

Parish of Monks Risborough

Newsletter



St Dunstan's Church St Peter's Chapel

October 2025 - November 2025

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Clergy

Team Vicar The Rev'd. Peter Godden, The Rectory, Mill Lane, Monks Risborough HP27 9JE

Tel: 01844 274771 Email: revpetergodden@outlook.com

Associate Priest: The Rev'd Sally Prendergast

Tel: 07876 515098 Email: revsallyp@gmail.com

Arrangements for Baptisms, Confirmation Preparation, Confessions, Banns of marriage, Weddings and Funerals can be made with Peter at the address above.

Website: www.stdunstanschurch.com

Registered Charity No. 115386

Regular Services

St Dunstan's	Sundays	8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)	1st Sunday in month
		10.00 am PARISH COMMUNION	
		10.00 am FAMILY SERVICE	1st Sunday in month
		3.00 pm Evensong	Except 4th Sunday in month
	Thursdays	9.30 am Holy Communion	
Owlswick Chapel		9.00 am Holy Communion	2nd Sunday in month
		3.00 pm Evensong	4th Sunday in month

The Parochial Church Council

Chairman:

The Rev'd. Peter Godden

Churchwardens:

Sue Ingram 07786 986823

Christopher Trower 07827 772948

Secretary:

Lucy Nott 01844 345268

Treasurer:

David Curry 07854 198498

Deanery Synod Reps

Mr C Fairall, Mr E Kent, Mrs A Vere

Ex Officio Member

The Rev'd Sally Prendergast

Elected Members

Mr S Gray, Mrs A-M Longshaw, Mrs A Maycock, Mrs D Norie, Mrs J Rogers,
Mr P Woodward-Court

Directory

Churches Together in Risborough Rep. Margaret Pitman 01844 346008

Gift Aid Secretary Nick Tyler 01844 344589

Electoral Roll Officer Caroline Godden
email: electoralroll@stdunstanschurch.com

Weekly Notice Sheet Organiser John McKay 01844 274650
email: comms@stdunstanschurch.com

Newsletter Editor Morna Hinch 01844 345169

St Dunstan's Choir Practice **Thursdays from 6.30 pm**

Tower Captain Brian Highe 01844 343755

Bell Ringing Practice at St Dunstan's **Thursdays 7.30 pm to 9.00 pm**

The Rev'd Sally Prendergast writes:

Dear friends,

Autumn is such a colourful season, but I can't help but feel a little wistful as I remember the shift of colour and scent in the great outdoors. I grew up in a tiny hamlet surrounded by crops and cattle, so harvest was a big deal.

We had an orchard and my father would lay the apples in wooden trays lined with newspaper, making sure none of them touched so one rotten apple wouldn't spoil the rest. They were stored in the spare bedroom, and the scent when we went in to choose a few was warm, woody and sweet.

Hay and straw was gathered in small rectangular bales sealed with orange twine. We kids would run behind the trailer, trying to haul a bale on to the bed of the trailer when it paused. There was huge kudos if you could manage that single-handed, something I never achieved. My hay fever and the scratches of sharp stalks never stopped me trying.

Once everything had been safely gathered in, the whole village picked their way through a field of cows to pack into the tiny church to celebrate. If the weather was poor, the porch would be lined with welly boots and we'd give thanks in our socks, or stuff shoes in our pockets to wear. I never knew - or cared, at that age - who baked the extraordinary loaf, golden and shiny, in the shape of a sheaf of wheat that always leaned against the altar. Decorations and donations were all fresh produce, dictated by whatever had grown well in the weather of the year. One year storms had arrived early and the electricity had gone, so we lit extra candles and carried on. The power cut meant the organ had to be hand pumped, but mice had chewed a hole in the bellows and the organ had acquired a bagpipe-like drone, much to the amusement of everyone (except the puffing ruddy-faced farmer pumping the organ). It's hard to sing when you're stifling laughter!

These days we've become accustomed to buying produce out of season, but that's not good for the planet, and it never tastes the same after flying thousands of miles before landing on our plates. God gave us seasons that ebb and flow like the tides, and there's a lot to be said for being attuned to the weather, the soil, and the phases of agriculture. As it says in Ecclesiastes, 'For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted...! Our lives, our health, and our relationships wax and wane... and that's how it should be as we grow and rest.'

If you'd like to join us to celebrate, give thanks, and remember the landmarks of the season, you're very welcome at any of our services. (See pages 6 and 7.)

With blessings for the season of 'mists and mellow fruitfulness',

Sally

From the Parish Registers

Baptism: *We welcome into the family of God:*

17th August: Isabelle Hana Hounslow

Funeral: - *Rest in Peace:*

25th July: Joyce Healey, age 107, formerly of Great Kimble

8th August: Elizabeth Copeman, age 86, Princes Risborough

28th August: Alan Kirby, age 85, Mill Lane

Would you like a lift to and from church on a Sunday morning?

If you would like a lift either on a regular basis or as a one-off, please contact Cathy on 07906 180550 or at **cathy.farquhar@btinternet.com**.

A call by Friday evening would be appreciated.

St Dunstan's Pastoral Care

Caring for our community is part of our vision and service. The Pastoral Care Group is there to visit and support all those in need - the bereaved, sick, lonely and housebound, and those who may feel anxious about themselves or a loved one.

Similarly, if you know of someone who might benefit from contact, please get in touch.

We are here for you.

For more information, please contact Angeline Vere on **01844 343006** or at **angeline.vere@btinternet.com**

There may also be those who could benefit from some spiritual encouragement. No matter where you might be on a journey of faith, there are members of the Pastoral Care group who would be only too happy to visit or have a telephone call with those who would appreciate a chat and perhaps someone to pray with. If you would like such a phone call, you can contact Jill Iredale on 01844 346488 or at **jillstovold@icloud.com** or Angeline Vere on 01844 343006 or at **angeline.vere@btinternet.com**.

The Pastoral Care group works alongside and with Peter, the Vicar, who can be contacted on 01844 274771, or at **revpetergodden@outlook.com**.

Church Calendar

All services at St Dunstan's Monks Risborough unless otherwise stated.

2 nd October	Thursday	9.30 am Holy Communion
5 th October	Sunday	Harvest Festival 8.00 am BCP Holy Communion 11.00 am All-Age Parish Eucharist, followed by refreshments 6.00 pm Evensong
9 th October	Thursday	9.30 am Holy Communion
12 th October	Sunday	Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity 9.00 am BCP Holy Communion (St Peter's Owlswick) 10.00 am Parish Eucharist 6.00 pm Evensong
16 th October	Thursday	9.30 am Holy Communion
19 th October	Sunday	Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity 10.00 am Parish Eucharist 6.00 pm Evensong
23 rd October	Thursday	9.30 am Holy Communion
26 th October	Sunday	Bible Sunday 10.00 am Parish Eucharist 3.00 pm Evensong (St Peter's Owlswick)
30 th October	Thursday	9.30 am Holy Communion
2 nd November	Sunday	All Saints' Day (Transferred) 8.00 am BCP Holy Communion 10.00 am All-Age Parish Eucharist 3.00 pm Service for the Feast of All Souls' (Commemoration of the Faithful Departed)
6 th November	Thursday	9.30 am Holy Communion
9 th November	Sunday	Remembrance Sunday 9.00 am BCP Holy Communion (St Peter's Owlswick) 10.00 am Parish Eucharist including 11.00 am Act of Remembrance (All in St Dunstan's) 11.20 am Act of Remembrance (Monks Risborough War Memorial) 3.00 pm Evensong
11 th November	Tuesday	10.45 am Act of Remembrance for Armistice Day (Monks Risborough War Memorial)
13 th November	Thursday	9.30 am Holy Communion
16 th November	Sunday	Second Sunday before Advent 10.00 am Parish Eucharist 3.00 pm Evensong
20 th November	Thursday	9.30 am Holy Communion

23 rd November	Sunday	Christ the King 10.00 am Parish Eucharist 3.00 pm Evensong (St Peter's Owlswick)
27 th November	Thursday	9.30 am Holy Communion
30 th November	Sunday	First Sunday of Advent 10.00 am Parish Eucharist No Evensong service at St Dunstan's: 6.00 pm Churches Together in Risborough Advent Service (Venue tbc)

Parish Prayer Group

The Pastoral Care Group meets to pray for both the needs of the Church and the parish in general, but also for individual people who may wish to benefit from the power of prayer. It also addresses urgent wider issues of concern.

Meetings are held in the Church Hall on the 3rd Friday of each month at 9.00 am for about half an hour. The next meetings are on 17th October and 21st November.. A reminder will be in the eNews and Pewsheets on the Sunday prior to each of those dates and we will also email those who regularly attend.

If you would like prayers said for you or for a loved one or for any aspect of Parish life, in confidence, then please do get in touch - or fill in a Prayer Request Card and put it in the new Prayer Request Box in the centre of the church. Also, if you are interested in being part of this Group, on a regular or occasional basis, we would be so pleased to hear from you - or indeed just arrive at the stated time.

Jill Iredale **jillstovold@icloud.com** 01844 346488

Angeline Vere **angeline.vere@btinternet.com** 01844 343006

The Church Hall

The fully equipped hall is available for church and associated events.

It is available for people to use after Christenings, weddings, funerals and other services. It is also available for hire to local community groups and charities, and is very popular for hosting small classes.

For further details or to arrange a booking, contact
stdunstanschurhhall@gmail.com or ring 07942 356245.

All Hallows Eve – or Holy Evening

Modern Halloween celebrations have their roots with the Celtic peoples of pre-Christian times.

In those long-ago days, on the last night of October, the Celts celebrated the Festival of Samhain, or 'Summer's End'. The priests, or Druids, performed ceremonies to thank and honour the sun. For there was a very dark side to all this: Samhain also signalled the onset of winter, a time when it was feared that unfriendly ghosts, nature-spirits, and witches roamed the earth, creating mischief. So the Druid priests lit great bonfires and performed magic rites to ward off or appease these dark supernatural powers.

Then the Romans arrived, and brought their Harvest Festival which honoured the Goddess Pomona with gifts of apples and nuts. The two festivals slowly merged.

When Christianity arrived still later, it began to replace the Roman and Druid religions. 1st November - All Saints' Day - was dedicated to all Christian Martyrs and Saints who had died. It was called 'All Hallows' Day'. The evening before became an evening of prayer and preparation and was called 'All Hallows' Eve', The Holy Evening, later shortened to 'Halloween'.

For many centuries, however, fear of the supernatural remained strong. During the Middle Ages, animal costumes and frightening masks were worn to ward off the evil spirits of darkness on Halloween. Magic words and charms were used to keep away bad luck, and everybody believed that witches rode about on broomsticks. Fortune telling was popular, and predicting the future by the use of nuts and apples was so popular that Halloween is still sometimes known as Nutcrack Night or Snap-Apple Night.

Today, Christians have learned to turn to prayer instead of charms to overcome the powers of darkness. And the deeper, true meaning of All Hallows' Eve should not be forgotten. As Christians, we all draw closer to Christ when we remember and give thanks for our loved ones and for others who have gone before us through the gates of death.

10 Tongue Twisters you should try!

1. Rory the warrior and Roger the worrier were reared wrongly in a rural brewery.
2. Six slippery snails slid slowly seaward.
3. Fresh fried flying fish, freshly fried and flying fast.
4. The great Greek grape growers grow great Greek grapes.
5. Crisp crusts crackle and crunch.
6. Vincent vowed vengeance very vehemently.
7. Two tried and true tridents.
8. Fred fed Ted bread, and Ted fed Fred bread.
9. Ed had edited it.
10. A loyal warrior will rarely worry why we rule.

Report of the PCC Meeting on 23rd July 2025

The PCC met late in July, with Rev'd Sally Prendergast in the chair. A lot of business was discussed in this meeting, including a review of our cleaning rate, an approval to give Lighthouse a donation, a proposal to form a Men's group, and an amendment of the terms and conditions for the newsletter to ensure appropriate and authentic use of advertising space.

With Peter's sabbatical now underway, most services have been covered, but the service on August 10th was the only one for which there would be no clergy. Since the PCC meeting this service has now taken place, and we are all grateful to Christopher Trower for leading this so well.

After agreement from the PCC in the July meeting, first aid boxes have now been replaced in both churches.

The PCC meeting took place the day before the interviews for the Team Rector of the Risborough Group, and it was a privilege for Lucy Nott to represent the parish on the interview panel. Several members of the parish met the applicants on the 24th July, and we are delighted that the Rev'd Canon Steve Benoy has accepted the invitation to be Team Rector. His licensing service will be held on 26th November at St Mary's Church, Princes Risborough.

In other matters discussed in the PCC meeting, one was that of the names on the prayer list. The only names that are on the prayer list are those that have been made by special request, in order to respect the sensitive nature of this part of our pastoral care.

Another matter raised was that of the need for risk assessments to be completed and given to the churchwardens at least two weeks prior to an event taking place. There is a template available for this.

Simon Gray updated the PCC on the progress regarding the organ – there has been an updated proposal from the organ builder, and some amendments to the specification. There is a possibility that work might commence within a year, although this is dependent on many factors including a fund-raising initiative. The organ working group will continue to update the PCC on progress.

There were the regular finance and fabric updates, and special thanks were extended to Jo Wade for the time she spent ensuring the hymn books were in good condition. Sally expressed her gratitude to many people during the meeting, and especially during this time of the sabbatical. It was wonderful to see so many people supporting and helping the life of the parish in different ways.

The PCC closed with prayer at a respectable time of just after 9:30pm, and will next meet on 14th October 2025.

Lucy Nott, Secretary to the PCC

St Dunstan's Friendship Group

Co-ordinator: Avril Clark

01844 342165

Meeting at 2.30 pm in the Church Hall on the 3rd Wednesday of each month (except in August).

All who wish to attend our meetings are very welcome.

Church Choir

Choir practice is held in church every Thursday evening from 6.30 pm to 7.30 pm.

For more information please contact Margaret Pitman 01844 346008.

Bell Ringers

This friendly group practises from 7.30/7.45 pm to 9.00 pm on a Thursday evening. We welcome beginners and experienced ringers.

If you would like to come along to see what's involved please contact Tower Captain Brian Highe 01844 343755.

Open House

We meet once a month on a Wednesday evening. The next Open House dates are 22nd October and 19th November. Both sessions will be about the Spread of Christianity as we come to the time of discovering the New World in the 14th and 15th Centuries. More details will be on the eNews.

Ted and Mary Kent

Bereavement Drop In

This group meets on the second Monday of every month throughout the year offering a warm welcome to anyone struggling with the grief of bereavement. We share together over a cup of tea or coffee, talk about our experiences or just listen. Many find comfort in talking about their loved ones with others who know what they are going through.

We meet in the Chapter House at St. Mary's Church, Princes Risborough, at 3.00 pm, and everyone is welcome, of any faith or of no faith at all.

Please contact me if you need further details.

Revd Rose Williams 01844 274225

Baptisms

The birth of a child is a wonderful occasion, and a time for thanksgiving and rejoicing. Many people still wish to mark this in their parish church, either with the service of Baptism (also known as a Christening), where a child is baptised and welcomed into the Christian faith, or with a service of Thanksgiving and Dedication, where a child is named and blessed.



If you would like to find out more, please do not hesitate to contact Peter our Vicar, on 01844 274771, or at revpetergodden@outlook.com.

10 O'Clock Club

Our Sunday school is a fun get together for children, in St. Dunstan's Church Hall, which runs parallel to the Sunday morning 10.00 am service, usually on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month.

We run an hour of games, craft, Bible stories and Lighthouse songs, and then join the congregation in church for the end of the service. There is no commitment or need to book. Just come along and join in the fun.

On the first Sunday of the month, we join the congregation for the family service at 10.00 am.

The 10 O'clock Club will meet on 12th and 26th October, 9th and 16th November.

If you would like any further information, please contact: Debbie Norie 07982 247715 or at debbienorie@googlemail.com.

Hody's Charity

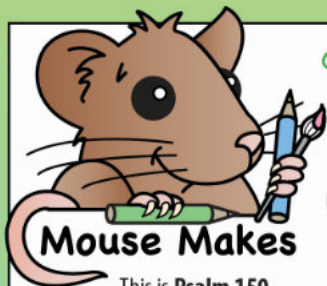
Small grants for local students or apprentices

The charity was founded by a former Rector of the parish in his will dated 1706. It was later added to by his successor, Dr. Quarries. The trustees are the Team Vicar and Churchwardens of the parish of Monks Risborough.

An applicant must be 16 and over and not more than 21 years of age. The applicant must live in the parish of Monks Risborough or have a connection with St Dunstan's Church or St Peter's Chapel (Owlswick). The grant is to be used for the applicant's personal or professional development and may be given for books, specialist equipment, outfits, tools, fees etc.

For an application form, please contact one of the churchwardens at:

suemingram@hotmail.com or trowerchristopher@hotmail.com



Mouse Makes

This is **Psalm 150**,
a song of praise to God,
it tells us why and how
to worship God.

*How do you praise and
worship God?*



Praise God in His Temple,
Praise Him in His mighty heavens.
Praise Him for His acts of power,
Praise Him for his surpassing greatness.

Praise Him

with the sounding trumpet,

Praise Him

with the harp and lyre,

Praise Him

with tambourine and dancing,

Praise Him

with the clash of cymbals,

Praise Him

with the resounding cymbals.

Let everything that has breath

PRAYSE THE LORD!



P	K	G	C	Y	M	B	A	L	S	A
O	L	R	H	E	A	V	E	N	S	B
W	T	E	M	P	L	E	T	U	A	R
E	T	A	M	B	O	U	R	I	N	E
R	H	T	L	U	T	E	U	A	C	A
D	A	N	C	I	N	G	M	P	T	T
R	R	E	P	I	P	E	P	R	U	H
U	P	S	F	L	U	T	E	A	A	H
M	D	S	G	O	D	E	T	I	R	O
S	T	S	T	R	I	N	G	S	Y	R
O	Y	L	E	D	L	Y	R	E	Y	N



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TAMBOURINE • DANCING • CYMBALS • DRUMS • BREATH • LORD

MONKS RISBOROUGH "POP UP"



SHOWING FILMS ON

Saturday 25th October at 6.00 pm

Saturday 8th November at 6.00 pm



Because of Licencing laws it is not possible to advertise the names of the films. However, if you are interested in cinema events, and haven't already done so, please email

comms@stdunstanschurch.com

with your name and confirm that you would like to hear information about the cinema events via email.

Alternatively contact Cathy Farquhar on 07906 180550 for further details.

Entry is by donation

All children must be accompanied by an adult

Bring your own snacks/drinks

The background of the poster features three lit candles in an Advent wreath. The central candle is white, flanked by a red candle on the left and a purple candle on the right. The candles are set against a dark background with a faint cross visible behind them. The text is overlaid on this image.

St Dunstan's Church

Mill Lane, Monks Risborough

Advent Craft Fair

Saturday November 29th

10.00 am to 2.00 pm

Greeting Cards

Craft Gifts

Love Debbie Patisserie

Plants

Stained Glass

Jewellery

Homemade Cakes/Produce

Festive Raffle

Entry £1.00 to include tea/coffee

Jamabar

Ladies' Breakfast

The next Ladies' Breakfast is on Saturday 1st November in St Mary's Hall at 9.00 am. The speaker will be Maggie Wooster Keyte giving her testimony of how God has worked in her life. All ladies and friends are welcome but PLEASE let Rose know if you are coming. Numbers are increasing and they don't want to run out of food!

Contact Rose Williams on 01844 274225 or rosewilliamsgp@yahoo.co.uk.

Men's Breakfast

The next men's breakfast will be on 8th November at 8.45am in the St Mary's Church Hall. As this is Remembrance Weekend the Revd. Kevin Capelin-Jones will be talking about his transfer from being an RAF Chaplain to being an Army Chaplain this year. There will be the usual full English breakfast. The cost is £5, payable on the day. Contact Steve Williams on mensbreakfast@stmarysrisborough.org.uk or phone 01844 274225 if you would like to come so that we can control the catering and avoid waste. Male guests are very welcome.

ActionAid

Thank you to all who have steadfastly contributed to the church's support of Adam in Malawi. In October we will be sending the £180.00 which we promise to raise.

Thank you.

June Timms

Play Day



Play Day will be on October 28th from 10.00-12.00 in St Dunstan's Church and Hall.

Free; no need to register in advance.

For all ages up to 11; under 5s must be accompanied by an adult.

There will be a story, crafts, games and singing.

Snacks and refreshments provided, and tea/ coffee for adults.

Christmas Concert by Candlelight



with the
Chinnor Silver Band
St Dunstan's Church
Monks Risborough

Wednesday 10th December
at 8.00 pm

Tickets £12.00

Complimentary Glass of Mulled Wine or a Soft Drink and a Mince Pie
Prize Raffle

Tickets are available from 1st November from

Jo 01844 346321 or Penny 07762 880219

or Days to Remember, High Street, Princes Risborough (cash only)
or online from

www.ticketsource.co.uk/st-dunstans-church

Jamadar

DIARY DATES FOR OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER

October

- 1st Women's Institute - Whitecross Hall 1.45 pm (Page 28)
- 1st PR Heritage Society - Wades Centre 7.30 pm (Page 28)
- 9th Fellowship Group - Church Hall 10.15 am (Page 10)
- 15th Friendship Group - Church Hall 2.30 pm (Page 11)
- 15th MR Horticultural Group - Church Hall 7.30 pm (Page 28)
- 17th Parish Prayer Group - Church Hall 9.00 am (Page 7)
- 21st Tuesday Talk - PR Library 3.00 pm (Page 27)
- 22nd Open House Group - TBA 7.30 pm (Page 11)
- 23rd Knitting Group - Church Hall 2.00 pm (Page 10)
- 25th Pop Up Cinema - St Dunstan's 6.00 pm (Page 1 4)
- 28th Play Day - Church and Hall 10.00am (Page 16)
- 29th Walking Group - Burton Lane 9.15 am (Page 10)

November

- 1st Women's Breakfast - St Mary's Church Hall 9.00 am (Page 16)
- 5th Women's Institute - Whitecross Hall 1.45 pm (Page 28)
- 5th PR Heritage Society - Wades Centre 7.30pm (Page 28)
- 8th Men's Breakfast - St Mary's Church Hall 8.45 am (Page 16)
- 8th Pop Up Cinema - St Dunstan's 6.00 pm (Page 1 4)
- 13th Fellowship Group - Church Hall 10.15 am (Page 10)
- 19th Friendship Group - Church Hall 2.30 pm (Page 11)
- 19th Open House Group - TBA 7.30 pm (Page 11)
- 21st Parish Prayer Group - Church Hall 9.00 am (Page 7)
- 23rd Tree of Life - PR 4.00pm (Page 25)
- 26th Walking Group - Burton Lane 9.30 am (Page 10)
- 27th Knitting Group - Church Hall 2.00 pm (Page 10)
- 28th MR Horticultural Group - Church Hall 7.30 pm (Page 28)
- 29th Advent Craft Fair - St Dunstan's 10.00am (Page 15)



Recycled Greetings Cards: latest update!



At the time of writing, 4th August, amazingly, the sale of our cards was over **£500**: thanks to those who have given me their 'old' cards and, equally important, to those who have bought them!

So a huge THANK YOU if you fall into either category for reaching such a landmark in less than 6 months. All money raised is for St Dunstan's Church.

So, please continue to buy them. Cards are available in church throughout the week. You will find them on a table in the right hand side as you enter the church. Those who have bought them have been kind enough to say how lovely they are and at just £1 each they are very good value. Two or three times I have been asked if I could make a card for something a bit different, like 'Passover' for example. If you have a special request, please ask and I will try and help. In the meantime, do pop into church and have a look! Used cards can also be placed in the box in the church porch. Let us together see if we can reach £1000 by the end of the year!

With best wishes and thanks.

Canon Rob

Final copy date for next *Newsletter*
is
10th November 2025

Please give copy to one of the following:

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Proof reader	Jane Curry	jlecurry@gmail.com	07973 300758

The next Newsletter will be issued from 30th November 2025

A Visit to Saint Albans

A group from St Dunstan's travelled to Saint Albans on the 24th July to visit the Cathedral. From the excellent guides, we learned that Saint Alban was martyred around 300 AD and thus became Britain's first saint. A cult soon developed around his relics. Centuries later, in 793 AD, a monastery was founded at the site, probably by King Offa of Mercia. The present building is largely the work of the Normans. In the absence of large quantities of locally available stone, they plundered the nearby ruins of the Roman city of Verulamium for the bricks and tiles needed to create this massive structure. The impressive Nave at 276 feet is the longest in England.

In the medieval period the monastery became England's leading Benedictine abbey. The shrines of St Alban and his contemporary Saint Amphibalus, were situated behind the High Altar. The vast numbers of pilgrims visiting it boosted the abbey's revenues enormously. The Quire, the Lady Chapel and the Presbytery, with its magnificent painted ceiling, were added during this period.



When Henry VIII broke with Rome in 1534, the wealth of the monasteries was a temptation too great to resist. All of them were dissolved between 1536 and 1539, the wealthy St Albans being one of the last. The shrines were dismantled; the relics of the two saints disappeared or were hidden; the silver and gold were seized by Henry, whose expenditure always exceeded his income; the fine library with its wealth of illuminated manuscripts was disposed of and the monastic buildings destroyed. The Nave became the parish church and the Lady Chapel a school for boys. The parishioners found the upkeep of the enormous building beyond their means. By the nineteenth century it had suffered centuries of neglect until the Victorians rose to the

challenge and began a major restoration programme. Queen Victoria created a new diocese and made the former abbey a Cathedral.

Those of us who were able and willing to tackle a dark and narrow spiral staircase and an even narrower passage - open on one side to the South Transept many feet below - were also thrilled by a visit to the Cathedral Archives. Caroline Godden, who manages the Archives, and Rob Piggott, who leads the Volunteer Archive Team, had assembled a collection of artefacts to show us. Some of these had come from the burial of John of Wheathampstead, a fifteenth-century abbot, whose body was discovered during archaeological work at the cathedral in 2017. He had been buried with three papal decrees, granted to him by Pope Martin V, which allowed the archaeologists to identify his body. Although the documents had not survived, the lead seals of these 'papal bulls' had. We also saw a charter of Henry III with its wax seal still attached, and pages from a beautifully illuminated fourteenth-century manuscript called the St Albans Bible, once part of the abbey's collection of books, seized at the Dissolution. Passing through several hands, this Bible was eventually bought by a dealer, who dismembered the book to enable him to sell - at greater profit - single sheets, or even individual illuminated letters cut from its pages. In contrast, we were shown a devotional book written around 1430, which was handwritten on vellum - the only known item from the abbey's pre-Dissolution collection to have made it back intact. It was written in Late Middle English in which language Caroline kindly read the Lord's Prayer for us. Finally, we saw the massive, sealed charter issued by Queen Victoria creating the new diocese in 1877. It was a most interesting visit and it was a privilege to see the work which Caroline and her team are doing.

Many of us took the opportunity of attending Evensong in the Quire and Presbytery, dominated by the magnificent High Altar Screen. During the summer, when the Cathedral choir is on holiday, visiting groups are invited to take on their duties. We were fortunate that our visit coincided with the tenure of an American Lutheran choir from Las Vegas, whose singing of the versicles and responses and the anthem did much to enhance our worship.

Our thanks go to Caroline for spending time during a busy day to show us the work of the archivists and to Rosemary Woodward-Court for organising the visit so efficiently, anticipating our every need. It was a great privilege to be taken to Saint Albans in a comfortable coach and to be dropped and collected only a short distance from the cathedral.

David Keysell

Church Flower Rota		Sunday Coffee Rota	
Organisers:		Organisers:	
Gwen Miles	01844 345230	Jo Wade	01844 346321
Jenny Masterton-Smith	01844 273538	Anne White	01844 346536

Bridget



Bridget Holmes 225.4x148.6 cm Windsor Castle
John Riley 1646-91

Here's something for our elderly congregation. (I can say that, as I'm one of them.) This old lady is 96, as the Latin inscription lower left tells us, and she continued working until she died the day after her 100th birthday. She is buried in the north cloister of Westminster Abbey, with a monument, an extraordinary accolade for a domestic

servant, but she was the longest-serving one in Royal history and was held in high regard.

Bridget Holmes 1591-1691 was a 'Necessary Woman' who cleaned the Royal Chambers for 86 years, which included 'cleaning and scouring' all the Royal chamber pots. Her grave inscription says she was a widow, no mention of children. She served Charles I(1625-49), Charles II(1660-85), William and Mary (1689-1702 &1694), and finally James II (1685-88). (reigning dates).

James II commissioned this painting 'to celebrate her great age and loyalty to the Stuarts', giving her an annual salary of £60, twice the income of a skilled craftsman, so the Castle Chambers must have sparkled! Whereas paintings of servants were common in the contemporary Dutch Republic, it was rare in England and astonishing for a Royal commission, especially on such a grand life size scale usually reserved for Royal portraits. This and Riley's other servant painting *The Scullion of Christ Church* (in that Oxford College's Picture Gallery) have far more character than the dull formulaic Royal portraits that poor Riley had to churn out, although I fear Bridget's face is a little too small.

She is not shown scrubbing pots, but is in a Royal Chamber wielding a beautifully painted brush with her brawny arms and hands to 'sweep away' a cheeky liveried pageboy. The boy had hidden behind a heavy gold-fringed brocade curtain and has sprung out to tease the old lady. The rich varying browns of background, floor, vase and Bridget's skirt all harmonise skilfully, with Bridget's pristine white collar and apron making her stand out. The diagonal of her brush counterbalances all the verticals.

The pageboy in blue seems to be on a different scale, although he and Bridget appear to stand on the same plane. It was normal then for two artists to work on the same painting (for example Rubens (1577-1640) had co-painters); so it is possible that the pageboy was painted by the artist engaged to paint the drapery in Riley's pictures: John Closterman 1660-1711. He probably painted that superb curtain and perhaps all of the right-hand-side. I would prefer Bridget to stand alone, like her male counterpart in Oxford. What do you think?

The grand classical vase with a relief of dancing nymphs was made by Cherubino Alberti (1553-1615) and featured in a fresco on the facade of the Palazzo Milesi in Rome. Riley took it from an artist's copy-book of prints for artists to use as props. Reynolds was to use it in some of his later portraits. Here it puts Bridget among fine things supposedly owned by Royalty. It is decidedly NOT a chamber pot! Vase, brocade curtain and liveried pageboy all enhance Bridget's status.

Riley was appointed Principal Painter, with the German Godfrey Kneller (1646-1723) to King William and Queen Mary. There was a dearth of native-born English painters at that time, there being no Royal Academy or National Gallery to teach them, and artists like Riley were soon to be outclassed by such as Flemish artists Rubens and Van Dyck, both employed to paint English monarchs.

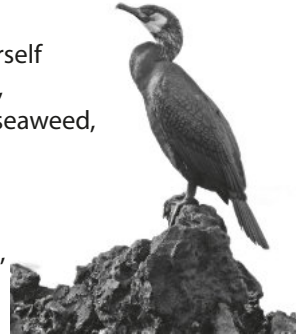
It is fitting that this painting hangs in one of Windsor Castle's Royal Chambers which she probably swept with that brush. There is, however, something about her portrait of which Bridget would not have approved: it needs a jolly good clean!

Susanne Carr

Cormorant

The dawn sea is liquid quicksilver
I glide through its surface in a single pleat
Towards you, King Cormorant, a carved statue of yourself
Standing on your rock eye - fishing for your breakfast,
Seeing my approaching head perhaps as a tangle of seaweed,
The rest of me under water, my hand- finds
Guiding my forward glide until we face each other.
Still as the unruffled sea, we hold our gaze,
Until your slow-motion wings unfurl and lift you aloft,
And I, a clump of seaweed, drift to the shore.

Susanne Carr. Guernsey August 2025



Plastic carrier bags

This year marks ten years since England introduced the 5p charge for single-use plastic carrier bags. The charge has had a dramatic effect – with a reduction of 98% in sales.

In 2014, 7.6 billion single-use plastic bags were sold in the UK. By 2023, 133 million single-use bags had been sold in the major supermarkets. The average person in the UK now buys only about two single-use plastic bags per year.

Tree of Life

All funds raised will be shared between Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity and Rotary charities. Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity has replaced Rennie Grove as the Rotary Club's partner as the reorganisation of Hospice services in Bucks means that Rennie Grove no longer operates in the town.

Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity is here for patients with life-limiting illnesses, and their families, across Bucks and its borders. We enhance and complement the care and support delivered by Bucks Healthcare NHS Trust to ensure patients, families and carers get the individual clinical, practical and emotional support they need to make the most of every day they have together.

Since the opening of Florence Nightingale Hospice in 1989, many thousands of patients and families have benefited from specialist hospice care. The Hospice remains the only bedded unit in Bucks for respite and end of life care, and services have evolved over the years with much of our care now also offered in the community. All services are provided free of charge to patients and their families. This is only possible thanks to the continued support and fundraising efforts of so many individuals and businesses.



Tree of Light Dedication Form



The Dedication Ceremony will take place at 4.00 p.m. on Sunday 23rd November.

Your name and address (Block Capitals Please)

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Address.....

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This is a BUSINESS Account

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The size of donation is left to your own discretion. **Please write in the amount of your donation £..... and indicate how you are donating by *circling* the method**

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In order to Gift Aid your donation, you must tick this box.

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Please send to Princes Risborough Tree of Light c/o Chilternholm, Manor Road, Princes Risborough, Bucks, HP27 9DJ or hand in at Princes Risborough Inf Centre (in the library). Further information from David Griggs 01844 345554.

The Chiltern Society

Spring clearing and summer maintenance at Whiteleaf

Following the tree felling that took place over the winter of 24/25 we have planted 400 new trees to replace the conifers that were removed. The new trees include species such as cherry, rowan, oak and field maple with the long-term aim to create a more diverse and resilient broadleaf woodland. Over the spring and summer, we've been keeping an eye on the trees to check they have taken to their new home. This initial period is crucial as it can take several years for them to establish with some growing faster than others, so we will be continuing to monitor them closely to give them the best chance of reaching maturity.'

March and early April saw us have our last bonfires of the Winter/Spring season on Whiteleaf, clearing the remains of the scrub that had been cut down over the winter.

We restrict where we site the bonfires to 2 spots out in the open on flat ground at the bottom of Whiteleaf Hill. This ensures we don't enrich too much of the site with bonfire ash, which may discourage wildflower growth, and also to ensure we don't disturb any nesting/overwintering wildlife.

These are also the last months we can continue clearing dead ash and coppicing hazel in the woods before we pause for spring nesting season.

We also continued our dead hedging efforts in both Whiteleaf and Brush Hill woods, which you will see if you walk there regularly.

Creating dead hedges helps remove brash (material left after wood has been cut down) from the woodland floor, so encouraging plants to grow; provides a safe habitat for wildlife; provides a natural boundary and helps mark out footpaths through the woods.

In May we started our summer maintenance tasks. This year we are tackling the rotting sleepers which edge the car park. This is a slow and heavy job as it requires cutting down dead trees and carrying the logs from other parts of the site to the car park before the rotten sleepers are taken out and the new logs are cut and put into place.

June was unseasonably wet and cool so, whilst we managed some brush cutting of the footpath on Brush Hill, we concentrated our efforts on replacing sections of broken fencing around the sites. Our usual task of weeding Whiteleaf Cross had to be postponed until July.

With August comes the golden rod, a perennial invader on Whiteleaf! An invasive species originally native to Canada, we are obliged to control its spread across the hill as it will outcompete native plants. Fortunately, yellow heads are easy to spot when it's in full flower. We pull them up from the roots by hand, put them head first into bin bags and dispose of them on the site away from where they can shed their seeds (obviously taking them out of the bin bags first!).

So, we come full circle to the start of our brush cutting season in September. You will hopefully see our efforts on Whiteleaf where the summer flowers are being cut and raked. As always there is more to do! We have our work parties on the first Thursday morning of each month so if you see us do come along and say hello. We couldn't continue the work we do across the Chilterns without the support of local people.

Caroline Bridgman

Chiltern Society Site Coordinator, Whiteleaf and Brush Hill

Monks Risborough CofE Primary School

We had a very busy last term at Monks Risborough Primary School with lots of events and some visitors coming to talk to the children:

The Eco Team are delighted to announce that our Waste Free Lunch Day at school was a roaring success! We reduced our waste from packaging by over A QUARTER! During worship, the Eco Team shared the results and were delighted to show the effect of our community efforts. We hope to make this a more regular feature of our school year.

Thank you for all your support with our Zero Waste Day!

Miss Goodright and the Eco Team

Year 5 & 6 were visited by our local PCSO to talk about what anti-social behaviour means and how it affects people.

Year 1 prepared and held a 'Picnic with Paddington' and then the parents joined in.

The school wore yellow for the One Can Charity collecting five huge tubs of food for those families in need in the local area.

We celebrated Mrs Hirst's support of the school over the last 24 years and wished her well in her retirement.

We said goodbye to Year 6 and we all wished them well at their new schools and hoped that they would come and visit us from time to time.

Princes Risborough Library

The Tuesday Afternoon Group Monthly Talks 3.00 pm - 4.00 pm

Tuesday 21st October: Talk on "Railways of The Chilterns Part 3" talk given by Francis Gomme

Refreshments available.

To book a place, talk to the Library staff or call 01296 382415 but, if you have not booked, just turn up.

We shall be pleased to see you.

Monks Risborough Horticultural Society

We hope that by the time that you read this in August many of you will have enjoyed taking part in our Annual Summer event. Thanks for coming and thanks to all the help in setting up and making it possible on the day.

Future Meetings:

St Dunstan's Church Hall, 7.30 pm start.

Wednesday 15th October: AGM together with Show photos

Friday 28th November: Early Christmas Social with mince pies, mulled wine and quiz.

No meetings December 2025 & January 2026.

Website: <https://themrhs.wixsite.com/mrhs>

Monks Risborough Women's Institute

We normally meet on the first Wednesday of each month at **1.45 pm** in the Whitecross Hall.

Our next Meeting is on **1st October** when Mary Saunders will tell us about 'The Olive Harvest in the West Bank.' Her experiences and photographs as part of the UN Protective Presence, which supports the Palestinian olive growers every October.

On **5th November** will be the Annual Meeting.

We welcome visitors and look forward to seeing you. We do ask that any visitors contact a member beforehand to make sure we can welcome you. A contact number is 01844 346582.

Princes Risborough Area Heritage Society

Future Meetings:

Wednesday 1st October: "John Nash and Clare Leighton. Bucks Artists and Gardeners between the Wars." Speaker Sarah Gray.

Wednesday 5th November: "Notley Abbey, Long Crendon. From its foundation to dissolution by a Tudor King and its Risborough connection." Speaker Will Strange.

Brushwood Suite, Wades Centre. Doors open 7.15 pm, meetings start 7.30 pm

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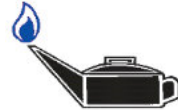
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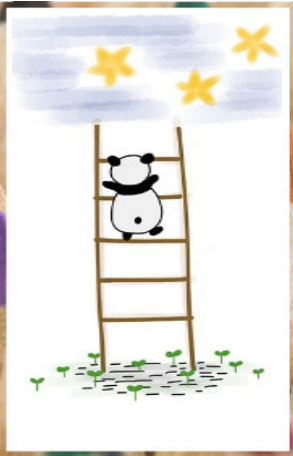
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