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# LINK

Monthly Magazine

February  
2019



**St Mary the Virgin, Rickmansworth**

The Church of England and The Methodist Church in Partnership

*Serving the whole community*





## LINK February 2019

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## Minister's Letter



If you have ever watched a soap opera on television, you will have noticed that there is invariably a character that represents a less than appealing stereotype of what it is to be a Christian. Narrow-minded, judgemental, censorious and often quoting snippets of scripture to have a pop at someone; these individuals seem to be an essential staple in the cast list of most soaps (think Dot Cotton from Eastenders).

Such stereotypes do us Christians no good and in my experience are far from realistic, if only because I'm not sure how much scripture most Christians could actually quote anyway. I have known Christians who have the capacity to quote chapter and verse to back up whatever point they are trying to make but I must admit to feeling inadequate in the face of this and not a little uneasy.

As I have matured in my faith I have learnt that the Bible is to be approached with a certain caution because we can of course, misuse it to back up whatever views we may currently hold. One of the problems for the Church of England is that there is often a profound ignorance of this sacred text from even the most regular worshippers.

It has to be said, that however good a preacher might be, for a Christian to grow and become the person God wants them to be, they need more than a spoon-fed diet from the pulpit Sunday by Sunday. We need to learn to read our Bibles regularly, perhaps with the aid of scripture notes. A good starting point is the gospels. There is a reason that we stand in our services when we have a reading from Matthew, Mark, Luke or John and that is to acknowledge the centrality of these texts to our faith. Here we read about Jesus of Nazareth and I find that there is nothing stale or old fashioned about His life story, teachings and death and resurrection. If ever there was a page turner, it is these gospels; but so often we only encounter them when sat in church, no doubt longing for a short sermon to follow!

Lent is approaching, and so perhaps those of us who regard ourselves as Christians might all try harder to get to know our sacred text, our rule book, our manual for living, although why wait? The need is imperative if we are to take seriously the call to discipleship as summed up beautifully in the prayer of Saint Richard:

Most merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother, may we know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day.

My hope and prayer for our church in 2019 is that more of us might be able to make that prayer a reality.

Our Lent course will be a valuable tool for this. I was so taken with all that flowed from our meetings last year, not least new friendships and a greater openness towards one another. Please don't miss out on all that will be happening during this year's gatherings, who knows where it may take you?

Give it a go!



*The Revd Scott Talbott*

## Readings at Communion

3 Feb	Isa 6.1-13	1 Cor 15.1-11	Luke 5.1-11
10 Feb	Jer 17.5-10	1 Cor 15.12-20	Luke 6.17-26
17 Feb	Gen 45.3-11,15	1 Cor 15.35-38, 42-50	Luke 6.27-38
24 Feb	Gen 2.4-9,15-25	Rev 4.1-11	Luke 8.22-25

## Prayer Suggestions

### Weekly Pointers for the Month

*Week beginning:*

3 Feb	New Christians
10 Feb	Willingness to serve
17 Feb	The teaching profession
24 Feb	Writers and artists

## For Local Churches

### The Deanery

3 Feb	Sarratt and Chipperfield
10 Feb	St Andrew's, Chorleywood
17 Feb	St Lawrence, Bovingdon
24 Feb	St Mary's, Rickmansworth

### The Methodist Circuit

Markyate
North Watford
Redbourn
Southdown

## People Living Locally

3 Feb	Juniper Gate, Juniper Close, Stockers Farm Road
10 Feb	Plaitford Close, Landford Close
17 Feb	Rushmore Close, Malm Close
24 Feb	Sherfield Avenue

# **A Prayer for the Month**

## **A Prayer for Brexit**

*The Revd Peter Crumpler*

Light of the World,  
Lord of the Nations,  
We turn to you at this crucial time  
in the life of the land we love.

Grant our leaders wisdom,  
Bring our politicians insight.  
Help them to work together  
To serve all the people of this land.

Let calm surround their discussions  
And mutual respect shine through their debates.  
Let personal advancement and individual gain be set aside,  
As together they decide on the future of our country.

We pray for unity in our land  
For reconciliation between those who strongly disagree,  
And a commitment to understand and respect  
each other's point of view.

We pray for a shared vision of our nation,  
A vision built on peace and justice,  
Of a land where people can share life, and live well.

*Circulated by the diocese at <https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/a-prayer-for-brexit-by-the-revd-peter-crumpler/>*

## **Safeguarding Training**

**Saturday 9 February, in the Church Centre, 10am – 1.00pm**

*Helen Swain (Safeguarding Officer)*

We have been lucky enough to secure Safeguarding Training C2 at our church. Everyone who helps with any of our Church Groups in a leadership role is required to undertake training, but we would like to invite all members of the church community to attend this training in order to be informed as to how to look out for

vulnerable members of the local community - both young and old alike; all God's people. If you would like to register for the course please send me an email at:

[safeguarding@stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk)

or call the Church Office and I will contact you to supply details for registration.

Places go quickly so if you are interested, I suggest that you book on to the course as soon as possible. The Course really is open to anyone and provides an opportunity for us all to learn how to care for those who are vulnerable.

## **Weekday Communion Services**

Please note that from the beginning of this month the Tuesday morning Services of Holy Communion will start at 10.00am instead of 9.30am. The morning service on Ash Wednesday will also be at 10.00am.

## **Working at Height**

St Mary's is looking for people to assist with the changing of light bulbs in the Church and the Church Centre, hanging curtains, wielding a paintbrush or duster etc. If you have a 'head for heights', would you consider undertaking Working at Height training in order to be able to help with these things. If you would, please speak to Deborah.

## **Local Night Shelter**

To try to provide a Christian and humanitarian response to the need for overnight accommodation for those sleeping rough, The Mill End Community Trust is planning to trial a night shelter on Friday nights during February at the Methodist Church in Mill End. If you would like to help or to know more about this Outreach Service, please phone 07716 856892.

## **Lent 2019**

*The Revd Deborah Snowball*

### **Getting Ready**

**Palm Crosses to Make the Ashes** We burn last year's Palm Crosses to make the ashes for Ash Wednesday (Deborah has a special tin used only for this task!) Please place your crosses into the basket at the back of church during February. The crosses will be burnt on Shrove Tuesday, 5 March.

## The Journey Begins...

### Ash Wednesday – 6 March

Signing others, and being signed, with the Cross on Ash Wednesday, alongside saying and hearing the words, “*Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return...*” is one of the most spiritually-charged moments in ministry. The Cross that is ‘imposed’ on our forehead is a reminder of both death to life and life in death. There will be Services of Holy Communion at 10.00am and 7.45pm on Ash Wednesday - both with the Imposition of Ashes. Please do try to attend one of these Services so that we begin the journey through Lent together - it is always good to have companions in faith by one’s side.

## Throughout The Season



### #LENTPILRIM: *The Beatitudes*

Following the great success of last year’s Lent Groups and the Lent Booklet that was used, this year’s Lent Groups will use the #LentPilgrim material, which follows the theme of The Beatitudes.

If you’d like to host a Group, please indicate this on the sheet in church. The material looks really interesting, and the theme will give much pause for thought too. There is much additional material available associated with the Course. A full colour booklet has 40 daily reflections based on the Beatitudes, to run from Ash Wednesday until Palm Sunday. They also provide an app for Android and iOS based on the award-winning 2018 #LiveLent app; email sign-up for daily content; a social media campaign; daily audio content for smart speakers both in the app and on the Church of England website; and explainer graphics throughout Holy Week to share the key elements in the journey to Easter Day through Palm Sunday to Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Eve.

### **Mondays at the Museum/Gallery**

Join Deborah on a *Magical Mystery Bible Tour* as we visit the British Museum, National Gallery or Tate Britain to view an artefact or painting associated with the events of Holy Week and Easter. It could be a bust of a Roman Emperor or a painting of one of the people from the Holy Week and Easter narratives. We’ll catch the first train after 10.30am (arriving in London in time for an early lunch), take time to look at the particular piece and have some conversation about its relevance/context, then take a cup of tea before heading home (or being free to ‘do your own thing’ in Town). There’ll be sign-up sheets in church giving details of what we are going to see, and where. I hope you’ll be able to join us.



The annual *Lent Holy Week and Easter Leaflet* will be available from church during this month, and details of all events, activities and services will also be on the church website.

## **The World Day of Prayer**

*Janet Lucas*

The Rickmansworth 2019 World Day of Prayer will take place at our own **St Mary's on Friday 1 March at 2.00pm**, followed by refreshments. This year's Service has been prepared by women from Slovenia and is entitled *Come - Everything is Ready!*



Over 120 countries and islands will take part in the service which is an open invitation to come to God's table. We shall hear the voices of some of those coming to the table: wives, mothers and grandmothers, Roma people, refugees and migrant workers. Their stories reflect the history, political and economic situation of this relatively new country.

After a consultation and ballot on the name "Women's World Day of Prayer" it was decided to remove the word 'Women's' from the name of the movement in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It will in future be known as the World Day of Prayer, a women-led global and ecumenical movement.

Please make a note of the date. All are welcome at this service and it would be good to have a record attendance, especially as it is "our" year.

## **Oberammergau 2020**

Deborah is leading this holiday during 16-23 September 2020 . As well as attending the famous Passion Play, which has performances only once every 10 years, on a top grade ticket, you would have time in the Tyrol with its 'sparkling lakes and mountains'.

Deborah needs first deposits by the end of February; it is time to make up your mind. There are brochures at the back of church with all the details.

## **Library News**

*Michael Baker*

Many thanks to Jennett Day, who has given books from her collection to the Church Library.

# Omnia



*...an evening of song*

Omnia present an evening of choral music in collaboration with Christian Aid. Sacred & secular songs in the church, with a break for cheese & wine in the church hall, followed by light and popular songs.  
[www.omniavoices.com](http://www.omniavoices.com)

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> February

7.30 for 7.45pm

All Saints Church and Hall, The Green, Croxley Green

Tickets, £12.50, include cheese and a glass of wine

**All profits to Christian Aid**



We believe in life before death

## **Omnia - Choral Evening,**

**Saturday 23 February**

***Gill and Martyn Gowing***

As mentioned in the January LINK the next Christian Aid event will be held at All Saints, Croxley Green. We will be entertained by choral group *Omnia* who are a London-based vocal octet. Set up initially to bring music into community settings, Omnia has given concerts in churches in and around London, Devon and Norfolk, as well as in care homes, hospices and for the Grenfell Tower Support Centre: for more about them see their website: [www.omniavoices.com](http://www.omniavoices.com)

The first half in the Church will include music by Britten, Howells, Paul Mealer and Eric Whitacre. The second half in the Church Centre, after a glass of wine and some cheese, will be more

light-hearted and informal, with jazz classics, arrangements of popular music from Billy Joel to Disney, and everything in between.

It is 7.30pm for a 7.45pm start and tickets cost £12.50, with all proceeds going to Christian Aid. As this event is organised by the Rickmansworth and Croxley Green Christian Aid Committee it is an opportunity to socialise with people from other Churches as well as support one of St Mary's charities.

The ticket price includes cheese and a glass of wine. Tickets are available from Gill and Martyn Gowing (777715) or by e-mail to Gill at [gmgowing@btopenworld.com](mailto:gmgowing@btopenworld.com) You can also contact Chris Gregory (255364) or [chris.gregory@tec-architecture.com](mailto:chris.gregory@tec-architecture.com)

## Grave News

*Michael Baker*



Last year the Church Office received an email from a lady in Australia who said she had been brought up in Rickmansworth and used to walk regularly through St Mary's churchyard, where there was a tomb with a tree growing out of it. She was told that the person who was buried there had said that if there was a god then a tree would grow out of the tomb. She wondered if this story was still told.

Karen asked the Vicar if she knew anything about this, and Deborah suggested she consulted me. I had never heard this story, and a quick tour of the churchyard revealed no trace of a tomb with a tree growing out of it (the tomb might, of course, have fallen apart since the lady lived here). So we were unable to help her.

Just before Christmas, I was stewarding in the Three Rivers Museum (well worth a visit!) and came across a little book for sale entitled *Gothick Hertfordshire* by Jennifer Westwood, a list of places in the county with spooky facts and legends. There was no entry for Rickmansworth, but in Watford, apparently, in the nineteenth century there was in St Mary's churchyard a tomb with a fig tree growing out of it, which people would come from far and wide to see. It was the tomb of one Ben Wangford, who lived at the end of the previous century. He didn't believe in an afterlife, but asked to be buried with some particular object. If there was an afterlife, this thing would grow - and behold! - there was the fig tree.

Elsewhere in the book, there is an entry for Tewin, near Hertford, which recounts a similar story about Lady Anne Grimston of Gorhambury, who did not believe in the resurrection of the body and was buried in the churchyard there in 1713. No fewer than seven trees are said to have grown out of her grave (well, she was a Lady, after all). I suspect that anywhere there is a churchyard with an old tomb that has a tree or bush growing out of it, a similar story will have been told.

# Memories of Christmas 2018

## The Travelling Crib

These delightful knitted characters passed from house to house around the Parish and beyond, not only encouraging those who brought and received them to think more deeply about the miracle of Christmas, but also to get to know each other better.



## Christmas Experience

Once again there were scenes from the Nativity story around the church, with question cards to give both children and adults pause for thought.



*The Angel Gabriel breaking the good news to Mary*

*The Shepherds' Fields abandoned in haste*



*The tent of the Magi*



*The Shepherds Visit the Crib*

With the experience of two previous years, the installations all seemed neater, smarter and less intrusive this year and lent themselves to leaving in place until Epiphany.



## **Decorating the Church**

These are a few views of the Church decorations. Congratulations to Hilary Pearce and her team for adorning every pillar, ledge and space so beautifully, starting with the beautiful arrangement that greeted visitors coming in the North door, which co-ordinated with pedestal arrangements by the main altar and the lectern.



*continued on pages 15 and 16.*

# CALENDAR

## February 2019

2 Sat	THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE (CANDLEMAS)
3 SUN	THE FIFTH SUNDAY BEFORE LENT <i>BCP: The Fourth Sunday after The Epiphany</i>
	8.00am Said Holy Communion
	10.00am Communion4All Communion Service
	6.00pm Said Evening Prayer
4 Mon	12 noon Ecumenical Clergy Gathering
	2.00pm <i>Threads for Change</i> Sewing Group
	3.15pm <i>J Club</i> at St Mary's School
	7.45pm Community & Outreach Committee, Cloisters Hall
5 Tue	10.00am Said Holy Communion
	7.45pm <i>START</i> Course continues, The Vicarage
6 Wed	11.30am Collective Worship, St Mary's School
7 Thu	9.30am <i>Little Angels</i> Toddler Group, Cloisters Hall
	<i>Copy deadline for March LINK</i>
9 Sat	10.00am Marriage Preparation Day, Room 1
	10.00am Deanery Safeguarding Training Day, (see p 6)
	7.00pm Deanery Quiz Evening, <i>St Oswald's</i>
10 SUN	THE FOURTH SUNDAY BEFORE LENT <i>BCP: The Fifth Sunday after The Epiphany</i>
	8.00am Said Holy Communion
	10.00am Sung Holy Communion
	12.15pm Said Holy Communion
	1.00pm Lunch Club
	6.00pm Said Evening Prayer
	7.00pm X Team meets
11 Mon	2.00pm <i>Threads for Change</i> Sewing Group
	2.15pm <i>LINK</i> Editors Meeting
	3.15pm <i>J Club</i> at St Mary's School
	7.45pm Fabric & Churchyard Committee, Cloisters Hall
12 Tue	10.00am Said Holy Communion
	7.45pm <i>START</i> Course continues, The Vicarage
13 Wed	11.30am Collective Worship, St Mary's School
	7.45pm House Group (for contact see cover)
14 Thu	9.30am <i>Little Angels</i> Toddler Group, Cloisters Hall
	12 noon Clergy Deanery Chapter
17 SUN	THE THIRD SUNDAY BEFORE LENT <i>BCP: Septuagesima</i>
	8.00am Said Holy Communion
	10.00am Sung Holy Communion
	6.00pm Said Evening Prayer
18 Mon	2.00pm <i>Threads for Change</i> Sewing Group
	3.15pm <i>J Club</i> at St Mary's School
	7.45pm Stewardship & Finance Committee, Cloisters Hall
19 Tue	10.00am Said Holy Communion
	11.30am Home Communion through the day
	7.45pm <i>START</i> Course continues, The Vicarage

20 Wed	9.30am 11.30am	Safeguarding Team Meeting, <i>The Vicarage</i> Collective Worship, St Mary's School
21 Thu	9.30am	<i>Little Angels</i> Toddler Group, Cloisters Hall
23 Sat	7.45pm	<i>Omnia</i> Concert for Christian Aid (see p 10)
<b>24 SUN</b>	<b>THE SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE LENT</b> (BCP: Sexagesima)	
	8.00am	Said Holy Communion
	10.00am	Sung Holy Communion
	6.00pm	Said Evening Prayer
	7.00pm	<i>X Team</i> meets <i>March LINK is published</i>
25 Mon	7.45pm	Steward, Wardens and Vicar meet, The Vicarage
26 Tue	10.00am	Said Holy Communion
	12 noon	10-bell ringing practice (all ringers welcome)
	3.30pm	Service at Westerley
<b>March</b>		
1 Fri	2.00pm	David, Bishop of Menevia, Patron of Wales c. 601 World Day of Prayer, in Church (see p 9)
<b>3 SUN</b>	<b>THE SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE LENT (BCP: Quinquagesima)</b>	
	8.00am	Said Holy Communion
	10.00am	Communion4All Home Communion Said Evening Prayer
	6.00pm	
5 Tue	10.00am	Said Holy Communion
6 Wed	<b>ASH WEDNESDAY</b>	
	10.00am	Said Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes
	12 noon	Deanery Clergy Meeting with Bishop Alan
	7.45pm	Said Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes

### Choir and Bellringers Regular Weekly Practices

Wed 7.30pm      Bellringing      Thu 7.45pm      Choir

### Decorating the Church (continued from page 13)

Then there were the window sills, the pillars with stars between, the ledges, and two Christmas trees. Despite all that colour and artistry, the Crib at the foot of the Nave altar, strikingly presented was still the focus of attention, catching and holding the eye.





*Photos by Brenda Bell*

## **St Mary's People**

*Brenda Bell*

**ROSEMARY TAYLOR**

Some of you will remember Rosemary, who with husband Richard, then Headmaster of The Purcell School, attended St Mary's some years ago. I have received a letter from her, as 'the best person to spread the news!' Well LINK is a help in that respect. She is now 88 and, following a series of falls and stays in hospital, she has moved into a 'locally-respected' Care Home in Brockenhurst. She first went there for respite after damaging her arm when she fell 'and decided to make it a new lifestyle'.

She must still find writing somewhat difficult as she has not written to other friends in Rickmansworth, although she apparently had no difficulty in putting the words together clearly and showed interest in



my news. I am sure she would appreciate hearing from other people she knew. I have her address if anyone would like it.

### **DAVID AND GERTRUD BROWN**

We were sorry to hear of David's death in December, just after going to press and also of his wife Gertrud a few days later. Some years ago David used to be pleased to fill in as a relief organist at services when our regular organist was unable to play and he was often to be found practising in our Church during the week. May they both rest in peace.

## **From the Registers**

### **Baptism**

30 December

JACK PAYNE

## ***Not a Lot of People Know That* To be Cut to the Quick**

**Information passed on by Bill Sylvester; research by Albert Jack for the book, *Red Herrings and White Elephants***

The expression, 'to be cut to the quick' suggests deep emotional hurt. It can easily be explained: the Old English word 'cwicu' meant 'living'. 'To be cut to the quick' is a simple phrase using 'cwicu'. It implies a deep flesh wound. We still use 'quick' to mean living in the familiar line in the Creed, said regularly in Church, '...and he shall come in again in glory to judge both the quick and the dead'.

## **St Mary's in the Past**

**1913**

Lent and Easter were almost as early as they could be that year; Ash Wednesday on 5 February and Easter Day on 23 March. Although the Revd Charles Parkinson's advice for Lent reflected the spirit of that age, it still rings true and may be of interest to us as we prepare for the season that this year does not start until March. He described Lent as 'a season for spiritual stock-taking and spring-cleaning' and added:

It is a call to careful, prayerful earnest self-examination as to the state of our Soul; that is of our deathless self, before God.

He recommended reading Psalm 139 and praying over it with Psalm 51. Also there were to be a series of Lantern Lectures that had been acclaimed by others the previous year; a series of addresses: given by the Bishop of London, entitled *Men that Crucify Christ* - and although women were not worthy of mention in his leader - there was a similar programme for them in the afternoon, featuring women instead of men.

A popular concert by the Band of Hope had been arranged by the Church of England Temperance Society for their January meeting, of

its time, with songs including *The Little Nigger Boy*, piano recitals, sketches, a Dumb-bell Drill a Wand Dril(sic) and a play, with characters Mr and Mrs Burton, Cook, Housemaid, Coachman and Page Boy. It proved popular; 'many persons were turned away'.

## 1994

Clasped hands on the magazine cover, and Methodist notices inside remind me that by now we had a joint Anglican-Methodist magazine re-named *LINK*.

The Revd Bruce Driver had been watching the video taken by Margaret Collins that followed the renewal of the Church during the time between a summer's evening in early September and the 1993 Carol Service. [His description is edited slightly for brevity.]

The Church was emptied of moveable furniture, then floors were lifted and re-flagged, pews came and went, lights and electrical cabling were renewed, walls painted, with some delicate gold leaf work, and heating piping direction was changed. Then came cleaning, polishing and carpeting. It was a great and complex task.

He said that the video left an astonishing impression of a crowd of people: Tom Perkins and the building team with Graham Martin, Douglas Bartholomew preparing for worship among crowds of parishioners first emptying the building of kneelers and furniture and at the end bringing it all back, with Ted Harman (remember him? - some will) busy washing tiles and Sally Morgan offering general support time and again. Suzanne Warren was in the Office coping with questions and communications over the Renewal on top of regular work, Buzz and Gary Coster were keeping the funds coming in, and Colin Bayley kept the then PCC informed and asking for their decisions at various stages.

In the 'Joint Annual Covenant Service', there was to be no sermon. Instead leaders in the Renewal Scheme would speak of their Covenant Commitment. The magazine also mentioned that worship took place in the Church Centre during at least part of the Renewal, that there were Spiritual Renewal Groups, a Youth Committee, a Prayer, Healing and Pastoral Group, a Christian Education Group and a Prayer Group.

Numbers at the Fourth Sunday Evening Service had quadrupled since new forms of worship had been introduced. The Sewing Group had closed and a new craft group, 'Metamorphosis' been started with Beryl Baker as leader. Initially afternoon and evening meetings were planned.

There had been an 'adventurous' Christingle, with modern piano and guitar music, liturgical dance with the readings, a story, handbell-ringing and prayers written by the Centre Club; the Children's Party was obviously enjoyed (Children were asked to

search for carvings and pictures of birds in the Church). The magazine also included a recipe for pancakes and book reviews.

Michael Baker described his first impressions of the Readers' Course and Tom Driver [the Vicar's eldest son] enthused about going up to University.

Incidentally LINK cost £4.80 a year then and so £6 today for printed copies with a coloured cover must be a bargain!

In the Renewal Section of LINK forthcoming events listed were two Starter Parties, a Valentine's Junior Disco, a Bellringers' Jumble Sale, a Motley Crew Music Hall, an Antiques Evening, a Women's Fellowship Coffee Morning, a Garden Event, taking *Splat the Rat* to the Canal Festival (as it was then named), a trip to Glyndebourne, a Mega-Barbecue and Frank Topping who was coming to present *Laughing in My Sleep*.

The *Renewal* was a busy time and one when people got to know one another better and had a lot of fun. At this stage £77,450 had been raised and a further £13,255.66 was needed.

## A Nature Note—or More

*Brenda Bell*

*No, I'm not taking this slot back from Angela! Much of my birdwatching these days is done from my armchair. I wrote this before I knew we had two new volunteer regular columnists.*

On the left of the drive leading to Three Rivers District Council Offices and the Police Station where it joins Northway there is a beautiful Indian Bean Tree (*Catalpa Bignonioides*), native to southeast North America and imported as an 'ornamental and street tree'. It has large clusters of white flowers hanging down in summer, somewhat bluebell-shaped and spotted with yellow and purple. In autumn and winter it has thin bean-like pods.



*Flowers and seeds of the Indian bean tree*



*Ring-necked parakeet*

At least two green ring-necked parakeets discovered this source of food recently, and were to be seen from time to time patiently extracting the seeds from the pods, which on this tree are about 6-8 inches long. It fascinated me to watch how they first nipped a pod off and held it horizontally near the middle and worked delicately with their beaks to get at the seed. I didn't see one drop a pod though no doubt they do when they have extracted the seeds. They seem to have found a better source of food now as I've not seen them lately.

Also a male sparrowhawk (considerably smaller than the female) is often on the prowl around the town. All the Rickmansworth pigeons suddenly rise up with great flapping of wings and sometimes I spot him chasing them. One day in early January was special. The sparrowhawk flew low through a patch of trees fairly close to the window, expertly missing the branches at speed and went off towards the railway. Not a bird moved. After some while a magpie arrived, quite unconcerned, and then a very nervous pigeon came to a patch of ivy with berries nearby, but only snatched one or two because it was constantly looking round. Soon after the sparrowhawk must have flown round the other side of the building opposite, because this time the town pigeons erupted in a great flock. I stood watching them flying away in panic and after a while I was rewarded by seeing the sparrowhawk again at the back of the flock, a clear outline, quite a different shape, high in the sky. It was typically chasing two pigeons slightly separated from the main flock. I didn't see whether it caught up with either. Usually pigeons fly too fast, but occasionally I've seen a pile of feathers or half-dismembered pigeon on the ground. [Apologies to the squeamish, but that's the way the natural world keeps a balanced population of species.] I have great respect for birds of prey.



*Sparrowhawk*

**Show the Love** I don't know about you, but I sometimes feel a little helpless about lessening the threat of Climate Change. We can all do a little about recycling and reducing our use of plastics, but the challenge seems so huge.

The RSPB is encouraging members to support the International Panel on Climate Change's, *Show the Love* Campaign; and I am sure they would be delighted if everyone joined in. The RSPB is already working to encourage the government to set a new target of net zero greenhouse gases by 2050, arguing for a revolution in the way energy is generated, in harmony with nature and to protect natural habitats here and internationally (meaning that biodiversity is retained) and exploring how best to reduce the carbon footprint of our food. The latter is what they call on us to concentrate on this year.

For the Climate Coalition's *Show the Love* campaign, on **St Valentine's Day, 14 February** the RSPB is encouraging people to think about the food they eat [or waste], where it comes from, how we farm and how land is managed here and internationally. They know that whatever the government guidance is, people will only take action if they really care. To join in, look at the website [climatecoalition.org/show-the-love](http://climatecoalition.org/show-the-love) and spread the word. (If you use Twitter, #ShowTheLove)

A suggestion for Christians this year is to plan some extra food-related economy for Lent; perhaps it might even become a habit.

# What's on in Rickmansworth

## Watersmeet

Film: <i>Mary Poppins Returns</i>	Wed 6	2pm, 5pm, 8pm
NT Live <i>Tragedy of King Richard II</i>	Thur 7	7pm
Tribute show: <i>One Night of Elvis</i>	Fri 8	7.30pm
Film: <i>Adrift</i>	Thur 14	2pm, 7.45pm
<i>RAF Shades of Blue Jazz Orchestra</i>	Fri 15	7.30pm
<i>The Addams Family,</i>	Thur 21-Sat 23	7.30pm
<i>Sharpe Academy</i>	Sat 23	2.30pm
NT Live <i>I'm not Running</i>	Thur 28	7pm

### The Arts Society, Rickmansworth

Sarratt Village Hall  
Tuesday 12 February

*Rescuing Zeugma from  
the Floodwaters of the Euphrates*  
Louise Schofield

11.00am; tea and coffee from 10.30am

For further information contact Gill Gowing (777715)

### Rickmansworth Evening Townswomen's Guild

St Mary's Church Centre  
Thursday 21 February  
7.30 for 7.45pm

*The Lord Chancellor's Wallpaper*  
Graham Goode

Contact Suzanne Hill (772809) for further information  
New members always welcome

# Rickmansworth Garden, Arts and Homecrafts Society

*(Formerly Rickmansworth Horticultural Society)*

OPEN EVENING

Wednesday 20 February

*Flower Power II (Lily & Tulip)*

Russell Bowes

8.00pm

Mill End Baptist Church  
Field Way, Rickmansworth WD3 7EL

## 'Spiral'—a Puzzle

*Devised by Jenny Woods*

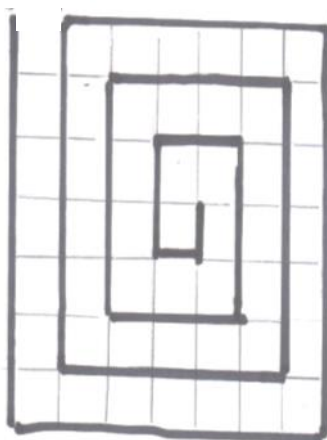
*Every answer except the first uses the last letter of the preceding answer as its initial letter; the chain thus formed follows a spiral path to the centre of the grid.*

### Clues

*From the start:*

- Lord and Saviour (5)
- Last of the Judges of the ancient Israelites, had immense strength (6)
- Mother-in-law of Ruth (5)
- Son of Abraham and Sarah (5)
- Brother of Abel (4)
- 16th book of the Old Testament (8)
- One of the minor prophets (5)
- Brother of Moses(6)
- Assisted Joseph of Arimathea in preparing the body of Jesus for burial (9)
- Son of Hannah, left in Eli's care (6)

START



# This and That

John Shaw

Following our January appeal John sent us this January review article, the most recent of the topical monthly series he writes for his son's freebie magazine in France and has offered to share with LINK. They are meant to be semi-humorous. We said yes please. We hope readers will enjoy them.

Christmas has come and gone. The cards and decorations are down. The loop of slushy Christmas music at the supermarket has fallen silent, not to be heard again for at least another thirty-six weeks, if we are lucky. The blessed Brexit-free holiday period is, alas, also over and Parliament is back once more filling the front pages with their plotting and squabbling. The Prime Minister's much maligned agreement with the EU seems doomed for defeat in Parliament and no-one, apparently, has a clue what happens next. As a change (or diversion) from Brexit, the Government has published a ten-year plan for the NHS, mainlining on 'Prevention is better than cure' and 'giving priority' (slippery words, those) to mental health services, maternity services and those for the elderly.

In the meantime, the Chinese have landed a probe on the dark side of the moon and 'we' have been taking photographs of *Ultima Thule* (pronounced 'Tooly', apparently, which makes it sound like some sort of sophisticated spanner), which is a mere four billion (yes, *billion*) miles away. Incredible achievements both, but of little or no use to the starving millions in Yemen and in solving the Ebola outbreak in the Congo, I fancy.

The obituary columns have been working overtime with the deaths of Paddy Ashdown, Baroness Trumpington, Bernardo Bertolucci (*The Last Emperor* and *Last Tango in Paris*) and Babs Beverley (aged 91) of the Beverley Sisters. More recently, June Whitfield died at the age of 93. She was a 'national treasure', having entertained us over some six decades (from *The Glums* to *Ab Fab*) with her brilliant and understated comic timing. When she had a rose named after her, she took delight in seeing that it was described in the catalogue as 'vigorous and superb for bedding'.

Less significant items which may have passed you by include the decision by the National Trust to cull the wild boar which have invaded their Stourhead estate, opposed by animal rights groups, of course, and inevitably dubbed the 'Boar War'...*The Wizard of Oz* was voted the most influential film of all time, followed by *Star Wars* and *Psycho*. Some say that the greatest opening line in English literature is from P G Wodehouse's *The Luck of the Bodkin*: "Into the face of the young man who sat on the terrace of the Hotel Magnifique in Cannes there had crept a look of furtive shame, the shifty, hangdog look which announces that an Englishman is about to talk French". And on matters French, did you see that the TV prop painting from *Allo, Allo* (entitled *The Fallen Madonna with the Big Boobies* and supposedly

painted in the 15th century by one Van Clomp) was sold at auction recently for £15,000? Nice work if you can get it.

I don't do New Year resolutions, do you? I take after my father who every year announced that his New Year resolution was to give up smoking; this from a man who had never smoked in his life. I do, however, plan to eat less meat, particularly beef, and to use less water—my way of saving the planet. Trendy gesture or pious hope? I don't know but hopefully every little helps.

Anyway, belatedly, “Happy New Year”.

## **Smile**

### **Say a Prayer**

*A ‘Sunday School Story’ Submitted by Buzz Coster*

Little Johnny and his family were having Sunday dinner at his Grandmother's house. Everyone was seated around the table as the food was being served.

When Little Johnny received his plate, he started eating right away. “Johnny! Please wait until we say our prayer.” said his mother.

“I don't need to”, the boy replied.

“Of course, you do.” his mother insisted. “We always say a prayer before eating at our house.”

“That's at our house.” Johnny explained, “but this is Grandma's house and she knows how to cook!”

## **Puzzle Answers**

*From Page 22*

Jesus, Samson, Naomi, Isaac, Cain, Nehemiah, Hosea, Aaron, Nicodemus, Samuel.

## **Wanted: New LINK Editor(s)**

*Brenda Bell*

As you'll have read in the last edition of LINK, I have said that I wish to retire from editing LINK at the end of this year. I announced my 'retirement' from LINK a year ahead to try to ensure that LINK has a future. Being involved has meant a lot to me. The other two editors plan to remain for the time being as long as there is somebody (or more preferably than one person) able to help.

There clearly is a demand for LINK. Some 180 people still take it annually, printed or on-line. Although I know that many churches



don't have a magazine nowadays; I think that this is very sad. I believe it is something that helps to unite us as a church family, hopefully encourages people to join us by giving them a good impression of us, provides a fascinating archive for future generations, and keeps our elderly housebound members in touch. I was very moved recently to hear that a daughter read LINK to her bed-bound elderly mother in a nursing home.

It may seem early to be looking for someone for next year, but in fact we have wanting an extra editor for some time. Since Suzanne Warren left there have been only two editors alternating to prepare magazines; a position has been open for a long time. If you are interested, have a word with Deborah or any of the three current editors. The next step would be to come along to a LINK meeting, and learn what's needed and how we work. You would have input into content and presentation once you've found your feet. It would be really good to have someone with some fresh ideas. We can help you extend your computer skills if necessary. You may be interested to learn that I was one of six editors when I started on LINK; *two* more editors now would mean the turn to prepare LINK only comes round once a quarter which would make the workload much easier.

The work is really not difficult to pick up if you use Word. A good starting point is an interest in our Church, a reasonable command of English, a computer with internet connection, ideally with both Word and Publisher (which is very like Word and makes the job easier), and the time to commit when needed.

## LINK Contributions

Thank you to Helen Haigh for the lovely photograph on this month's cover. We hope that another snowy view might act like carrying an umbrella (most of the time) and keep 'the Beast' *in* the East this year! If you have a good digital photo of the church we should be pleased to receive a copy for consideration.

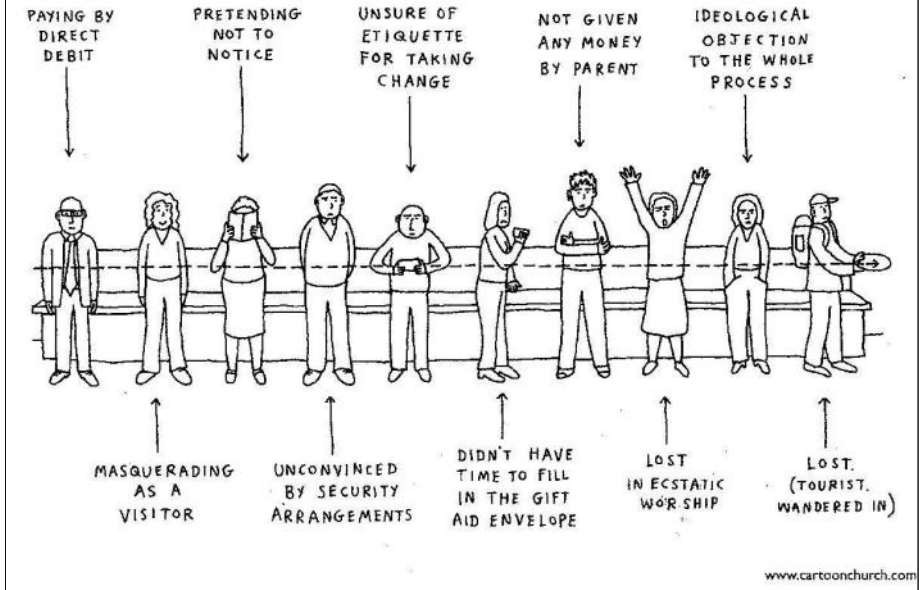
We hope you like the new covers. We shall not necessarily change the picture every month, but we will change the colour of its border and the letters of LINK each month so that you can tell issues apart.

Also thank you very much to the two people who responded to our plea for regular contributions to replace Angela's *Nature Notes*: Bill Sylvester for, *Not a Lot of People Know That*, and John Shaw for *This and That*. We look forward to reading them.

We wish others were as good at submitting one-off items. *Please* don't forget to send us accounts and photos of the pantomime for our March issue—but do let us know if you are writing something to prevent us trying to do unnecessary arm-twisting.

# THE COLLECTION PLATE

REASONS TO LET IT PASS



***Please Give Generously!***

*A David Walker cartoon from cartoonchurch.com that also appeared in Church Times. It is used with the artist's permission.*

## March LINK

**Copy deadline:** Thursday 7 February

**Publication date:** Sunday 24 February

We are very pleased to receive contributions of interest to members of the Church and the local community. Your name should be included (we will respect requests not to publish it) and items should not be subject to copyright. Please let a member of the LINK Committee, whose phone numbers are on the back cover, have them by the above copy date preferably by email at [link@stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk](mailto:link@stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk); we can accept handwritten copy. We may have to edit for space or other reasons and tight deadlines do not always allow for discussion of changes with authors. We like good quality photographs. *Please note that opinions expressed in LINK are not necessarily those of the Editors of LINK or St Mary's Church.*

## Contacts (continued)

The code for all phone numbers, unless otherwise stated, is 01923

### Officers (continued)

Church Council Secretary	Buzz Coster	via Church Office
CofE Electoral Roll and Methodist Members Roll	John Glidden	223613
Methodist Council Secretary	Petra Hedges	222715
Church Giving Advisor (A)	David Gilbert	via Church Office
Treasurer	Adam Shiels	07950 262798

### Worship

Altar Servers	Chris & Sue Hillier	779580
Bellringers	David Hibbert (Captain)	773735
Intercessors	The Revd Deborah Snowball	772627
Lesson Readers	June Poppleton	773388
Organist and Choirmaster	Andrew Sykes	07943 601717 07519 318049 organistsmr@gmail.com
Sacristan	David Gilbert and team	via Church Office
Sidespeople	David Hibbert	773735
Welcomers	David Carruthers	07831 387541

### Christian Teaching and Prayer

Bible Reading Fellowship	Sue Hillier	779580
Exploring Prayer Group	The Revd Deborah Snowball	772627
House Groups Tues am:	Gillian Baker, Brenda Bell	775890 772482
Wed pm:	Jane Pummell	774343

### Pastoral

Baptism (Christening)		via Church Office
Confirmation	The Revd Deborah Snowball	772627
Children's Communion	The Revd Deborah Snowball	772627
Home Communion		via Church Office
Home/Hospital Visiting	The Revd Deborah Snowball	772627
Wedding Bookings		via Church Office
Coffee after Church	Anne Kay	773470
Handbell Ringers	Suzanne Warren	01442 385922
Meet for Tea	Joan Martin	775433
Motley Crew (Drama Group)	Chris and Sue Hillier	779580
Sunday Lunch Club	Gill Gowing	777715 mgmowing@btopenworld.com
	Maxine Platzman	896622

### Children and Young People

Children's Church Leader	Rachel Turvey	via Church Office
Sunbeams (3-5s)	Rachel Turvey	via Church Office
Shooting stars (6-11)	Christine Martin Ayling	via Church Office

*The code for all phone numbers, unless otherwise stated, is 01923*

### **Contacts (continued)**

#### **Children and Young People (continued)**

X Team (Youth Group, year 7+)	David Carruthers	07831 387541
<i>Little Angels</i> : babies & toddlers, Thurs am, Cloisters Hall	Gillian Thomas	07957 749636
Girlguiding UK		
Rainbows:	Yvonne Wells	via Church Office
Brownies:	Ali Hampton	via Church Office
Guides:	Tracy Jenkins	via Church Office
Church School	St Mary's CofE Primary	776529
Headteacher:	Mrs Emma Edwards	
School website:	www.stmarys698.herts.sch.uk	

#### **Administration**

Charitable Giving Committee	Jane Earl (Chair)	711695
Community and Outreach	David Carruthers (Chair)	07831 87541
Harvest Giving	Jennett Day	237248
Safeguarding officers:	Mary Weatherilt	07593 532567
	Helen Swain	07593 532567
email:	safeguarding@stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk	
Stewardship and Finance	John Rhodes	via Church Office

#### **Buildings and Support**

Church Centre Booking	Church Office	721002
Church Centre Committee	Martyn Gowing (Chair)	777715
Church Bookings	via Church Office	
Church Cleaning	June Poppleton	773388
Cloisters Hall Bookings	Janet Carruthers	07799 050532
Cloisters Hall Committee	The Revd Deborah Snowball (Chair)	772627
Fabric & Churchyard	David Hibbert (Chair)	773735
Flowers	Hilary Pearce	896025
Library	Michael Baker	776109
Steeple Keeping	David Hibbert	773735
Threads for Change	Beryl Baker	776109

#### **Communications**

LINK (Church Magazine)		
editors:	Brenda Bell	772482
	Geoff Hall	720543
	Jane Pummell (& Subscriptions)	774343
email:	link@stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk	
Newsletter	c/o Communication Committee	
Website	Buzz Coster	775908

#### **Representatives for Organisations Beyond St Mary's**

Action for Children	Christine Butler	778001
CARE (07935 269144)	Jenny Woods (St Mary's Rep)	447417
The Children's Society	Suzanne Powell	via Church Office
Christian Aid	Gill & Martyn Gowing	777715
See Round-on-line by email	LINK link www.stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk	

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