack, Saturday 27 April at Moored, Alderton

We will be holding a fundraising evening of atmospheric stories by our Curate, crime writer, Rev'd Graham Brack. The evening starts at 6.00 p m with a welcome drink and nibbles, for a 6.30 p m start to the readings. There will be a break halfway through the evening to top up your glasses and plates.

Tickets are priced at £15 per person and booking is essential as space is limited. Please contact either Margaret Hall-Townley, email magshall-townley@hotmail.com, tel 01327 811307 or Linda Dards, email linda@dards.net, tel 01327 811265, or via the village WhatsApp. It would be helpful if tickets were paid for in advance.

All proceeds from the evening will go to the toilet/servery project in St Margaret's Church. There will be a raffle and various items for sale including jewellery and jam so bring some extra pennies! We hope you will be able to join us. You don't have to live in Alderton to come along! Margaret and Linda

Tree Pollarding

The lime trees in the churchyard have recently been pollarded; this is something that has to be done every five years or so. We are very grateful to Franks Tree and Hedge Maintenance Service, a local company, for carrying out the work so promptly and efficiently and at a very fair price. They will be returning to the churchyard in the near future to treat the ivy which could damage the trees.

Church Cleaning Rota

Daryl and Julie

Churchyard Rota

Roy Cox (first half of April), Tom Chaplin (second half of April)

Notes from a Local Farmer

Here we are at 18 March and it's still raining! We are down to the last few to lamb; it has gone quite well with good sized lambs being born. Although wet, it has been mild and the grass is growing and the lambs are growing well. We are waiting to start spring drilling but looks as if it will be after Easter now with the winter wheat waiting application of fertiliser. My lawns are covered in moss so we applying a granular moss killer to improve the grass so there is always plenty going on.
Speak to you next month. Robert Davy

News from The Old Mail

For events and happenings in the nearby villages: Cosgrove, Potterspurty and Yardley Gobion, see the newsletter, The Old Mail, is available online at various websites: www.cosgrovevillage.co.uk; www.potterspurtypc.wordpress.com; www.yardleygobionparishcouncil.gov.uk

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Three Men on the BCN

Speakers: Tom Stewart with Paul & Kevin Cousins

Three men embark on a 24 hour marathon challenge to navigate as much of the Birmingham Canal Navigations as they can, collecting points as they go. How did they get on? Come along and see.

Tuesday 9th April @ 19.30pm

The Conference Room, The Boat Inn, Stoke Bruerne, NN12 7SB

All are welcome. You don't have to be a member. Full bar service and food available. A small donation of £2 would be appreciated to help cover expenses.



SPRING CONCERT BY
HUNSBURY AND BLISWORTH
COMMUNITY CHOIR
and
RANDOM NOTES CHOIR
Musical Director: Helen Thorman

Friday, 12th April 2024 at 7pm
St Benedict's Church
West Hunsbury
NN4 9UG

Free entry with raffle and donations at the end of the concert to raise money for



COME AND ENJOY A TOE-TAPPING
EVENING OF SONG!



MARK SHETTLE

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Contact Paul Dards on 07540 000844 or 01327 811265 or paul@dards.co.uk

PDC, Moorend, Spring Lane
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ART SHOW

20th/21st April

Blisworth Village Hall
10.30 – 4.30

Tea/Coffee and cakes
All are welcome to come and see/buy
a wide range of art from our talented
artists

United Benefice Calendar for 2024

All groups and organisations within the community are warmly invited to include events here.

April

- 6 Coffee morning and Messy Church, Milton Malsor, 10.00 a m
- 9 IWA – Three Men on the Birmingham Canal Navigations, 7.30, the Boat Inn
- 9 Annual Parish gathering, Stoke Bruerne, 7.30 p m, village hall
- 10 Shutlanger and Stoke Bruerne Flower Club, Roade village hall, 2.30 p m
- 11 Blisworth WI meeting, Queen Victoria's wardrobe, 7.30 p m, Blisworth village hall
- 12 Farmers' market, Towcester, 9.00 a m to 1.00 p m
- 12 Hunsbury & Blisworth Community Choir concert, 7.00 p m St Benedict's Church, West Hunsbury
- 18 Coffee morning, Shutlanger, 10.00 a m to 12.00 noon
- 18 Grafton lunch, 12.30 p m, Grafton Regis village hall
- 20 Plant sale, Alderton Churchyard, 10.00 a m
- 20 Stoke Bruerne churchyard and church working party, 9.30 a m to 12. 00 noon
- 20/21 Art Show, Blisworth village hall, 10.30 a m to 4.30 p m
- 26 Blisworth coffee and cakes, 7 Pond Bank, 10.00 a m to 12. 00 noon

27 An evening of readings of short stories by Graham Brack, Alderton, 6.30 p m

May

4 Coffee morning and Messy Church, Milton Malsor, 10.00 a m

4 Sale for the knight, 10.00 a m to 12.00 noon, St Margaret's Church, Alderton

9 Blisworth WI meeting, resolutions, 7.30 p m, Blisworth village hall

8 Shutlanger and Stoke Bruerne Flower Club, Roade village hall, 2.30 p m

11 Grafton Regis, 1,000 Years in 100 Minutes, 2.30 p m

11 Concert, Stoke Bruerne Church, 7.30 p m

12 Garden party, Shutlanger, 2.00 p m

14 Inland Waterways Association – A heritage walk around Stoke & afternoon tea, 2.30, canal museum

18 Stoke Bruerne churchyard working party, 9.30 a m to 12. 00 noon

18 Grafton Regis Church Fete, 2.00 p m to 4.00 p m

25 Stoke Bruerne coffee morning – plant stall

31 Blisworth coffee and cakes, 7 Pond Bank, 10.00 a m to 12. 00 noon

June

1 Coffee morning and Messy Church, Milton Malsor, 10.00 a m

9 Open gardens, Shutlanger

13 Blisworth WI meeting, gold work, 7.30 p m, Blisworth village hall

15 Stoke Bruerne churchyard working party, 9.30 a m to 12. 00 noon

19 Beat Bus, Royal Oak car park, Blisworth, 3.00 p m

21 Proms and Prosecco, Milton Malsor Church, 7.00 p m

22 Grafton Regis, 1,000 Years in 100 Minutes, 2.30 p m

28 Blisworth coffee and cakes, 7 Pond Bank, 10.00 a m to 12. 00 noon

July

6 Coffee morning and Messy Church, Milton Malsor, 10.00 a m

11 Blisworth WI meeting, I'm a Poet but not as you know it, 7.30 p m, Blisworth village hall

20 Barn dance, Shutlanger

26 Blisworth coffee and cakes, 7 Pond Bank, 10.00 a m to 12. 00 noon

27 Stoke Bruerne churchyard working party, 9.30 a m to 12. 00 noon

August

3 Coffee morning and Messy Church, Milton Malsor, 10.00 a m

8 Blisworth WI meeting, outing

10 Stoke Bruerne churchyard working party, 9.30 a m to 12. 00 noon

17 Stoke Bruerne coffee morning - raffle

30 Blisworth coffee and cakes, 7 Pond Bank, 10.00 a m to 12. 00 noon

31 Alderton Art Festival

September

1 Alderton Art Festival

7 Coffee morning and Messy Church, Milton Malsor, 10.00 a m

8 Dog show, Shutlanger

11 Beat Bus, Royal Oak car park, Blisworth, 3.00 p m

11 Shutlanger and Stoke Bruerne Flower Club, Roade village hall, 2.30 p m

12 Blisworth WI meeting, 'Our Fifth Sense', 7.30 p m, Blisworth village hall

14 Stoke Bruerne churchyard working party, 9.30 a m to 12. 00 noon

21 Grafton Regis, 1,000 Years in 100 Minutes, 2.30 p m

27 Blisworth coffee and cakes, 7 Pond Bank, 10.00 a m to 12. 00 noon

October

5 Coffee morning and Messy Church, Milton Malsor, 10.00 a m

- 10 Blisworth WI meeting, Mata Hari – a spy or a scapegoat, 7.30 p m, Blisworth village hall
- 19 Stoke Bruerne churchyard working party, 9.30 a m to 12. 00 noon
- 25 Blisworth coffee and cakes, 7 Pond Bank, 10.00 a m to 12. 00 noon
- 26 Hallowe'en trail, Shutlanger

November

- 2 Coffee morning and Messy Church, Milton Malsor, 10.00 a m
- 9 Stoke Bruerne coffee morning – bacon butties
- 13 Shutlanger and Stoke Bruerne Flower Club, Roade village hall, 2.30 p m
- 14 Blisworth WI meeting, Northampton theatres, 7.30 p m, Blisworth village hall
- 16 Bingo evening, Shutlanger
- 29 Wreath workshop, Shutlanger

December

- 4 Beat Bus, Royal Oak car park, Blisworth, 3.00 p m
- 7 Coffee morning and Messy Church, Milton Malsor, 10.00 a m
- 12 Blisworth WI meeting, Christmas celebration, 7.30 p m, Blisworth village hall
- 21 Tea and carols, Shutlanger

The Blisworth short mat bowls club meets every Monday and Wednesday afternoon at 1.45 p m until 4.00 p m

The Milton Malsor Short Mat Bowls Club meets every Tuesday from 2.00 p m until 4.00 p m

SNIPPETS:

The ability to speak several languages is an asset, but the ability to keep your mouth shut in any language is priceless.

Do not dwell in the past, do not dream of the future, concentrate the mind on the present moment.

Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.

THE CLOSING DATE FOR THE NEXT EDITION OF GRASS is 18 April 2024

thanks to Jackie Grundon for proof reading

If you can get any copy to us earlier than that it would be very much appreciated

Please send any copy to: Linda Dards, Moorend, Spring Lane, Alderton NN12 7LW tel 01327 811265, e-mail: linda@dards.net.

Could you please include your name & phone number with entries in case we have any problems. If you would like to add photographs or drawings to your text these are welcome and can be supplied via email or as photos, and returned after scanning. Contributions by email are most welcome, we can accept most formats; please request a response from us on receipt – so you are sure that we have your submission.

Word (any version) is preferred.