

# Semington



Designed by

Megar Yr 6

Vicar: Revd. Stephen Ball

22 Warren Road

Staverton, Trowbridge

BA14 8UZ

Tel. 01225 774903



December

2014

# Semington Diary



## December 2014

1st	Monday	WI Skittles	7.30pm	Village Hall
2nd	Tuesday	SEM B Ladies	8pm	Village Hall
4th	December	Book Club	7.30pm	Somerset Arms
5th	Friday	SEM B Men	8pm	Village Hall
6th	Saturday	Cardiff Shopping	8.30am	Village Hall
		Books & Bacon	Noon	Village Hall
7th	Sunday	Xmas Lights Switch-on	6pm	Village Square
		Semingtones Sing along		
9th	Tuesday	SEM A Ladies	8pm	Village Hall
10th	Wednesday	ANGELS Ladies	8pm	Village Hall
11th	Thursday	SEM WI meeting	7pm	Village Hall
12th	Friday	SEM A Men	8pm	Village Hall
13th	Saturday	Senior's Party	7pm	Village Hall
14th	Sunday	Xmas Quiz	7.30pm	Village Hall
15th	Monday	Xmas Bingo	8pm	Village Hall
17th	Wednesday	SEM Parish Council	8pm	Village Hall
18th	Thursday	Xmas Draw	11.30am	Village Hall
25th	Thursday	Christmas Day	CLOSED	Village Hall
26th	Friday	Boxing day-Open	12-2.30pm	Village Hall
28th	Sunday	Lounge Quiz	8pm	Village Hall
31st	Wednesday	NEW YEAR'S EVE	8.30pm-1am	Village Hall

## January 2015

1st	Thursday	Hot Rolls	12-2.30pm	Village Hall
14th	Wednesday	SEM Parish Council	8pm	Village Hall
18th	Sunday	Quiz	7.30pm	Village Hall
31st	Saturday	Food Night	8pm	Village Hall

### **Skittles events in January all at 8pm in the Village Hall:**

6th	Tuesday	SEM A Ladies		
7th	Wednesday	ANGELS Ladies		
9th	Friday	SEM B Men		
13th	Tuesday	SEM B Ladies		
16th	Friday	SEM B Men		
20th	Tuesday	SEM A Ladies		
22nd	Thursday	Steeple Ashton Men		
23rd	Friday	SEM B Men		
27th	Tuesday	SEM B Ladies		
29th	Thursday	Steeple Ashton Men		
30th	Friday	SEM A Men		

## EVERY WEEK IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Bingo	Monday	7.30pm
Post Office	Monday & Thursday	9.30am - 12.30
Stompers	Tuesday	2.30 - 3.30pm
Bridge Club	Tuesday & Friday	9.15 - 1pm
Zumba fitness	Wednesday	6.30pm - 7:30pm
Coffee Morning	Thursday	10 - 12noon
Semingtones Choir	Friday	6 - 7:30pm

## MAGAZINE DEADLINES & ADVERTISING

Next deadline is 15th January 2015(!) for the February issue: email Leon at [semparmag1@outlook.com](mailto:semparmag1@outlook.com). For all advertising enquiries, please contact Jeremy on 870708 or email [jez\\_tyler@hotmail.com](mailto:jez_tyler@hotmail.com)

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**31 Club** - for you if you're at senior school. It's a Christian club, we have fun together, find out about God and what he thinks of things that matter to us. If you're interested in coming, contact Bev & Jack Woodward, 870784.

**Bible Study** - 7.45pm, Wednesday 10th December - 17 Highfield Close, 14th January - 31 Pound Close, 28th January, 17 Highfield Close. Everyone welcome - we're all learning together. More information from Jack Woodward 870784.

**Christians in Semington** - Wednesday 3rd December & 7th January, both 7.45 - 9pm, 10 Pound Lane. Join us to pray for our community.

**Join us at Church on Christmas Eve**, 2pm, for a very special Celebration. All ages welcome - there will be a portrayal of the Christmas story with carols and drama. This is informal and particularly appropriate for children. In fact, *we need children of any age to take part in the play*. There will be a few words to learn, and we will have 3 short practises before Christmas Eve. *Please let Bev (870784) or Maureen (871424) know as soon as possible if you'd like to be part of the drama, and we'll sort out practise times.*

**Messy Church** - the next one is on **Saturday 31st January**, 11-1pm in the school hall. There will be more activities, suitable for all ages, and lunch included so that you can forget about cooking for the day. (Suggested donation £1.) Please let us know if you can come so that we'll have enough food! Phone Bev/Jack on 870784 or text 07922 105084. *Please note that Messy Church is for all ages, but children must bring an adult.*

**There is still a vacancy for a Secretary and Treasurer for Semington Village Hall, as from 1st January 2015. Due to Retirement. Details available from Pete Vooght.  
Tel 01380 870665. (Secretary/Treasurer).**

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### Semington WI November Meeting.

On Thursday November 13<sup>th</sup> the members of Semington WI met together for a Harvest at Home Evening, when we brought a supper to share comprising of a home grown, home produced, or locally sourced and home cooked selection of delicious foods. The spread was imaginative and very impressive, well done Semington ladies! I planned a quiz and brought Autumn poems, so did other members of the group.

Next month is an open meeting when we invite friends of Semington WI, and interested villagers to join us on December 11<sup>th</sup> in the village hall, at 7.30 to hear Steve Williams talk about "A Soldier's Life in the Trenches". A small entrance fee will give you an interesting evening with good company, and refreshments. There will also be a raffle.

**Carole Ball**

Many thanks to the congregation at St George's Church and Semington residents for giving their Harvest Festival contributions to the Melksham Foodbank once again. The



Foodbank really appreciates your continued support so, on behalf of all the clients and the team from Melksham Family of Churches – thank you. If you want to see what items to donate, please look at the notice in the church porch or contact me. Also contact me if you would like to help pack boxes. We are on Facebook and our website is [www.melkshamfoodbank.org.uk](http://www.melkshamfoodbank.org.uk), where you can find out what items we are most in need of and what we have in abundance. We always need strong cardboard boxes – the ideal size is on the website under Notices. Thank you.

**Julia Wade 01380 870137**

### Trowbridge Area Community Link Scheme - Volunteer Drivers Needed

We urgently need more volunteer drivers to help in our work with the local community, mainly driving clients to medical appointments. Volunteer drivers use their own vehicles and a mileage allowance is paid to help towards the cost of fuel. The Scheme has been in existence for more than 15 years and the aim of the Scheme is to "help people in need in a personal and friendly way". It provides its services to residents of Trowbridge and surrounding villages. Volunteer drivers should have a few hours to spare each week, and, most importantly, a kind and thoughtful approach towards those who need a little extra support in order to maintain their independence.

**If you are interested in becoming a volunteer driver, please ring 07969 347042 at any time and, if necessary, leave a message.**

**Sue Holt**



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## **Parish Council (PC) Edited Minutes: 19th November 2014**

**Neighbourhood Policing.** Cllr. Robinson reported that there had been a road traffic collision recently at the junction of St Georges Road and High Street.

### **Planning.**

14/07713/FUL 51 Littlemarsh WITHDRAWN: Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of replacement dwelling with detached double garage.

14/07757/FUL 15 Church Street APPROVED: Side extension to ground and first floors.

14/09318/ADV Littleton R'dabout PENDING: 4 free standing non illuminated sponsorship signs.

*The PC has no objections to the following 3 planning applications:*

14/10176/FUL 51 Little Marsh NEW: Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of replacement dwelling with detached single garage. (Resubmission of 14/07713/FUL)

14/09817/FUL 545 Canal Bridge NEW: Demolition of existing single storey extension, erection of a two storey extension, garage and associated works.

14/10293/FUL Aidan's Field Devizes Road NEW: Extend existing large barn and construction of a new detached barn. Improvements to existing vehicular access.

The PC was advised that the following planning application had been registered with Wiltshire Council and that the detailed plans would be received over the next few days:

14/10797/FUL Greenacres Mobile Park Comments by 19/12/14: Change of use of agricultural land to create 7 additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches with associated ancillary development.

The PC would request Cllr. Seed to 'call in' this application. The PC agreed to convene an Extraordinary Parish Council or an Ordinary Parish Council meeting, on 17th December 2014, to discuss this planning application. Cllr. Scott reported that there had been a consultation meeting held at Melksham, attended by Wiltshire councillors and other interested parties to discuss a possible large scale development between Semington and the River Avon centred on the Wilts and Berks Canal. He understood that some seven hundred properties could be built and that the cost of the development totalled some £30m. The Clerk was asked to contact Cllr. Seed to seek more details and to enquire why Semington Parish Council had not been informed of this meeting or advised regarding this possible development.

### **Finance. Full report available on request**

#### **World War 1 Commemorations/Semington War Memorial.**

Cllr. Rimmer stated that he had now purchased a stone plaque (Memorial Stone) for the commemorative oak from James Long (Masons) and that its cost was £220. The Remembrance Service went very well and was well attended.

**Continued on page 19**

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Steve and Sue Connor set the November quiz, which saw a closely contested test of knowledge. There was one round on the 1970s which puzzled most

of the contestants because those who were old enough to have been there were also old enough to have forgotten it, and most (poetic licence?) of the contestants were too young to remember it. Thank you to Steve and Sue for entertaining us on a dull November night. In third place were Tea for Three, in second place were the Infamous Five but the winners were "I told you so", who also showed their global knowledge by the winning the marathon round on flags of the world.

The Infamous Five will be setting the Christmas quiz on the 14th of December. There will be the usual spot prizes on every round. Santa hats and tinsel scarves might earn bonus points. There will be an informal quiz in the lounge on Sunday the 28th, and the January quiz will be on Sunday the 18th. Keep quizzing!

**Julia Wade**

**NOTE: Baby and Toddler Group in the School Hall every Tuesday during term time from 10am - 11.30am.**

### **Shopping online this Christmas?**

Please help St George's School raise money by purchasing items through the website [easyfundraising.org.uk](http://easyfundraising.org.uk). Enter 'Friends of St George's Semington' as the charity you wish to support. Then do your shopping via this website and they will donate money to your chosen charity. There are over 2700 retailers including, John Lewis, Argos, Amazon, eBay, M&S, Debenhams, to name only a few.

With your support it will help the teaching and learning for all children at St George's School now and in the future.

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[SpecialsCoordinator@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:SpecialsCoordinator@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk)

**A lady parked in a field** to watch fireworks on 08/11/2014, when someone damaged her car, removing the front light fitting and snapping the indicator fixture. There was no other attempt to get into the car.

**Kington St Michael** - a vehicle parked on a bridleway was stolen between 08/11/2014 – 10/11/2014. There were no clues for Police to follow up.

**Kington St Michael** (must be a lawless place!) - Someone gained entry into an insecure shed between 09/11/2014-10/11/2014 and stole an old blue bicycle, value under £50. There were no clues for Police to follow up.

**Kington Langley** - Someone stole a passenger side headlight from a parked vehicle between 09/11/2014-10/11/2014; value under £100.

**Beware if you get a phone call** from the 'police station' saying they have arrested a suspect and have reason to think he has been drawing money out of your account. They want to make sure they stop this, and will send a bank official round to collect your bank card so they can replace it. The guy arrives, you hand him your card and he says he will be back with your new card in due course. These people are so plausible! You will never see him again and next time you look, your bank account will have been emptied.

**The 'Anonymous Caller Reject' facility** reported last month does work although OFCOM confirmed it will block incoming calls from NHS and Police. If you are paranoid about this and don't have a mobile, you can buy a pay-as-you-go one for a few pounds. You get the NHS services to change your number to the new one, but remember to keep it switched on and charged up.

**'Good Neighbours Stop Rogue Traders' campaign.** Wiltshire Police are encouraging residents to look out for rogue doorstep traders targeting vulnerable people. These traders often cold call and offer to carry-out repairs which are poor quality, unnecessary and charged at extortionate prices. There are 170,000 such incidents a year so this campaign encourages neighbours, friends, families and carers to join a Nominated Neighbour Scheme. Nominated neighbours give vulnerable residents a post-card for their door with the nominated neighbour's address and phone number, informing cold-calling doorstep traders to speak only with the nominated neighbour on the resident's behalf. If you suspect a rogue trader is at your door then call 999 and do not open the door.

**Christmas is coming** (have you noticed??) and don't the criminals love it, from busy shopping mums (pickpockets), piles of new presents in the backs of cars, back doors left unlocked in the melee, etc. **Above all, have a happy Christmas. Paul Bowyer**



# St. George's C of E Primary School



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***In God's love we cherish, challenge & inspire***

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In early November St. George's held an open morning for prospective parents to come and visit the school with the view to enrolling their children in September. We were delighted to welcome the parents and children who attended, and were very proud of how all our children behaved and engaged enthusiastically in the assembly, resulting in some lovely feedback from our visitors including one remark of: "the children are incredible". The Year 6 children also did a wonderful job of showing the visitors around the school and making them feel welcome.

In memory of those who fought in WW1 and WW2 the children and staff wore poppies with pride and on Remembrance Sunday some of our pupils attended the Remembrance Day Service at St George's Church. After the service the pupils laid a poppy wreath at the memorial cenotaph in the churchyard.



Parent's Evenings are well under way at school and these give the parents and teachers a wonderful opportunity to

share their understanding of the children and thus ensure the most appropriate measures are in place to help the children engage in and enjoy their learning.

The Friends of St George's (FOSG) have been extremely busy fundraising and held a well-attended Fancy Dress Disco at the end of Term 1 and a very successful Jumble Sale in November. Takings at the Disco amounted to £279 and an incredible £805 was raised at the jumble sale – this is the most that has ever been raised from a single event and we are very thankful for everyone's hard work and the wonderful donations that were received! The school are blessed to have such a hard-working FOSG committee and their efforts are very much appreciated.

The school Council have also been fundraising and held a 'funky footwear' day which raised £56 for the 'Big Ted's Day Out' fund at RUH, Bath. They also organised a 'wearing spots' day for BBC Children In Need and it was great fun to see all the spotty outfits brightening up the school!

It's not long until Christmas now and on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December we have our

Christingle Service in St. George's Church at 6:30pm. In addition, the Key Stage 1 children are busy practising for their Christmas Nativity. Members of the community are very welcome to come and watch the afternoon performance of the Nativity at 2 p.m. on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> December in the school hall – if you need help with transport to the school please contact the school office on 01380 870243 and hopefully we will be able to help.

**Gordon Campbell - Head**

### **XMAS EVENT by FOSG (Friends of St George's School)**

**St George's School will be holding their Xmas event at the school from 3.30 - 5.30 on Friday 12th December. The event will include ...Meet Father Christmas; BBQ; games; story time and much more; more details will be displayed around the village nearer the time.**



**Steeple Ashton/Paxcroft Guides**

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**The Guides will be collecting monies towards their Unit Funds**

**Editor's Note:** Apology - Correction to last month's issue. I forgot to mention **Reynolds Cleaning Services** of Semington who also made a generous donation to the War memorial fund. Many thanks.

For our front cover, we asked the pupils at St George's school to design one appropriate for Christmas. There were many wonderful entries and it was hard to pick the right one to use. Finally my wife with her artistic eye picked the one designed by Megan, Year 6. Well done and my thanks to all the children who contributed.

Again, I have had to use my editor's discretion to make everything fit in, so my apologies if it isn't exactly what you wanted. **Have a great Christmas!**

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## WILTSHIRE COUNCIL NEWS FROM JONATHON SEED

As we draw to the end of another year we have the opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved this year and look forward to the challenges ahead. 2014 started with the dreadful and consistent rain that produced such severe flooding in Wiltshire and as the Council Cabinet Member for flooding, I was heavily involved in dealing with both the flooding at the time and the aftermath. For individuals who suffer flooding of their properties, the effects are devastating and last for months. Whatever our place in the flood alleviation process we all must work together to try to prevent future flooding of houses and businesses. This means individuals doing all that they can to protect their own properties as well as Councils at different levels taking measures and investing in plans, schemes and strategies to help prevent flooding. Clearly this is a matter to reflect on and for us all to help those who were flooded in the spring and autumn of this year.

Wiltshire Council, like the rest of our community, recognises the challenging economic climate in which we are operating and a future where we expect central government cuts to our local government funding for years to come. In these circumstances we also need to reflect and to defend all that we have that is positive here in Wiltshire and that means acting to maintain the front line services that our communities and residents care about. There is much good news in this sphere. Our ground breaking campus programme continues to develop apace and we have managed to preserve all of our leisure centres and libraries as well as opening new ones and for longer hours. This is very good news for our residents of all ages ranging from the young people who benefit from free swimming during the school holidays to older members of our community who can access our excellent library service which is often the only extensive source of large print books available to them. We also look forward to Broadband being rolled out to 97% of our county, our roads being put into a better state of repair than most of our neighbours and continued delivery of decent services to the vulnerable members of our community.

So as 2014 draws to a close we can reflect on the troubles, achievements and indeed the commemorations of the year, including the extensive WW1 recognition throughout the County and Country. We also look forward to 2015 as a year when our national Government submits itself for Election in a General Election and where there will be many local challenges to be met. I very much look forward to joining with those who lead in our villages to address the local challenges that arise in Summerham and Seend in 2015.

**In the meantime as your Wiltshire Councillor I would like to wish all those who I have the privilege to represent on Wiltshire Council a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.**

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## **A Hymn on the Nativity of My Saviour**

I sing the birth was born tonight,  
The Author both of life and light:  
The angels so did sound it;  
And like the ravished shepherds said,  
Who saw the light and were afraid,  
Yet searched, and true they found it.

The Son of God, th'eternal King,  
That did us all salvation bring,  
And freed the world from danger;  
He whom the whole world could not take,  
The Lord which heav'n and earth did make,  
Was now laid in a manger.

The Father's wisdom willed it so,  
The Son's obedience knew no "No,"  
Both wills were in one stature;  
And, as that wisdom had decreed,  
The Word was now made flesh indeed,  
And took on Him our nature.

What comfort by Him do we win,  
Who made Himself the price of sin,  
To make us heirs of glory!  
To see this Babe, all innocence,  
A Martyr born in our defence,  
Can man forget this story?

**Ben Jonson**, [1573 – 1637] was first a bricklayer, and then a soldier in Flanders. He became an essayist, and one of the major dramatists and poets of the seventeenth century. **William Scott**

### **GREAT BULKINGTON RAILWAY – BOXING DAY**

The miniature railway will be open for 'diesel' powered train rides for adults and children of all ages on December 26th from 1.30 to 4pm. Hot sausages on sticks and light refreshments will be served. We are on the corner of Mill Lane in Bulkington. There is 1000ft. of railway track, a 40ft. long tunnel and lots of working signals. Toilets and shelter (if it rains) are available in the Village Hall.

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Children Treated*

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DOCTOR OF CHIROPRACTIC  
Registered Member of the  
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## **Edited PC Minutes continued from page 7:**

**Defibrillator.** The PC agreed to obtain a defibrillator from South West Ambulance Service at £1600 (mandatory minimum 4yr rental period) and a heated cabinet at £700. The Village Hall Management Committee had agreed that the defibrillator could be mounted on the Village Hall wall and that they would arrange for the necessary electrical connections to be made. An application should be made to the Area Board for a grant towards the cost of this community asset and Cllr. Bowyer stated that he would make that application on behalf of the PC.

### **Highways/Environment.**

A. The maintenance of the hedge that runs alongside the path next to the Village Hall was discussed by councillors. The Council agreed that an application be made to the Area Board to improve the safety of parishioners using that path, especially at night. It was proposed that the safety measures should include the cutting back of overgrown vegetation and the installation of additional lighting. The PC decided that Lee Swinden be invited to provide a quotation for cutting back the vegetation and that a quotation for installing additional lighting should also be obtained. Cllr. Wade agreed to obtain these quotations and to make the application to the Area Board.

B. Councillors noted that it was intended to obtain a Christmas Tree for the village and to erect this tree on the weekend of 29/30 November. There were two options – a tree from a property at Bromham, although free of charge, would require cutting and transporting, or a tree purchased from Longleat Forestry for £95. Cllr. Wade offered to examine the tree at Bromham at the weekend and a decision would be made thereafter.

**AOB.** Cllr. Scott enquired whether there had been any progress in respect of the report that Littleton Mill was being used as a school. The Clerk stated that the Wiltshire Council Enforcement Officer was investigating this matter and the occupiers of Littleton Mill had been requested to submit a planning application.

**Date of Next Meeting:** next Ordinary PC meeting on 14 January 2015.

### **Paws for Thought - Christmas in 100 words**

God sends an angel to a teenager, Mary. Shocked, “You will be the mother of God’s only son”. Joseph her fiancé is also shocked but assured in an angelic dream, “This is God’s plan”. The Romans want to count everyone. The couple travel to Bethlehem. They arrive late, the inns are full. They find space in a stable. The baby, Jesus, is born; placed in a feeding trough. The shepherds on the hills see a vision of angels singing God’s praise, telling them of the baby and go to see him. Later Wise men bring gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh.

## CATHOLIC NEWS

**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST TROWBRIDGE  
& ST BERNADETTE'S WESTBURY**

**PARISH PRIEST CANON LIAM O'DRISCOLL**

**TELEPHONE 01225 752152      [www.stjohnthebaptist.co.uk](http://www.stjohnthebaptist.co.uk)**

**St John's Sunday Masses** : Saturday (Vigil) 6pm; Sunday 10.30am & 6pm

**Weekday Masses**: Mon: 9am; Tues: 6pm; Wed: 12.10pm; Fri 6pm Sat: 10am; 6pm (Vigil)

**Rosary**: Weekdays before Mass. SVP Fri 6.45pm

**Confessions**: Sat: 10.30-11.15am and 5-5.45pm

**St Bernadette's Sunday Mass** - 9am **Weekday Mass** -Thursday 11 am  
**Confessions/Reconciliation** before Mass and any time on request.

### **THE NEW 300 CLUB 2014**

Subscriptions: £50 annually - £13 quarterly - £4.33 monthly. New members are most welcome to join at any time. Prizes are: £200-£70-£50-£10 -£5 monthly. Information and application form from Francis Geraghty – details below

**SHARING OUR FAITH.** The Group meets in the Parish Centre Trowbridge on Wednesdays from 8-9pm. This is open to anyone wishing to learn more about the Catholic Church.

**SICK AND/OR HOUSEBOUND.** Any catholic who is sick or housebound should let Canon Liam (01225 752152) know as he would be pleased to arrange a visit and bring Holy Communion, if desired.

### **CHRISTMAS BAZAAR**

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December 11.00am in St Augustine's Catholic College, Wingfield Road, Trowbridge. *Stalls – Lunches – Refreshments –Games ; Father Christmas Grotto ; The Grand Draw with Awesome Prizes (£500 Cash, £200 Cash, £100 cash, Case of Wines, Sumptuous Christmas Hamper, Superbly Decorated Exquisite Christmas Cake.)*

**THE 'BEST IN THE WEST' WITH BARGAINS GALORE & FUN-FUN**

### **AN EVENING OF COMMUNITY CAROL SINGING**

Carol Concert in St John's Parish Centre, Trowbridge, Community Singing, Mulled Wine & Mince Pies, Sunday 7th December from 7-9pm. Admission £2.50 on the door. Compere: Denise Drew. Music: Christiana Turner.

**For information on any of the above contact Francis Geraghty 01380 871083 or email: [f.geraghty303@btinternet.com](mailto:f.geraghty303@btinternet.com)**



With the long summer days behind us, it is at this time of year that we begin to prepare for the colder days to come. If you are worrying about Winter Fuel Bills or how to stay healthy and stay out of hospital perhaps we can help. Are you worrying about the possibility of a fall, or thinking of getting a Lifeline? Have you thought about getting online? It is a great way of staying connected with family and friends and feeling less isolated. Be prepared and give me a call for more information on all of these things and more.

**BE PREPARED. ASK ME ABOUT:**

GRANTS FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN FUEL POVERTY

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MONEY MATTERS

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

HOME MAINTENANCE/REPAIRS

For more information please call for a free and confidential chat.

**If we can help you to find the services you need, give us a call on 07541 353430 or email [melkshamgnc@communityfirst.org.uk](mailto:melkshamgnc@communityfirst.org.uk)**



**BOOKCLUB: Meeting on 29th October**

The members discussed *Fallen Skies* by Phillipa Gregory. Joy had recommended the book and read out some research on the author. There were mixed feelings about the book and not everyone had finished it. Those who had thought that the second half was more compelling than the first half and had found it difficult to engage with the characters. Most people felt that she is more successful with her historical novels. The next meeting will be on **Thursday 4 December** in the pub at 7.30 p.m. and a Christmas menu is available if folk would like to have a meal as well. It was agreed that everyone should bring the title and author of a book they would recommend and a quick resume of the plot and on the author.

**Angela Grodzicka 870756**

## **The Canalside Benefice**

**St. Michael and All Angels, Hilperton with St. Mary the Virgin, Whaddon;  
St. George's, Semington;  
St Paul's, Staverton with St. Mary Magdalen, Hilperton Marsh;  
near the Kennet and Avon Canal, within the Dioceses of Salisbury**

Dear Friends,

Christmas is nearly here, though I hardly dare say the words out loud. I cannot think of one single time that I have voiced this reality when the response has been, "Oh I'm so looking forward to it; I am so ready for it". (Ah, maybe there was a super-efficient someone once). Very often one might just as well say, "Heads up folks, the single most busy and pressurised time of the year is approaching". Why then should we be so surprised at a negative response?

My dear old Mum was a genuinely lovely lady but one of the things she could do really well was Christmas pressure. Her particular talent was exerting this on us to participate in perfectly executing her version(s) of Christmas celebration; be it English Christmas, German Christmas or, her favourite, American Christmas. At the same time she was immensely difficult to buy presents for and she would tend tell you if you had it wrong. It was a glorious moment when we didn't. I can't recall the point at which I came to hate Christmas and proceed to unwittingly inflict this negativity on my loved ones, but it happened nevertheless.

Please don't misunderstand; I love the celebration of Jesus' birth and everything that takes place in the church family. It's just what happened at home that was problematic. Even after my Mum passed away this continued; perhaps the source of my pressure was in me after all. So, if it was, I had the power to change it; easier said than done. I made a decision to make the next Christmas the best one ever; to embrace everything that made my family happy and to let the joy of the Christmas story overflow to them. I struggled but it worked, though there were moments. That was only two years ago. Last year was even better and this year, even though I still am aware of my propensity to resist, I am choosing life and a positive attitude. The key, I have discovered, is that I need to actively *do* things to make it work. Now I am looking forward to Christmas more than I ever have since I was a child.

I hope this may be of some encouragement to those who struggle with Christmas pressures. The season is primarily to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ; not to leave us exhausted and broke. Why not make some creative and liberating choices this year, depending on the particular pressures that you experience. Jesus came to this earth to liberate us *to* a relationship with God the Father. If our way of 'celebrating' Christmas does the opposite then it would seem to be at odds with God's purpose. Sadly it is typically human of us to inflict that on ourselves.

So, why not make plans for a more meaningful Christmas as we celebrate God's amazing gift of Jesus. One of the names of Jesus appears in an Old Testament reading we use at Carol Services, "*Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: the virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel*" (Isaiah 7). Immanuel means 'God with us' and that means God with us in Jesus then; God with us by his Spirit now and God with us in every circumstance (both good and bad) in the future. Come and join us to celebrate that reality and let our celebration and the Gift of God to us overflow into our lives to bring liberation and new life in Jesus.

Every blessing for a peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

*Stephen* (Rector) 01225 774903 sb54rev@gmail.com

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## St George's Church, Semington

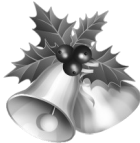
# Christmas in the Village



**Sunday 21st December**

**Carol Service 3pm**

Come and sing traditional Carols  
along with **The Semingtons  
Ladies Choir**



**Christmas Eve**

**Christmas Celebration 2pm**

The Christmas Story told in a short play performed by our village children with familiar carols, suitable for all ages  
Coffee and Mince pies to follow



**Christmas Day**  
**Parish Communion 9.30am**  
All the family welcome



**St. Michael's Hilperton with St. Mary's Whaddon: St. George's, Semington;  
 St. Paul's Staverton with St. Mary Magdalen, Hilperton Marsh;**  
 YOU ARE MOST WELCOME TO JOIN ANY OF THE SERVICES IN THE BENEFICE

**December 2014 & January 2015 Services**

**St. George's Semington**

7th	Dec	9.15am	Parish Communion
14th	Dec	9.15am	Morning Prayer
21st	Dec	3pm	Carol Service
24th	Dec	2pm	Christmas Eve Celebration
25th	Dec	9.30am	Christmas Communion
28th	Dec	9.15am	Together in Worship
4th	Jan	9.15am	Parish Communion
11th	Jan	9.15am	Morning Worship
18th	Jan	9.15am	Methodist Covenant Service
25th	Jan	9.15am	Together in Worship

**St. Michael's Hilperton**

7th	Dec	8am	Holy Communion / 11am Joint Anglican Methodist Service
14th	Dec	9.15am	Parish Communion/ 11am Methodist Service
16th	Dec	7pm	Carol Service
21st	Dec	11am	Together in Worship
24th	Dec	5pm	Crib Service / 8pm First Communion of Christmas
25th	Dec	11am	Family Communion
28th	Dec	9.15am	Holy Communion / 11am Methodist Service
4th	Jan	8am	Holy Communion / 11am Together in Worship
11th	Jan	9.15am	Parish Communion
18th	Jan	11am	Methodist Covenant Service
25th	Jan	9.15am	Parish Communion

**St. Mary Mag Hilperton Marsh**

7th	Dec	11am	Parish Communion
14th	Dec	6pm	Evening Worship
21st	Dec	4pm	Carol Service
24th	Dec	3.30pm	Crib Service
28th	Dec	11am	Parish Communion
4th	Jan	11am	Parish Communion
11th	Jan	6pm	Evening Worship
18th	Jan	4pm	Tea Time Service
25th	Jan	11am	Parish Communion

**St. Mary Whaddon**

14th	Dec	8am	BCP Communion
19th	Dec	6.30pm	Carol Service
11th	Jan	8am	BCP Communion