

Parish of Monks Risborough

Newsletter



St Dunstan's Church St Peter's Chapel

February 2026 - March 2026

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Clergy

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

Tel: 01844 274771

Associate Priest: The Rev'd Sally Prendergast

Tel: 07876 515098

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

Ex Officio Member

Mr C Fairall, Mr E Kent, Mrs A Vere

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 Peter Godden writes:

I have a new favourite painting.

For years, I would probably have gone for one of the masterpieces that I had had the privilege of seeing in the National Gallery.

There's JMW Turner's *The Fighting Temeraire*, with its wistful depiction of old and new, as a glorious sailing ship is pulled by a steam tug to be broken up for scrap. It's the colours that draw me in: I love a good blue and there's plenty of it in that painting, and it's offset with wonderful yellows and golds that speak of a fading era.

I have also always been captivated by *Christ Before the High Priest*, by the seventeenth century Dutch painter Gerard van Honthorst, showing Jesus' interrogation ahead of His crucifixion on Good Friday. The expression on Christ's face is so brilliantly painted. I feel as if I have seen sorrow, frustration, exhaustion, pity, and defiance upon it as I have returned to the painting over the years.

Then again, having enjoyed history as a student, I have frequently been interested in depictions of key historical moments, being particularly struck by Paul Delaroche's *The Execution of Lady Jane Grey*, which captures that awful event with extraordinary poignancy.

What all these paintings have in common is drama: something arresting is happening in all of them, which naturally commands the viewer's attention.

Now, however, something else is at the top of my list. Also by van Honthorst, it is entitled *Adoration of the Shepherds*, and shows that group of visitors to the manger in Bethlehem crowded around Christ and His mother. What I love about the picture is the Virgin Mary's face: unlike the enigmatic look on the adult Jesus' face in *Christ Before the High Priest*, this expression is one of pure bliss. One cannot help but feel pulled into the joy of the emotion in the painting – it is almost an invitation for the viewer to enter into the extraordinary delight that is flowing between the mother and the child.

In a world which, at the moment, feels increasingly fractured and hazardous – and, as I write this in early January, is particularly so on the international stage – things that bring us joy and hope are ever more valuable, and I do not doubt that this is part of why this painting has started resonating with me so much.

Similarly, our services here at St Dunstan's over the period of Christmas and Epiphany were filled with deep joy, as we gave thanks for the birth of that baby depicted in van Honthorst's painting. Indeed, joy and hope are at the heart of the Christian faith and worship the whole year round – for in the gift by His birth of Christ to the world, and in His death and resurrection for us, we find joy in the love that He lavishes upon us, and the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life.

As ever, you are all very much in my prayers, and I will be particularly praying at this time that you will know the joy and hope that is to be found in Jesus Christ.

With my very best wishes,

Peter

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.

From the Parish Registers

Funerals: - *Rest in Peace:*

20th November: Cyril Frank Tapping, age 90, of Cherry Tree Nursing Home, Saunderton

26th November: Michael White, age 100, of Askett

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.

Church Flower Rota

Organisers:

Gwen Miles

01844 345230

Jenny Masterton-Smith 01844 273538

Sunday Coffee Rota

Organisers:

Jo Wade

01844 346321

Anne White 07811 659583

Church Calendar

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

1st February	Sunday	Presentation of Christ in the Temple, also known as Candlemas (transferred from 2nd February) 8.00 am BCP Holy Communion 10.00 am All-Age Parish Eucharist 3.00 pm Evensong
5th February	Thursday	9.30 am Holy Communion
8th February	Sunday	Second Sunday before Lent 9.00 am BCP Holy Communion (St Peter's Owlswick) 10.00 am Parish Eucharist 3.00 pm Evensong
12th February	Thursday	9.30 am Holy Communion
15th February	Sunday	Sunday next before Lent 10.00 am Parish Eucharist 3.00 pm Evensong
18th February	Ash Wednesday	10.00 am Said Holy Communion for Ash Wednesday 7.30 pm Sung Holy Communion for Ash Wednesday
19th February	Thursday	9.30 am Holy Communion
22nd February	Sunday	First Sunday of Lent 10.00 am Parish Eucharist 3.00 pm Evensong (St Peter's Owlswick)
27th February	Thursday	9.30 am Holy Communion
1st March	Sunday	Second Sunday of Lent 8.00 am BCP Holy Communion 10.00 am All-Age Parish Eucharist 3.00 pm Evensong
5th March	Thursday	9.30 am Holy Communion
8th March	Sunday	Third Sunday of Lent 9.00 am BCP Holy Communion (St Peter's Owlswick) 10.00 am Parish Eucharist 3.00 pm Evensong
12th March	Thursday	9.30 am Holy Communion
15th March	Sunday	Mothering Sunday 10.00 am Parish Eucharist 3.00 pm Evensong
19th March	Thursday	9.30 am Holy Communion
22nd March	Sunday	Fifth Sunday of Lent 10.00 am Parish Eucharist 3.00 pm Evensong in St Dunstan's Church, followed by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting
26th March	Thursday	9.30 am Holy Communion

PCC December Meeting Report

The PCC met on 1st December to review ongoing parish life and key developments. The meeting opened with approval of the previous minutes and a number of updates on earlier actions. These included confirmation that information has been sent to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission regarding the installation of related signage in the churchyard, and that baptism application forms have been updated to include reference to our baptismal boards in the church. A new vacuum cleaner has been purchased for church use, and Angeline Vere kindly offered to oversee data-handling administration in line with national guidance.

Preparations for Advent and Christmas services are well in hand. Reports were received from several PCC teams. In Mission and Outreach, the Lunch Club is entering a period of transition, with deepest thanks expressed for Anne Baker's remarkable 20 years of leadership and service. Plans are underway to review various arrangements as the club's future organisation takes shape.

In Safeguarding, we are waiting to see which agency the Diocese will recommend for processing future DBS applications in the long term.

The financial forecast for the parish was that it would end the year with a modest surplus, in part thanks to a HMRC Gift Aid rebate, and despite significant recent repairs at Owlswick chapel. The PCC held a thoughtful discussion on charitable giving and agreed to continue its long-standing practice of making end-of-year donations to some carefully selected charitable organisations – both local and further afield – doing so at a level that would take into account our income and expenditure for the year. Six charities will be supported for the end of 2025, each receiving £800: Wycombe Youth for Christ, Parkinson's UK (Aylesbury branch), Operation Orphan, Open Doors UK, Mind (Bucks & East Berks), and Risborough Lighthouse.

Several practical matters were considered, including an upgrade to the church roof alarm system. The PCC agreed to install a new Wi-Fi provision in the church so that quotations for updated alarm technology can take into account the church's capability in that regard. Significant discussion also centred on the refurbishment of the church organ. The PCC agreed to begin the process of submitting a faculty application to the Diocese for this work, acknowledging the huge importance of music to worship, the organ's current shortcomings and challenges, and the need for significant fundraising alongside potential grants.

In the churchyard, a tree risk assessment had recently been undertaken by an arboricultural consultant, and approval was given for the Standing Committee to appoint a tree surgeon to undertake the recommended works.

The dates of the APCM and future PCC meetings are to be confirmed.

Lucy Nott, Secretary to the PCC

Holy Week (29th March – 5th April)

Holy Week is the most special week in the Christian year, marking the dramatic days from Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem, to His betrayal, arrest, His execution, and finally His glorious rising from the dead.

You are warmly invited to come and experience the beauty of this journey with Jesus, through life and death to the dawning of life eternal. All services are at St Dunstan's unless specified.

Palm Sunday 29th March

Palm Sunday Procession and Eucharist, 10.00 am

We remember Jesus entering Jerusalem to the adulation of the crowds. For those who are able, we commemorate His journey at the start of our service by processing around the environs of St Dunstan's.

Monday 30th March

The Dream of the Rood Poetry Recital, 7.30 pm

The beautiful Anglo-Saxon poem *The Dream of the Rood* – a vision of the crucifixion from the perspective of the cross – is read for us using a mixture of the original Old English and modern language, together with an introduction to the poem.

Compline, circa 8.20 pm

Following on from *The Dream of the Rood* recital will be a service of Compline – the ancient service of Night Prayer that prepares us for a quiet night.

Tuesday 31st March

Compline, 7.30 pm

A peaceful service of prayer before the day's end.

Wednesday 1st April

Stations of the Cross, 7.30 pm

A service where we journey around the church, stopping at images of Jesus' final hours (referred to as 'Stations'), in order to reflect upon Jesus' own journey through the streets of Jerusalem before His death on the cross.

Maundy Thursday 2nd April

Eucharist of the Lord's Supper & Watch, 7.30 pm

The night before His death, Jesus washed His friends' feet, showing them the extent of His love and devotion. He blessed bread and wine, and gave it to them, saying that it was His body and blood. They then went to a garden to pray, where Jesus asked them to watch over Him, before He was then arrested and taken away. We recall all these events in this poignant service, which concludes with the chance to hold a watchful time of prayer.

Good Friday 3rd April
The Good Friday Liturgy, 2.00 pm

A solemn service of prayer and devotion, where we mark Jesus' death on the cross, and give thanks for His sacrifice made for us.



Holy Saturday 4th April
Easter Vigil, 8.00 pm

The equivalent of Midnight Mass at Christmas, this is the start of our Easter celebrations. We gather in the dusk and quiet of the end of the day, as our service begins with the kindling of a flame. From there we light the Easter candle, and then more and more candles are lit, until the church is filled with light and music, and we joyfully proclaim Jesus' rising from the dead. This is an ancient service full of wonder, and it heralds the start of Easter.

Easter Day 5th April
BCP Holy Communion, 8.00 am

A quiet, contemplative service of Holy Communion at the start of Easter Day, according to the Book of Common Prayer

All-Age Easter Celebration Eucharist, 10 am

Our main celebration of Easter: a joyful, vibrant service of Holy Communion where we will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Evensong, 6.00 pm (St Peter's Chapel Owlswick)

A beautiful service of prayer and praise to end Easter Day

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 20th February and 20th March. 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

Fellowship Group

Co-ordinator: **Rosemary Woodward-Court**

01844 344417

The Fellowship Group normally meets in the Hall on the second Thursday of the month at 10.15 am.

Future Meetings:

12th February:

Super Soup Morning **11.15 am - 1.00 pm**. Come along to enjoy homemade soup, a crusty roll and tea/coffee. Suggested £5 donation to Christian Aid.

12th March:

Mini AGM and a talk by Kate Galley, a local author, about her inspiration and ways of working.

£2 to cover refreshments.

Open to everyone. Bring a friend!

Details from Rosemary 01844 344417.

Walking Group

We will continue our local walking on Wednesday 25th Feb & Wednesday 25th March. Starting 9.30am at Burton Lane for around an hour and a half.

Please contact Mick & Anne White (07811 659583) if more information needed.

The Crafty Sew & Sews

Organisers: **Pam Scott**
 Janet East

01844 346857

01844 345028

We meet every Tuesday in the Church Hall, between 1.30 pm and 4.00 pm. Come along and learn new skills, share knowledge, expand your interests. Bring along your own work (Cross Stitch, Tapestry, Knitting etc.).

Join us for just £1.00 per session (for Church Funds).

Knitting Group

This group meets on the 4th Thursday of the month at 2.00 pm in the Church Hall. For further information please contact Janet East 01844 345028 or Pam Scott 01844 346857.

St Dunstan's Friendship Group

Co-ordinator: Avril Clark

01844 342165

Meeting at 2.00 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 have no meetings during the next two months as we encourage people to go to the special parish groups during Lent.

We meet again towards the end of April.

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.

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 8th and 15th February and 8th and 22nd March. On 29th March we will plant the Easter Garden.

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

Organ Working Group

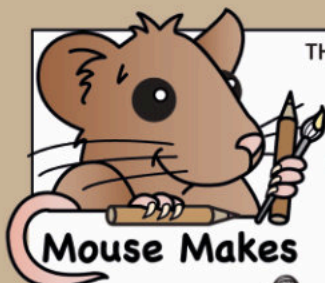
At its December meeting the PCC formally decided to proceed with a proposal from Cotswold Hybrid Organs that is specified to address two specific goals :

1. To expand the existing pipe organ keeping it to a realistic size for the building and influenced by larger Holdich organs.
2. To provide much-needed support for congregational singing in the nave.

The project will include a considerably improved console, with a lighter action and playing aids that did not exist when the original organ was built in 1863.

We are now preparing a faculty application, seeking approval for these works by the Diocese.

Simon Gray



Read the story in
Luke 4:1-13

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

After Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan where did the Holy Spirit lead him to? v1

How many days was Jesus being tempted by the devil? v2

What did Jesus eat? v2

What did the devil tempt Jesus to turn a stone into? What did Jesus say? v3-4

What did the devil offer Jesus if He worshipped him? What did Jesus say? v7-8

What did the devil ask Jesus to do? What did Jesus say? v9

FIRST TEMPTATION

THE
DEVIL SAID:

"If you are God's Son order this stone to turn into bread."

JESUS REPLIED:

"Man shall not live on bread alone."

Read Deuteronomy 8:3

WE LEARN:

Read the Bible
Learn God's word.



SECOND TEMPTATION

THE
DEVIL SAID:

"I will give you power and wealth if you worship me."

JESUS REPLIED:

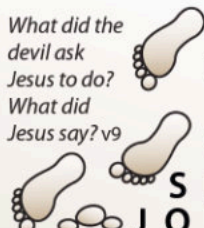
"Worship the Lord your God and serve only Him."

Read Deuteronomy 6:13

WE LEARN:

Put God first
Worship only Him.

①



T W L D G
R O G L O R Y L O
I B A P T I S E D
V O F O O T H D
S E R V E B T I
J O R D A N J E G



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

JESUS • BAPTISED • RIVER • JORDAN • HOLY SPIRIT • LED
WILDERNESS • DESERT • FORTY DAYS • HUNGRY • DEVIL
TEMPTATION • STONE • BREAD • WRITTEN • SON • WORLD
KINGDOMS • GLORY • WORSHIP • SERVE • GOD • HIGH
JERUSALEM • TEMPLE • SON • JUMP • DOWN • LIFT • FOOT • LORD • TEST • LENT

THIRD TEMPTATION

THE
DEVIL SAID:

"If you are God's Son throw yourself down, the scriptures say God will take care of you."

JESUS REPLIED:

"Do not put the Lord your God to the test."

Read Deuteronomy 6:16

WE LEARN:

God cares, trust
Him do not test Him.



Notice of Revision of the Church Electoral Roll for the Parish of Monks Risborough

This notice is applicable to persons not already on the church electoral roll and wishing to enrol, and those who are currently on the roll who wish to be removed from it. If you are already on the electoral roll and wish to remain on it, you do not need to do anything.

The church electoral roll for the parish of Monks Risborough will be revised by the Parochial Church Council beginning on 19th February 2026 and ending on 4th March 2026.

Under the Church Representation Rules any lay persons are entitled to have their names entered on the roll if the person is:

- (a) is baptised,
- (b) is aged 16 or over, and
- (c) has made one of the following three declarations and duly applied for enrolment.

The first declaration is that the person is a member of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with it and is resident in the parish.

The second declaration is that the person is a member of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with it, is not resident in the parish, but has habitually attended public worship in the parish during the preceding six months.

The third declaration is that the person is a member in good standing of a Church which is not in communion with the Church of England but subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and is also a member of the Church of England and has habitually attended public worship in the parish during the preceding six months.

Application Forms for enrolment will be available in the church porch or by email at **electoralroll@stdunstanschurch.com**.

For any further enquiries, please contact Caroline Godden on 01844 274771 or at **electoralroll@stdunstanschurch.com**.

Applications must be received by 4th March.

The Annual Meeting of Parishioners and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting will take place on Sunday 22nd March, at approximately 3.45pm, in St Dunstan's Church. The meetings will be preceded by a 3.00 pm service of Evensong.

MONKS RISBOROUGH "POP UP"



SHOWING FILMS ON

Saturday 21st February at 6.00 pm

Saturday 7th March 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

Jamadar

Easter Lilies in Memory of a Loved One



St Dunstan's Church is once again offering the opportunity for parishioners to donate the cost of an Easter lily as part of an arrangement in memory of a loved one. If you would like to take part, please write your name and the person(s) whom you wish to remember, on the list in the Church or contact Jenny Masterton-Smith on 01844 273538 or Gwen Miles on 01844 345230.

To make your donation, please put your contribution into a blue gift aid envelope and write "Easter Lily" on it (with your name and address on, if you are a taxpayer). Please put the envelope into the wooden chest on the pillar or hand it to Peter Godden.

Hooray for Play Day!

St Dunstan's Church Monks Risborough

Tuesday 17th February 10am - 12noon



Join us for a story, a variety of crafts, activities and singing.

Free, no need to register. For all ages up to 11.

Children to be accompanied by an adult.

Snacks and refreshments provided.

Tea and coffee for adults.

Winnie the Pooh and Lent 2026

Remember the Winnie the Pooh stories? And Kanga's insistence on Baby Roo's taking his Strengthening Medicine? It's 'really quite a nice taste when you get used to it', she explained, although I'm not convinced Baby Roo always agreed.

It can be helpful to think of Lent as a sort of medicine; an opportunity to strengthen us in the things that are good, rein in other facets of our personality, and reset the compass to the true North of following Jesus. A Spring-clean of the soul, if you like.

Baby Roo (and Piglet on the one occasion he was subject to it) found Strengthening Medicine not to their liking, and we may groan inwardly at the thought of 'giving up something for Lent'. Think of what lies behind this 'giving up'. It's so that we may be strengthened, our character refined, our prejudices examined, our junk thrown overboard, and we may come to Passiontide and Easter more fit to walk the way of the Cross, and rise in new life with Jesus at His Resurrection.

Nor is Lent just a case of giving up chocolate. One year I gave up Facebook for Lent, having spent far too much time scrolling through it each day. It freed me to do other, more constructive things. And instead of giving up, why not take up something you've been meaning to do but never got round to; something life-affirming, something good for God.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which this year falls on 18th February. Many Christians go public with their intention to keep a good Lent by being 'ashed' - the sign of the Cross made on the forehead in a mixture of ash and holy oil at a special service that day. The ash is usually the burnt remains of the palm crosses from last year. Having been ashed, the intention of the 40 days of Lent is to maintain a steady course closer to God, symbolised by the giving up of something - like chocolate - which has a hold on us. We walk with Jesus on the way to the Cross, mindful of the 'riches of God's kindness, forbearance and patience' as St Paul has it, and mindful too of Jesus' choice of the Cross as a way for us to enter those riches more fully.

And to face the immensity of that sacrifice, and the immensity of God's riches made available to us in Jesus, we need all the Strengthening Medicine we can get!

Thought for the month

During a great storm, a doctor in a rural area was called to go several miles into the country to visit a sick child. It was late in the day and the weather was bad, with snow falling so quickly that he could hardly see the road. He was worried he might not get to his destination. He reached a remote house and the owner telephoned to the next house along the road, asking them to ensure that a light was on outside the house. When the doctor reached that house, the owner did the same and eventually the doctor arrived at the house where he was needed.

Is not this a picture of the Christian life? By the way we live, we can each let our light of faith shine so that others can find Jesus who is the Light of the World.

DIARY DATES FOR FEBRUARY AND MARCH

February

4th Women's Institute - Whitecross Hall 1.45 pm (Page 27)
4th PR Heritage Society - Wades Centre 7.30 pm (Page 27)
12th Fellowship Group - Church Hall 11.15 am (Page 10)
17th Play Day - Church Hall 10.00 am (Page 16)
18th Friendship Group - Church Hall 2.00 pm (Page 11)
18th MR Horticultural Society - Church Hall 7.30 pm (Page 27)
20th Parish Prayer Group - Church Hall 9.00 am (Page 9)
21st Pop Up Cinema - St Dunstan's 6.00 pm (Page 15)
25th Walking Group - Burton Lane 9.30 am (Page 10)
26th Knitting Group - Church Hall 2.00 pm (Page 10)

March

4th Women's Institute - Whitecross Hall 1.45 pm (Page 27)
4th PR Heritage Society - Wades Centre 7.30 pm (Page 27)
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18th Friendship Group - Church Hall 2.00 pm (Page 11)
18th MR Horticultural Society - Church Hall 7.30 pm (Page 27)
20th Parish Prayer Group - Church Hall 9.00 am (Page 9)
25th Walking Group - Burton Lane 9.30 am (Page 10)
26th Knitting Group - Church Hall 2.00 pm (Page 10)



Ladies' Breakfast

The next Ladies Breakfast will be on **Saturday 7th March at 9.00 am in St Mary's Hall**. All are welcome but please let Rose Williams know if you are coming. (01844 274225 or rosewilliamspp@yahoo.co.uk) Our speaker will be the new Rector of St Mary's, Steve Benoy.

Men's Breakfast

The next men's breakfast will be on **14th March at 8.45am in the St Mary's Church Hall**. 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.

Recycled Greetings Cards

A Big Thank You!

By the middle of December, together we reached the hoped-for target of £1,000 from donations for the recycled cards, including many Christmas Cards sold at the Advent Fair in church. A great achievement since they have only been available since last Easter!

So, a BIG thank you to those who have given me their old cards to recycle and to those who have bought them. I already have several hundred cards to keep me busy during the coming weeks! Some of them may not be able to be re-used. For example if they are too big for me to cut to the size of the blank cards. But a vast majority are suitable.

There is a good range of recycled greetings cards available in St Dunstan's Church during the week as well as on Sundays. So, whether or not you have already done so, do please drop by and have a look. If you see any you like, there is a box for donations. There is also a box in the church porch if you have any old cards you wish to donate. Or, donations of money and, or, cards can be delivered to our home at 9 Westmead. Let's see how much more money we can raise during this year for the Church Organ Fund which needs a great deal of work to ensure it is at its best, not just for Sunday Services, but also for funerals and weddings. THANK YOU!

Canon Rob

**Final copy date for next *Newsletter*
is
10th March 2026**

Please give copy to one of the following:

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The next Newsletter will be issued from 28th March 2026

I do like to stroll along the Prom, Prom, Prom

Edwin Rye is a long-standing member of St Dunstan's congregation, along with his wife Pamela, who sadly died in 2023, a familiar figure in the front pew on Sunday mornings. He's also known to us as a Gardener's World Gardener of the Year, runs the spectacular plant stall on Risborough market, and gives talks on horticulture to organisations far and wide.

One of the other strings to his bow (excuse the pun - I will try to avoid any more) is his passion for the Proms. He has been a 'prommer' since 1965, when Sir Adrian Boult was conductor, and has gone at least twice a week every season ever since.

At £8.00 per ticket it is, says Edwin, 'a fabulous way to hear world class music at a very affordable price. All you have to do is stand up to listen'.

The Proms concerts were founded in 1895 by impresario Robert Newman, who wanted to reach a wider audience by making classical concerts more informal, and by keeping ticket prices low, especially for those standing in the arena. He offered Henry Wood the conductorship of a permanent orchestra at Queen's Hall. The BBC have been running and broadcasting the proms season since 1927, moving to the Albert Hall after Queen's Hall was bombed in 1941. Under the baton of such luminaries as Sir Malcolm Sargent and Sir John Barbirolli the concerts are an institution, and the world's top conductors, orchestras and musicians dazzle audiences.

'I first went with Aylesbury Young Conservatives' Edwin tells me. 'The arena section of the Albert Hall has 1000 places, standing only - but standing is easy for me, because I do it on the plant stall!'

'You queue on the day and you're always running into people you've seen before. I try to get on the front row in the arena, and to do that you have to queue early, but we help each other out... everybody is very considerate - you can leave your spot to go to the loo and no-one will take it. If someone doesn't know the rules a steward will sort it out. It's all very civilised.'

'The season lasts from July to September. I love Handel, Beethoven, Verdi - but especially Wagner, and The Ring Cycle in particular. I remember there was a bit of a fuss when they started putting 'modern' stuff in the programme - jazz, the Beatles and so on. But why not?'

Who are his favourite performers? He goes quiet... he's finding it hard to choose. Some of the names that emerge are Bryn Terfel, Daniel Barenboim, Petroc Trelawney, Martha Argerich, Angel Blue, Angela Gheorghiu, Simon Rattle.

The Last Night is a miracle of understated politeness. Football crowds could learn a lot. Edwin says 'if you've been to a minimum of five concerts during the season - you keep your tickets to prove it - you are automatically eligible to advance book two standing tickets for the last night, and they arrive in the post the week of the concert. If you want to buy seated tickets you have to go in a ballot. The last night has an incredible atmosphere. Around 64 million people watch around the world!'

He's had a special honour too. 'For each last night a prommer is selected to present a gift to the soprano who has sung Rule Britannia and because I had been going for so long they asked me to do it. I gave a glass paperweight in the shape of the Albert Hall – and a kiss – to Angel Blue, the wonderful South African soprano.



I had been due to do it and then the Queen died and it was postponed, so I finally did it in 2024. Two other prommers will put a wreath on the statue of Sir Henry Wood, and another presents a gift to the conductor.



I spoke to Edwin about all this last Christmas, before he left to spend his annual few weeks in Capetown, where he and Pam have built a school for local children with funds raised from the plant stall. Now he is raising money to fit the interior and equip it. So do go and buy some begonias. The beat goes on...

Jackie Highe

Renaissance Man



Self-Portrait at 26 52x41cm 1498 Museo del Prado Madrid
Albrecht Dürer 1471-1528

I want to pour out new things which have never been before in the mind of any other man.

So wrote the greatest graphic artist and foremost northern European painter of the Renaissance: Albrecht Dürer. One of three surviving sons from eighteen children born to a Nuremberg goldsmith and his wife, he had a relentlessly enquiring mind and would pursue perfection until he was ill with exhaustion, as when he trekked to Zeeland in 1521 hoping to see a beached whale. Amongst his lofty patrons were Emperor Maximilian I (1459-1519) and Luther's protector Grand Elector Frederick III of Saxony (1463-1525). He knew all of Luther's writings and he also met Erasmus. In Nuremberg he designed and printed his own illustrated books, the earliest of their kind.

As well as by extensive travels in the Netherlands and Germany 1490-4, Dürer's art was revolutionised by two long sojourns in Italy in 1494 and 1505, where he was the first German artist to study such Italian Renaissance masters as Giovanni Bellini (1430/40-1516) in Venice and Andrea Mantegna (1431-1506) in Mantua; in 1505 he even met the young Titian. His first contact with Italian humanism transformed his treatises, prints and paintings, earning him international admiration and the prestige which he felt was denied him in Germany.

He drew himself often, initially when he was only thirteen, creating the first self-portrait by one so young. He painted himself three times: in 1493 (in the Louvre) 1498 (opposite) and 1500, the latter a Jesus *Doppelgänger* (in Munich.) These are the first independent self-portraits in Europe, unless Van Eyck's 1433 *Man in a Turban* (National Gallery London) is himself.

In this Dürer's second self-portrait we see him as a refined aristocratic gentleman, who had left Germany a humble craftsman. He is dressed in high Venetian fashion, with no artisan painting materials sulling his politely clasped kid-gloved hands. His arms rest on a ledge, a Venetian device borrowed from Giovanni Bellini, which Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) would later use in his *Mona Lisa*. Framed by a tall interior archway, he stands next to a window, under which he has written in German *1498 I have painted myself. I was 26 years old*. Signed *Albrecht Dürer* with his monogram.

That sidelong gaze gives him a haughty reserve, he looks guarded, even shifty, or does he feel uneasy? His long hair is artificially curled: in his earlier self-portrait his lanky hair showed no such coils. A striped silver-tasselled hat is matched with a flamboyant cream jacket dashingly trimmed in black. Gold embroidery adorns the neckline of his finely pleated shirt and a light-brown cloak is held nonchalantly over his left shoulder by a twisted cord at the same angle as his shirt top. Strong verticals and horizontals with the dashing V of his jacket make this a commanding portrait.

Dürer's *chiaroscuro* (light and shade), assimilated from Italian masters, is fused with his German devotion to detail and exactitude. The landscape beyond the window is characteristic of Netherlandish portraits, but this view is an original Alpine scene such as Dürer recorded in many extraordinary water-colours when crossing the Alps three years previously, amongst the first topographical landscapes of their kind.

By devouring and incorporating all the art he saw in Italy Dürer brought the Renaissance to northern Europe, never ceasing to *pour out new things*.

Susanne Carr

Autumn Clearing at Whiteleaf

September work at Whiteleaf transitions from Summer into Autumn. Whilst we started our regular brush cutting and raking, we also finished some late summer tasks.

We pulled the last of the invasive 'golden rod' from the slope, putting them into bin bags and disposing of them on the site away from where they can shed their seeds (obviously taking them out of the bin bags first!).

We also cleared away dens made in the woods during the school holidays, putting the wood back into our dead hedges to help delineate the site boundaries and provide a habitat for wildlife during the coming colder months.

We did our final clear of the footpaths and mowed the picnic area.

Our October work party was attended by 33 volunteers, almost a record! This is when we really got going with our brush cutting, having 6 brave souls cutting the grassland on both Whiteleaf and Brush Hill before 9.30am. Along with raking up the cuttings, the rest of the group also checked the Brush Hill boundaries in preparation for the sheep arriving.

On both sites we used tree poppers to pull up young saplings (blackthorn, hawthorn, cotoneaster) by the roots to help keep their spread in check.

Our local flock of Herdwick sheep arrived on Brush Hill during October and stayed until the end of November. This is called 'conservation grazing' as they help to keep the grassland in check and encourage wildflowers. Our local volunteers visit them each day to check on their well-being.

Along with more brush cutting in November, we had a small group working to clear the cross-ridge dyke, a prehistoric feature that can be seen as a distinct dip in the Ridgeway path about 100m from the gates onto Whiteleaf hill. We clear the dyke of undergrowth to maintain its distinct appearance, but it was originally a large bank and a ditch which has long been filled in over the years.

We also continued work started earlier in the year to replace the wooden sleepers that edge the Whiteleaf car park. This is heavy work so is being tackled in stages. You may have noticed that the rotten wood is gradually being replaced. We use wood from trees that have already been cut down across the site.

In December we began tackling a large area of invasive scrub right at the bottom of Whiteleaf hill. We haven't worked in this area for some time. It is difficult to access and will take some time to clear, but will stop the woodland at the base of the hill from encroaching on the grassland.

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

Why Is Net Zero So Difficult?

To begin to answer this question, we need to go back to the baby boomer years of the 1940s, 50s, 60s and 70s. Our postwar governments were determined to give us a modern, reliable and affordable electricity generation and distribution system. This was to be based mainly on coal fired power stations. The energy was to be distributed using a very high voltage network using massive pylons, called the “Supergrid”. The coal fired power stations were situated close to the coal fields and on large rivers, which could be used both for transport and cooling water. In practice this meant that most of these stations were situated in Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire while the network distributed the energy to the industrial complexes of the west midlands, the North East and the North West as well as to the major centres of population.

Jump forward half a century and the coal mines are gone, the coal fired stations are worn out and closed, gas is the cheapest of the fossil fuels, a lot of heavy industry has gone and population is shifting southwards. We are moving rapidly towards renewable generation in the form of wind and solar power. This, of course, raises its



own problems, mainly because of the intermittent nature of power availability. Intermittency is quantified by the term capacity factor, which is a measure of the actual annual energy generated compared to what could have been generated if the system worked at full power all the time. We all know that the wind does not always blow and the sun does not always shine and never at night. Averaged over a year, the available renewable energy varies between one third of maximum rating for offshore wind power and one tenth for solar. This means that, theoretically, we must install three times as many wind turbines as we require

offshore and ten times as many solar panels onshore. The next issue is that, unlike gas, storage of large amounts of electrical energy is difficult. This is best illustrated by the limited range of all electric cars compared to petrol cars. If the whole of the UK were to be powered from its 2025 installed battery capacity, we would be lucky to last for fifteen minutes. In practice we rely on importing energy via a number of cables running from our European neighbours based on the assumption that they will have electricity to spare and on our remaining gas power plants.

The next hangover from the baby boomer years is that our network was designed to get its electricity from near the coalfields, whereas wind power is concentrated in the shallow waters off our east coast and in Scotland, solar power is being installed mainly in the farmlands of the south east. Neither of these locations has access to the Supergrid. This means that we will need to rewire our countryside if we are to benefit from renewable energy. We will also need to rewire our towns and cities if everyone is to have a heat pump, an electric cooker and an electric car but this is another topic altogether.

Brian Highe



Update January 2026

A Happy New Year to you all. 2025 was a year of change for the Princes Centre. With the retirement of our General Manager Kim, the trustees changed the structure of the management of the Centres. There have been staff upgrades and our new Day Centre Managers, here and in Bourne End, have brought fresh ideas. Our Finance Officer, Julia, has had her role extended and is now our Business Manager. The Friday community bingo sessions will now take place fortnightly.

Our Jingers performed once again in St Mary's Church with their Christmas Jumper debut and entertained everyone with their singing. Our MP, Greg Smith, and our Mayor and Chairman, Matt Walsh, attended their performance. It was a great success and enjoyed by all. £154.50p was raised in donations from the audience.

The run up to Christmas was an exciting time for our clients who enjoyed making wreaths, Christmas decorations and calendars in the craft sessions. During the week before Christmas, the clients were treated to Christmas lunch and there was music every day with the Kelybilly Stomp Duo, Sally Blossum [a wonderful singer], the Black Dog Band, and the Hemley Hill Billies who rounded off the week. Some of the more mobile clients enthusiastically danced to the music. Some of the staff dressed up as elves and helped to provide the Christmas atmosphere and one member of staff transformed herself into a snowman and entertained the younger clients with her dancing and singing. There were mince pie workshops all week, so everyone who wished had a chance to learn how to cook mince pies and to enjoy eating them afterwards. There were plenty of other activities too with various games, dancing and entertainment.

Other news:

We held our first car boot sale recently. The event was a great success raising £345.63 with around 100 visitors through our doors. One of our trustees, along with 19 other helpers, organised a collection for the centre outside Tesco's and raised almost £900 once Gift Aid is included. In addition, **the Bird in Hand pub** kindly selected us as their chosen charity for their Christmas Carol event and the **Risborough Santa Run** also generously collected donations for us. Jo, one of our staff, also organised a Christmas raffle.

If you would like to consider having a relative or yourself attending the Centre, a free taster of what we have to offer can be arranged. Please contact Mags on 01844 345105 or Marina on 01628 527024 for our Bourne End Centre.

Maggie Wooster Keyte

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 **stdunstanschurhall@gmail.com** or ring 07942 356245.

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 **4th February** when will be hearing the talk, 'The Ridgeway – Europe's Oldest Trackway?' given by John Tyler.

The **March Meeting on 4th** is yet to be confirmed.

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.

Monks Risborough Horticultural Society

Future Meetings:

St Dunstan's Church Hall, 7.30 pm start.

Wednesday 18th February: John Tyler on 'Life In A Nutshell'.

Wednesday 18th March: Chris Day on 'Successional Planting'.

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

Princes Risborough Area Heritage Society

Future Meetings:

Wednesday 4th February: "Halls of Fame". New film by Dave Rixon celebrating our local halls.

Wednesday 4th March: "Cavershan Park. 930 Years at the Centre of History." A talk by Dr Stephen Goss.

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

Shrove Tuesday – Pancake Day – 9th February



It's odd, really, to think that that confessing one's sins to God should be linked to making pancakes. And yet the beginning of Lent brings us both – Shrove Tuesday is Pancake Day, and is followed by Ash Wednesday, and so Lent begins.

In centuries gone by, the pancakes were made to use up the milk and eggs before the fasting of Lent. More recently, many readers will have childhood memories of the wonder of watching our mothers break an egg, mix it with milk and flour – and out of that gooey mess, to produce a light and delicious pancake.

These days, more of us buy pancake mix, or even ready-made pancakes. It seems we prefer the certainty of ending up with pancakes - to the risk of having made nothing BUT a mess of the kitchen.

In many parishes they used to hold pancake races on the day. Why anyone would want to run around a field while holding a pancake is not clear, but in Olney, Bucks, they have held a pancake race almost every year since 1445.

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