



NEWSLETTER FOR THE PARISH OF CALNE & BLACKLAND

*Christ is risen,
He is risen indeed
Hallelujah!*

*... keeping you in touch
with your church family.*

April 2025

Easter Edition

Parish contact details

Team Rector:

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Team Vicar:

The Reverend Sarah Errington

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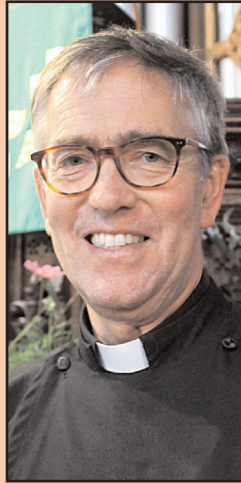
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Parish Administration:

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SN11 0HU

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*Church House is open from 10.00am to 12noon
on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.*



Prayer for April

*Christ is Risen: The world below lies desolate
Christ is Risen: The spirits of evil are fallen
Christ is Risen: The angels of God are rejoicing
Christ is Risen: The tombs of the dead are empty
Christ is Risen indeed from the dead,
the first of the sleepers,
Glory and power are his forever and ever.
– St Hippolytus of Rome*

Church addresses

Holy Trinity Church, Quemerford, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 0AR

St Mary's Church, Church Street, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 0HU

St Peter's Church, Blackland, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 8UQ

Website: <https://www.mardenvale.org.uk>

Find us on facebook @stmaryschurchcalne

Thought for April

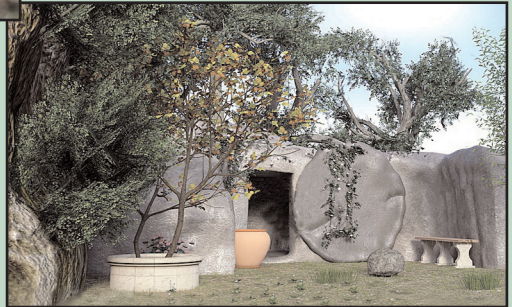
I've just clocked up 10 years since I took up running, as an attempt to stop my middle-aged spread from spreading any further. It's only ever first thing in the morning that I run, and in the winter it's always dark so I wear a lot of hi-vis, and a chest torch, and stick to street-lit pavements in Calne. Then as the mornings get lighter, I really love being able to get out into the lanes to the villages – or right across the Bowood Estate. I even made it to Foxham once last year, though that involved running up Wick Hill on the way home, which I've vowed not to try again!



In February each year something wonderful happens, which is that blackbirds start singing just before dawn while I'm out. If I ever had to choose my desert island discs, one of them would be a blackbird singing at dawn. I'm aware that it's really singing to attract a mate, and defend its territory from rivals, but to my ears it's the most wonderful and delightful sound, and makes my soul sing! Not only that, but it speaks to me of something truly amazing about God's created order: that a bird only 25 to 60 days old can learn to sing, listening and practising, and end up singing the same beautiful pattern of notes all its forebears did.

The dawn chorus of birds is one of the things I particularly enjoy about our Easter Day dawn service, timed to start in the dark, and encompass this moment of creation coming to life as we mark the

resurrection of Jesus once again. This year it will happen at 5.15am in the churchyard at St Mary's Church in Calne, and people from across all our parishes are very welcome – perhaps we might hold it at another church next year. It recalls the moment in John's gospel when we read this, "Very early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, the women went to the tomb". As we well know they went expecting to find Jesus' dead body, but found instead the risen Saviour. In our service, we light a fire, and while the fire takes hold we simply listen, just as dawn is breaking, while all sorts of different bird species are at their peak tunefulness – almost like they too are singing the praises of the one who has been raised from the dead.



Of course we have a fair bit of Lent to journey through still, and the intensity and trauma of Holy Week – living again through Jesus' suffering. But the night will not last forever. May God be with us through whatever dark times we might be enduring at the moment, and in due time fill us again with the joy and life of Jesus' resurrection.

*With my prayers, and very best wishes
Caspar Bush, Team Rector
(email address see page two)*

New Archdeacon of Wilts *(from Grapevine)*

Welcome to the new Archdeacon of Wilts, Revd Louise Ellis! Louise is currently priest at Holy Angels Lilliput in Dorset, and the diocesan vocations coordinator.

She was ordained in Southwark diocese in 2007 where she held parish and diocesan posts. She has been in the Diocese of Salisbury for seven years.

Louise brings significant leadership experience from her role as chair of a large multi-academy schools trust in the diocese.

Louise is married to Nick and they have two grown-up children. They look forward to moving into the archdeaconry in the next few months.

Louise said: "One of the joys of my vocations role which I've seen in the last few months is the number of people coming forward to explore their vocation and to have conversa-

tions about where God might be calling them. I've felt a real sense of call myself in stepping forward into this ministry and I'm excited about the possibilities and the opportunities that lie ahead as together we seek to make Jesus known, that all may flourish and grow."

Bishop Andrew said: "I am delighted at Louise's appointment to this significant role and look forward to welcoming her to the See of Ramsbury. Louise is likely to be living in Warminster: please pray for her as the family prepares for this new start."



Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The Annual Parochial Church meeting (APCM) is required to be held annually between 1st January and 30th April each year under the Church Representation Rules, amended 2008. It is a formal occasion and these rules are set out by the Church of England of which the Marden Vale Benefice is a part. At the meeting there is a variety of important business that needs to take place. Electing PCC members and Church Wardens is a very important part of the meeting as is the receiving of reports on the past year.

Anyone who is elected to the PCC automatically becomes a trustee of the parish. It is also important that all members of the congregations should support the Church wardens and PCC in their responsibilities, both with practical solutions to difficulties, new ideas and with prayer. This is an important event in the year, which should be prepared for thoughtfully and with prayer. This is especially true this year when we are considering big changes to St Mary's Church.

The Yew

Yew trees are found in churchyards because they symbolise immortality and have been guardians of graveyards since ancient times. Some believed they marked the gateway to the underworld. For many centuries it was the custom to carry yew branches on Palm Sunday and at funerals. Sprigs of yew were tucked into coffins, in the hope of eternal life. The poet Robert Blair summed up the yew in his poem called *The Grave* in 1743: "Well do I know thee by thy trusty yew, Cheerless, unsocial plant! that loves to dwell 'Midst skulls and coffins, epitaphs and worms:"

Traditionally, yew was found growing on consecrated ground around churches. A medieval author stated that the yew was grown in churchyards as "an emblem of Resurrection from its perpetual verdure". There are at least 500 churchyards in England which contain yew trees older than the buildings themselves. They are not considered ancient until they are at least 900 years old. A yew tree is said to have sheltered Robert the Bruce, and it was under a yew that the Magna Carta was sealed. The same yew was also said to have been the meeting place of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn.

People thought the trees protected plague victims, and even purified the soil their bodies were buried in. Yews within graveyard walls were also out of reach of cattle and sheep. That's just as well, because the trees are very poisonous to people and animals.

Yew timber is very strong and durable, traditionally used to make tool handles. Thou-

sands of yews were cut down in the medieval period to use the strong springy wood to make longbows. It was forbidden to take churchyard yews to make weapons, so they survived the cull. Apparently one of the world's oldest surviving wooden artefacts is a yew spear head estimated to be around 450,000 years old. Anti-cancer compounds can be harvested from the foliage of the yew, *Taxus baccata*, and used in modern medicine. Yew trees contain the highly poisonous taxane alkaloids that have been developed as anti-cancer drugs. Eating just a few leaves can make a small child very ill. The red, fleshy part of the yew's fruit isn't toxic, the birds love them, but the seed inside is poisonous to humans, and so are the bark and leaves. St Mary's Church sports wonderful avenues of yew trees leading up to the front and side entrances. The most notable yew tree grows on a small mound southwest of the church porch. The remaining yews are younger, with five growing on the south perimeter and six along the east perimeter. The churchyard also includes 39 clipped Irish Yews that line the pathway from the west gate to the west side of the church.

Serena and Charles Boase



St Mary's re-ordering update

A trip to Bradford on Avon

On Friday 28th February members of the PCC Buildings Group, including Caspar, visited Christ Church, Bradford on Avon. Why? I hear you ask. It was actually a fact-finding mission. Christ Church is in the middle of renovations, with internal scaffolding engulfing the north and west sides of the church whilst wall paintings are restored and lighting enhanced. The church remains open during these works, with a rolling video telling their story. In May the second phase of the project will begin, with kitchen, toilets and an office being created within the church. Currently there are none (sound familiar?). This phase of the project is planned to take 18 weeks. The church is early Victorian Grade 2*. It is rectangular with very small transepts, very limited storage space and parking. It does however have the advantage of no pillars! They use a next-door community hall for toilets and office, but this is chargeable. They have a small congregation.

Whilst there, we were able to meet with Becky who has been employed as a Community Engagements Officer for the church on a 3-year contract (3 days a week), finishing at the end of this year. Her role is wide-ranging; liaising with schools and community groups in creative ways to help people connect with the church and working with church representatives on their re-ordering project. Crucially, her role was paid for as part of a whole project grant application from the Heritage Fund.

At St Mary's we are considering a similar grant application to the Heritage Fund to progress the re-ordering project, and we were encouraged by all that we saw and heard. St Mary's is steeped in history with many opportunities to share this history with our community and intertwining this with our faith.

It will be a long-term, phased, project but we are confident that with prayer, enthusiasm and some kickstart funding, we will achieve our goal.

Kevin Wells

Mothers' Union

Calne MU had a very interesting talk at our February meeting from Graham Bennett. He shared some thoughts about Queen Esther and then spoke about the work of Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF). They use small aircraft to reach isolated people groups in many hard to reach places in Africa and Papua New Guinea and help in emergencies, providing food and medical aid. They transport Bibles and church pastors and also evacuate women experiencing domestic abuse to a safe place, and fly expectant women

who have birth problems to hospital. Members of the group gave £90 for the work of MAF and a Thank You letter from them was shared at the March meeting.

Revd Caspar gave a very enjoyable and inspiring talk at the March meeting on the theme of keeping Lent. We meet again at 2.00pm on 8th April when the speaker will be Trevor Grant who will be talking to us about the work of The Leprosy Mission. All are welcome at MU meetings.

Jenny Colby

Dates for your diary (Includes Holy Week)

- 6th Calne and Blackland APCM after 10.00am service at St Mary's
- 8th Mothers' Union meeting at Church House. Speaker: Trevor Grant speaking about the Leprosy Mission.
- 12th Calne Choral Spring Concert at St Mary's. 7.30pm
- 13th Palm Sunday
- 17th Maundy Thursday
- 18th Good Friday – Ecumenical Walk of Witness. Noon. Town Centre
- 20th Easter Sunday
- 21st Easter Monday
- 26th Spring Sing – various locations in Calne, including St Mary's Church
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Focus for Prayer

Please remember to pray for ...

- Farmers and all providing our food, at a busy time of year.
 - The changes planned for St Mary's Church and the team working on this.
 - Christian people throughout the world observing Holy Week and celebrating Easter.
 - Peace in our beautiful world.
 - Anyone who is anxious because of debt and the organisations working to help them.
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Have a Happy Easter

Editorial Team:

Sue Twyman, Jane Ridgwell and Jack Robinson.

Illustration, Graphic Design and Layout: Alex Grenfell.

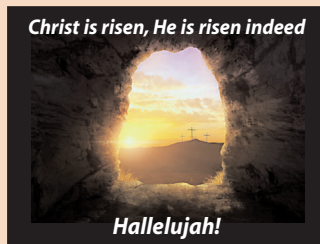
And finally ...

If you organise any groups or events in the parish and would like them to be included in this newsletter then get in touch with the editors.

We would also love to have articles about the different groups in the parish to spread the word more widely and encourage people to come along.

Please email or give copies of items to us in plenty of time for the next newsletter, the deadline is 10th of the preceding month.

email: cbp.news.editor@gmail.com



Regular Activities in the Parish

*Please check Website or Parish Notices for Zoom Link.

Day	Time	Place	Activity
Sunday	8.00am	St Mary's	Holy Communion (NOT 4th Sunday of the month).
	9.30am	St Peter's	Holy Communion (BCP) – (4th Sunday of the month).
	10.00am	Church House	Sunday Club for 4–11s. (1st Sunday of the month)
		St Mary's	Parish Eucharist (4th Sunday of the month; Morning Praise).
	10.45am	Holy Trinity	Morning Praise (2nd Sunday of the month). Holy Communion (4th Sunday of the month).
	3.00pm	Holy Trinity	Family Service (3rd and 5th Sunday of the month).
Tuesday	10.00am	Church House	SMUF's parent and toddler group. Only during term times.
Wednesday	10.00am	St Mary's	Holy Communion (Mothers' Union Corporate Service 1st Wednesday of the month).
	3.30-5.30pm	Church House	Wednesday Club for 4–11s. Only during term times.
Friday	8.30 am	Zoom	Morning Prayers – Whole Benefice*
	2.00-4.00pm	Church House (Downstairs)	Cameo – Come And Meet Each Other. 3rd Friday of the month only. You'll be welcomed with a cup of tea... plus board games and time to chat.
	7.00pm	St Mary's	Choir Practice.
	7.30pm	Bell Ringing	Please contact Jane Ridgwell for further information.

If you wish to make a donation to the Parish of Calne and Blackland you can use this QR code

