



WELLOW & SHERFIELD ENGLISH

Parish Newsletter

March 2024



Letter from our Vicar, Rector and Area Dean

This year, Easter falls at the end of March – so this month has most of Lent in it as well as Easter. In a certain church marketing newsletter, called the Churches' Advertising Network, a campaign has been developed to attract people to church during the season of Easter. In this public relations campaign, it is suggested that the cross is removed from the altar. According to the author, a survey has revealed that the cross is one of those symbols that the new generation of churchgoers considered too "churchy". One minister interviewed for the campaign gave wholehearted endorsement: "We are going to attempt to concentrate on the resurrection, and not the death, of Jesus."

Easter without the cross! Rather an interesting thought. Is it possible to have resurrection without crucifixion? No. It distorts the entire gospel if crucifixion is separated from resurrection. The road to the empty tomb will forever pass by

a cross. The one who is raised from the dead is none other than the crucified Christ. Easter without a cross is a hoax.

Good Friday (29th March) remembers the time that Christ spent on the cross. If you see only the happy ending of a movie, everyone who saw it from the start is elated, but you go away saying "So they were all hugging each other? So what?" But if you see the beginning and the middle part, with all the suspense and grief, you understand what the characters overcame, and the happy ending is all the happier. So to me, attending the Easter services without attending Holy Week services is like watching the happy ending of the movie without seeing the middle – you only rob yourself of joy. For the joy, join others to celebrate the Resurrection on Easter Day.

Yours, James

Revd James Pitkin - jamespitkin@priest.com

Letter from Sara-Jane Stevens

Hello all. Thank you for the warm welcome I have received into the Thorngate & Blackwater Benefice. BoB and I look forward to settling in at the Vicarage in West Wellow and getting to know you all. Do say hello if you see me about.

So, a little about me ... I was born in Dublin a long time ago and moved to the UK when I was 12, growing up on the Isle of Wight. I became a Christian in my teens, and with guitar in one hand and Bible in the other joined my friends in starting a youth church and outreach in Newport. Those wonderful teenage years when you believe you can do anything!

After moving to Southampton for university I worshipped at Above Bar Church for fifteen years, which is where I met my soon-to-be-husband, BoB. From there we spent many formative years larking about on a farm in Lockerley. I started a wonderful career in Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service, where I served for over sixteen years, only resigning my post to step into full-time ministry.

I was ordained at Chichester Cathedral in May 2015 and priested just less than a year later. I began my ministry as curate at St Matthew's Church in Worthing for 3½ years, including one Christmas where I was dressed as a Christingle!

I then spent a little over five years as Priest-in-Charge in the Sullington and Thakeham with Warminghurst Benefice on the South Downs, two quite different rural parishes united in one goal, to 'Love God and Love our Neighbour'. We did this through a wide variety of different church services and a lot of tea and cake, through Breakfast Fellowships, Home Groups, Messy Church, Muddy Church and Flower Festivals.

Moving back to Hampshire is exciting. We are keen to discover the new ways God will use us here, with James and the team, amongst strangely familiar village names. I look forward to joining you all in prayer and fellowship, growing our church families and spreading God's love to our communities. But you will need to remind me of your name when we meet, at least for the first few months.

Letters from Churchwardens

From Julia Noble, St Leonard's, Sherfield English

We have just spent a few days in Shropshire visiting my niece at university and we attended a church for their "all ages" morning prayer service. Their vicar was on maternity leave having had a baby recently, named Gabriel, and a Churchwarden led the service saying that he was rather out of his "comfort zone" doing so. Children played quite quietly in front of him with the toys provided but assisting him when asked. The congregation joined in embracing the "new" style of service and everyone was joyful despite it being Lent.

Then he read out a message from their vicar's husband to say that Gabriel had died a few nights before, not being able to overcome the obstacles which he had been dealt. The congregation wiped tears from their eyes, and we all prayed for their family. I cannot imagine how that must feel, joy of a birth followed too soon by a death. And yet that is what we, as Christians, base our faith on: we have the joy of Christmas and then the sadness of the crucifixion at Easter. You cannot have one without the other, life and death. We must find comfort that their faith will help them, as ours helps us, and we in turn help each other.

From Roy Perry, St Margaret's, Wellow

A new chapter for St Margaret's has opened with our Welcome to Sara-Jane at a packed and uplifting service in St Margaret's on 22nd February. I am sure we all hope she and BoB will be very happy living here in Wellow. My thanks to all who worked so hard for the service, especially the choir and volunteer caterers, but not to forget Roger Venning who did sterling work as car park attendant. It was also wonderful to see and hear Keith Tomkinson back on the organ after his hospitalisation. Real music beats canned recordings any time.

St Margaret's Services and Events

St Margaret's Services, Readers and Sidespersons for March 2024

March 2024	Reader 1	Reader 2	Sidesperson
3rd Holy Communion 9.15 a.m.	Jonathan Cooper	Sue Amey	Sheila Scott
10th Mothering Sunday Holy Communion 9.15 a.m.	John Parr	Rose Forward	John Parr
17th Holy Communion 9.15 a.m.	Margery Thomas	Carl Donnelly	Margery Thomas
24th Palm Sunday Holy Communion 8.15 a.m. Matins 9.15 a.m.	Paul Newby	Sue Harder	Paul Newby
Monday 25th March Simple Communion 7.00 p.m.			
31st March Easter Holy Communion 9.15 a.m.	Ann Jarrett	Roy Perry	Ann Jarrett

Tuesday 19th March, 7.00 p.m., the Lent course on "Communion through the Ages" comes to St Margaret's.

Full details of the whole programme (otherwise on Thursday evenings, 7th, 14th and 28th March at various churches in the Benefice) are in the Thorngate and Blackwater *Weekly News and Notices* and circulated separately.

Every week in the Church Rooms (Transport can be arranged if needed)

Seasonal Lunch, Tuesday from 12 noon

Coffee and Chat, Thursday from 10.30 a.m.

**Diary date! The "Annual" Wellow Lecture will be back, on Saturday 13th April, at 7.00 for 7.30 p.m. in Wellow Village Hall
Dr Matthew J C Thomas will speak on *From Roadside to Recovery: the inside story of air ambulances***

From Peter Castle [Methodist Local Pastor]: "Reflections" service at Canada Common Chapel (West Wellow, SO51 6DH)
Maundy Thursday 28th March, 1.00 p.m. : Reflections on Celebration. (Contact pandccastle@hotmail.co.uk for further info)

St Leonard's Services and Events

3rd March – Holy Communion (James Pitkin) **10th March** – Morning Prayer "Mothering Sunday" (Julia Noble)
17th March – Family Service "Easter" (James Pitkin) **24th March** – Morning Prayer "Palm Sunday" (Clare Durham)
(7.00 p.m.) Wednesday in Holy Week 27th March – Simple Communion **(7.00 p.m.)**
Easter Sunday 31st March – Holy Communion **7th April** – Holy Communion (James Pitkin)
[All services are in St Leonard's at 11.00 a.m. unless stated otherwise]

Saturday 2nd March, 10.30 a.m. to 12 noon – Coffee Morning in St Leonard's Church

Friday 8th March, All-female bellringing team* celebrating "International Women's Day"

Saturday 16th March, 12 noon to 2 p.m., Community Lent Lunch in aid of UNICEF

Wednesday 20th March, PCC Meeting, 7.00 p.m.

Saturday 6th April, 10.30 a.m. to 12 noon – Coffee Morning in St Leonard's Church

Saturday 20th April, 6 p.m., Quiz Evening

* Other bellringing events throughout the year include four quarter peals, and ringing a 'touch' for every bellringer.

Lectionary Listings for use in both Churches

Date	Sunday	Old Testament Reading	Psalm	New Testament	Gospel
3 Mar	Lent 3	Exodus 20:1-17	Psalm 19	1 Corinthians 1:18-25	John 2:13-22
10 Mar	Lent 4	Numbers 21:4-9	Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22	Ephesians 2:1-10	John 3:14-2
17 Mar	Lent 5	Jeremiah 31:31-34	Psalm 51:1-12	Hebrews 5:5-10	John 12:20-33
24 Mar	Palm Sunday	Isaiah 50:4-9a	Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29	Philippians 2:5-11	Mark 11:1-11
31 Mar	Easter	Acts 10:34-43/ Acts 10:34-43 Isaiah 25:6-9 here OR	Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24	1 Corinthians 15:1-11/ Acts 10:34-43	Mark 16:1-8
7 Apr	Easter 2	Acts 4:32-35 as NT	Psalm 133	1 John 1:1-2:2/ Acts 4:32-35	John 20:19-31

In case of ambiguity, Readers should not hesitate to consult the Celebrant to check which variant is required.

St Margaret's Church, East with West Wellow and St Leonard's Church, Sherfield English

<https://www.stmargaretswellow.co.uk/>

<https://www.sherfieldenglish.org.uk/st-leonards-church>

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