

**APRIL 2016**  
**SEMINGTON**

**PARISH**



**MAGAZINE**

**Contact Minister for Semington:**

**Revd. Hugh Hoskins**

**42 St. Mary's Close**

**Hilperton Marsh**

**Trowbridge BA14 7PW**

**Tel. 01225 781579**

**Mob. 07710 514808**

*Sir Isaac Newton, discoverer of the principles of gravity, also invented the cat flap*



**APRIL 2016**  
**(in the Village Hall unless stated)**

1st	Fri	Skittles	8pm
7th	Thur	Steeple Ashton Skittles	7.30pm
8th	Fri	Skittles	8pm
12th	Tue	Book Club	8pm Somerset Arms
14th	Thur	WI Meeting	7.30pm
17th	Sun	Quiz Night	7.30pm
21st	Thur	Wiltshire Air Ambulance	At the Coffee morning
27th	Wed	Parish Council Meeting	8pm
28th	Thur	Wiltshire Air Ambulance	At the Coffee morning
29th	Fri	Phoenix Skittles Night	8pm
30th	Sat	Start of Cloth Road Arts	13 High Street

**EVERY WEEK IN THE VILLAGE HALL**  
**(unless otherwise stated)**

Bingo	Monday	7.30pm
Post Office	Monday & Thursday	9.30am - 12.30
Stompers	Tuesday	2.30 - 3.30pm
Bridge Club	Tuesday & Friday	9am - 1pm
Coffee Morning	Thursday	10 - 12noon
Semingtones Choir	Friday	6 - 7.30pm
Baby/Toddler Group	Tuesday	10-11.30am
Zumba fitness	Wednesday	6.15 - 7.05pm
Zumba Beginners	Wednesday	7.15pm

(Zumba at St. George's School)



**DONATIONS REMINDER!**

Have you remembered to drop something into your donation envelope and deliver it to Jack or Bev Woodward? We only survive with your generosity. **Many thanks.**

*If you love life, don't waste time, for time is what life is made of*



## **VILLAGE EVENTS & NEWS**

Christians in Semington - Wednesday 6th April, 7.45-9pm, 9 Somerset Way. Join us to pray for our community.

New "Men About Town" Choir - check out page 17! Led by Sarah-Jane who has singing experience across the board and is a dedicated singer-songwriter - more information at [www.sarah-jane-official.co.uk](http://www.sarah-jane-official.co.uk).

The Cloth Road Arts Week is back again - checkout page 13.

## **EDITOR's COMMENTS**

Welcome to our new Vicar, the Revd. John Rees. John and his partner Anne have written the article on page 5, telling us all something about their background.

I have received emails from a number of residents who want to contribute stories to the magazine and one appears this month (page 11).

**If you have something you would like to contribute for the next edition,, why not drop me a line?**

**Paws For  
thought**



"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

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Joshua 1 verse 9

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St George's School, Semington  
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**Greetings from John and Anne Rees**

Hello everyone. We are excited about joining you in late June to share in the ministry and wider life of the Canalside Benefice communities.

We are not coming from very far away – my current ministry in Rowde and Bromham (which also includes Sandy Lane) is in Devizes Deanery and includes most of the Caen Hill flight of locks. Anne and I have been there since 2010 and it has been our privilege to see the Churches working together more closely as they serve the villages. A key part of this ministry has been work with the two C of E schools. Both Churches have begun to grow spiritually and (particularly in Rowde) numerically too.

Anne teaches two days a week at St Leonards C of E Primary Academy at Blunsdon, near Swindon, where she is RE and Collective Worship co-ordinator. She also does some more local supply work. She has shared in ministry in our Churches as a Lay Pastoral Assistant and Mothers' Union Branch Leader and has recently been commissioned as a Lay Worship Leader – and she supports John in ways that are too numerous to list.

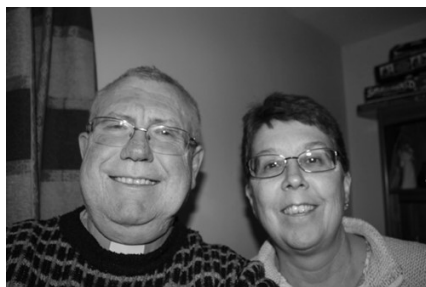
We have two adult children, Tom (23) and Phil (22). Tom lives and works in Devizes and Phil is a postgraduate student at the University of Leicester. We also have a friendly and enthusiastic terrier cross, Frodo, who will love walking along the canal but may miss his paddock at Bromham Rectory!

Prior to moving to Bromham we were in Highworth, near Swindon, where we lived from the time we got married in 1982. We were both involved in ministry there with young people and led a home group. John was Churchwarden before training for ordination part time via STETS in Salisbury between 2003 and 2006 while still working as a Business Development Manager for BT Defence. Once ordained in July 2006 John was NSM Curate responsible for Blunsdon within the same team.

Although I believe much of our previous experience will be helpful as we come to join you, we realise that every community is different. We look forward in sharing together as we discover how the Lord calls us to explore what your Benefice vision "Together in worship and service, depending on Christ" means. I'm sure that as we seek to discern the Lord's will through prayer, reading Scripture and discussing the future together, the ministry we share will be blessed.

With our love and prayers,

**John and Anne.**



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*Your children need your presence more than your presents*

March's quiz was set by Sue and Steve Connor, so many thanks to them. It was a very good quiz, much enjoyed by the 6 teams in attendance.



For the Marathon, teams had to identify a well known building or structure from its photograph. Examples included the Samson and Goliath cranes in Belfast and The Alamo in Texas. The cash prize was won by Team 'Walking Wounded'.

For the main quiz Gerald and Marilyn decided to ring the changes by awarding a prize for each round. If there was a tie, as happened 2 or 3 times, then those teams cut cards for the winner.

At half time 2 teams ('Just the 2 of Us' and 'The Ragged Smocks') were both on 36 points, with several teams not far behind. The lead swung back and forth until the final round, on General Knowledge, when The Ragged Smocks (Brian, Colin, Helen, Jennie and me) just crept ahead of 'Just the 2 of Us' to win by half a point. This was revenge for the previous night at Hilpertons Quiz, where Ernie and Kevin from 'Just the 2 of Us' were in a team who came second, just ahead of 3 of The Ragged Smocks (with Esme and Philip). There were 3 teams from Semington at Hilpertons Quiz, which was another good night.

More people would be very welcome at the quiz. If you are on your own we can always put you in a team. See you there!

**Julia Wade**

**NEXT SEMINGTON QUIZ:**

**SUNDAY 17 APRIL & 15 MAY, 7.30 for 7.45pm start.**

### **MAGAZINE DEADLINES & ADVERTISING**

Next deadline is Friday 22nd April 2016 for the May issue: email Leon, the Editor, at [semparmag1@outlook.com](mailto:semparmag1@outlook.com). For all advertising enquiries, please contact Jeremy on 870708 or [jez\\_tyler@hotmail.com](mailto:jez_tyler@hotmail.com)

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## New Home!

We were delighted to be granted outline planning permission by Wiltshire Council in February 2016 for our proposed new home on land at Outmarsh Farm, Semington. Our new home would bring together our helicopter, aircrew and charity team onto one site for the first time. We are working on the detailed design of our new home and will undertake further public consultation. Information on the public consultation will be announced in due course.

**Kevin Reed, Head of Operations.**  
Wiltshire Air Ambulance

## SEMINGTON VILLAGE FETE 2016

Date: Saturday 2nd July 2016  
Time: 2.00pm  
Place: St George's School Field



A decision about which local charity will benefit from a share of this year's Fete proceeds will be made at the Fete Committee meeting in April. We have received a number of excellent suggestions, but if you wish to propose a local charity please contact Victoria Shackleton (01380 871936) before Tuesday 12th April. Don't forget the Plant Stall when you are potting up this spring!



Donna  
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## LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE

I was feeling rather horrible the other day. The pain in my hip was so bad I couldn't go out for a walk, the news was full of scare-mongering, intolerance and gloom, and I just learned that Hilpertion Herd was soon to be goat-less! I was feeling so bad that I started to laugh in that semi-hysterical way you do when it all gets a bit over-whelming. My stomach muscles contracted rhythmically, I started shaking, I made some weird, snorty noises and started slapping my thigh and anything, or anyone, within reach! My hysterical laughter turned into genuine, heartfelt guffawing of the best kind. "But there's nothing funny!" I screamed through the tears of joy coursing down my face, and, as I snorted again, I laughed even harder: "Most unladylike!"

There's just something about laughing that makes you feel good for no good reason. You don't have to start off with something funny to trigger it, just listening to someone else laughing can make it irresistible. Laughter is contagious, like yawning, only it makes you feel great. It boosts your immune system, reduces pain and stress, helps your heart stay healthy, burns calories and even tones your abs! What more could you ask? Oh yes, it helps improve short-term memory, aids learning, and laughter has even been found to reduce blood sugar spikes following a meal, lower inflammation (C-reactive protein) and raise good cholesterol (HDL) for people with diabetes. I felt so good I fairly frolicked round the fields with the dog afterwards!

So if you fancy banishing the blues and doing something to help you stay healthy, find your sense of fun, re-ignite your sense of the ridiculous and laugh your socks off. Laughter really is the best medicine.

**Nic Walker**



## **BOOKCLUB**

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 12th April at 8.00pm in the Somerset Arms to discuss '**All the Light we Cannot See**' by Anthony Doerr. All welcome.

**Angela Grodzicka 870 756**

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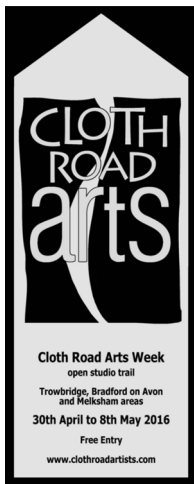
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### Semington WI March Meeting

March saw us having our Annual General Meeting, where we looked back over the last year at all the things that we had done. It was also an opportunity to say thank you to those that had led some of our sessions, made our refreshments, washed and cleared up and to those on the committee. All that were on the committee were re elected and are as follows: Deb Hurn President, Sue Connor Secretary, Julie Hervin Treasurer, Sue Gibbs, Lesley Vooght, Carole Ball, Sue Wilthew Committee Members. We also welcomed two new members Rose and Sue. After the official business we played Hoy (apologies if not spelt correctly) courtesy of Gerald, which saw four of our ladies winning Easter eggs. Our next meeting is on Thursday 14th April at 7.30pm when we will be having a talk by Reverend Hugh Hoskins. All ladies welcome.

**Deb Hurn**



### **CLOTH ROAD ARTS WEEK**

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> APRIL – Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> MAY 2016**

This is the 7<sup>th</sup> event with venues in various villages. It is a **free**, 9 day visual feast celebrating talented local artists and craftspeople, providing you with the opportunity to view exhibitions, meet the artists, participate in workshops and buy from them at reasonable prices. I am very pleased to open my doors, at **13 HIGH STREET**, with an exhibition of hand-painted glassware with **5** other artists joining me.

**Helen Holliday**, from the village, sews and creates practical, decorative home accessories.

**Sylvia Bell**, from the village, works in a range of fabrics and mixed media.

**Ann Haber**, Stamp art using inks, and makes delightful fabric covered novelty cards.

**Meryl Kelsey Masters**, an experienced artist using watercolours, pen, pencil and acrylics.

**Andy Millar**, hand crafts British and topical woods into pens, letter openers, boards, etc.

Everyone will be most welcome. If you would like to have a go, glass painting workshops are on offer.

On behalf of all Cloth Road Artists, I would like to thank Semington Parish Council for their very much appreciated donation and thank you all for your continued support.

**Esme Howard**

*You see much more of your children once they leave home*

## **St. George's C of E Primary School**

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As Spring approaches St George's School has been very busy, with the pupils participating in lots of exciting activities. Saturn Class performed their routine at the West Wiltshire Schools Sports Partnership Dance Festival on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February. The theme was "Dance Through the Ages" and they performed a dance to Le Freak by Chic. They did a superb job and the school are very proud of them. The Year 6's have also been undertaking Bikeability training, with officers from Wiltshire's Road Safety team coming in to teach them how to ride their bikes safely. You may have seen them practicing around the village in the early spring sunshine!



*I don't want to make money. I just want to be wonderful*

We all thoroughly enjoyed World Book Day on 3<sup>rd</sup> March – staff and pupils alike came to school dressed as characters from their favourite books and a fantastic variety of costumes were on display.

We have also had a gymnastics coach in school over the past term who has been working with all three classes; and an exercise challenge by running enthusiast Jim 'Gump' based around exercising every day. The children have enjoyed these sessions.

We would love to see some of you at the Semington Slog on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May. The run is being organised by the Friends of St George's, and will start and finish at the school.

We hope everyone has had a lovely Easter and a relaxing spring break.

**Headteacher: Mr Gordon Campbell**

### **News from the Friends of St George's**

#### **The Semington Slog 10k is on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May.**

You can enter by going online to [entrycentral.com/semingtonslog](http://entrycentral.com/semingtonslog)

We are still looking for people who would be willing to help marshall and support the runners along the route. It would be for a maximum of a couple of hours and would be hugely appreciated. Please let John Adams know via: **FOSGChair@st-George's-Semington.wilts.sch.uk**

On Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March we were enjoying Chocolate Bingo and it was great fun for parents and children.



Thank you to everyone who came along to the Jumble on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March or gave any Jumble. We raised **over £650** towards the new gym bars for the outside area.

The school is still collecting empty ink cartridges which can be turned into money for the school. Therefore, if you have any empty ones please drop them into the school.

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*A painting in a museum hears more ridiculous opinions than anything else*

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## **WILTSHIRE COUNCIL NEWS FROM JONATHON SEED**

There is always something going on in local politics and I try to represent the views of all of our residents proportionally. Sometimes it is difficult to cater for all sides of an argument and it is particular difficult when vociferous local pressure groups on single issues pop up from time to time in the local community. In these cases the intensity of their arguments often reflects the depth of feeling of the campaigners who are determined that their views are listened to above all others. There are also members of our community who may not articulate their opposition to vociferous campaigners because they prefer a quieter representation of their view. In matters of a controversial nature I often take advice from the elected Parish Councils of a village when these issues arise and it is rare for a Parish Council to misrepresent local feelings.

I was recently challenged on my record on the solar farm issue by a local campaign leader and I am very clear on this matter. I took each local solar application on its merits and assessed these applications with the help and guidance of the elected local Parish Councils. I supported those applications where we assessed the impact of development to be as minimal as a development of this nature could be and this support was only given to those applications which had both Parish Council and considerable local support. I also opposed and campaigned against those applications where there was clearly a strong impact on the environment and where the Parish Council and community were also demonstrably opposed to the application. This latter situation was the case in the only solar application in Seend Parish (which I strongly opposed) and the appalling and sprawling Sandridge Vale solar application. On the latter I successfully led opposition at the Council Planning Committee only for this decision to be overturned by the Government Planning Inspector.

On reflection I think our community as a whole can take pride in their pretty sensible and balanced involvement in the solar farm issue although clearly it was not to the satisfaction of the campaigners at either extreme of the argument. Time will show how the wider general public feel about the solar issue but as I drive down Sandridge Hill on a daily basis I do look over and regret the desecration of the lovely Sandridge Vale with its sea of solar panels that we fought so hard to prevent happening.

There is now a new issue which is starting to attract attention from local campaigners and that is fracking. I have grave reservations on the effects that local fracking may have on our environment but, as with solar power generation, the Government is generally supportive of fracking. I would urge residents to become properly informed on this issue as it develops and several of our villages have useful reference pages on fracking on their websites. Bulkington and Steeple Ashton websites have started to lead on this but others are also posting fracking information as it becomes available.

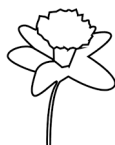
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## **NATURE NOTES**

**Lizette Woodworth Reese** was a late 19<sup>th</sup> century poet and teacher from Baltimore who wrote extensively about the seasons. It would seem from her sonnet, ***April in Town***, that daffodils and rain were as common then in the eastern USA, as they are here and now – although there were daffodils in the village in January this year.

Straight from the east the wind blows sharp with rain,  
That just now drove its wild ranks down the street,  
And westward rushed into the sunset sweet.  
Spouts brawl, boughs drip and cease and drip again,  
Bricks gleam; keen saffron glows each window-pane,  
And every pool beneath the passing feet.  
Innumerable odors fine and fleet  
Are blown this way from blossoming lawn and lane.  
Wet roofs show black against a tender sky;  
The almond bushes in the lean-fenced square,  
Beaten to the walks, show all their draggled white.  
A troop of labourers comes slowly by;  
One bears a daffodil, and seems to bear  
A new-lit candle through the fading light.





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## NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH



If you receive a phone call saying you have won a “Good Citizen Award”, you might be a bit suspicious! They tell you that you have won £8000, but the “organisers” say there is a release fee of £210 which you have to pay to get the money. Nobody would be so daft, surely? There is no genuine ‘Good Citizen Award’ scheme in the UK that operates by cold calling “winners” and asking for an upfront fee to release a prize, so if you receive a call that claims to represent such a scheme, it is a scam. End the phone call – do not give out any personal or financial data.

We have recently had a spate of Door Step peddlers trying to sell poor quality drawings – they use different tactics, some claiming to be poor students, drawings by themselves or a member of their family – all falsehoods. It is illegal to sell door-to-door without a Peddlers Licence. Two people were recently arrested in Melksham for this.

There has been a spate of damage to cars in the village by “keying” – vandals dragging a key or other object along the side of a car causing damage to the paintwork. If you see any mindless individual acting suspiciously ring the police on 999.

We had a report of a bogus caller in Roundponds who claimed to be with the water company . He targeted an elderly lady asking for cash to clean the u-bend under her sink. He managed to get in and dismantled the pipework but did not get any money thankfully.

Holiday time is upon us. Guard your luggage – there’s a story of a couple arriving at an airport, the man guards the luggage while the partner goes off to find a trolley. He sees her in the distance being molested by a man, naturally he goes to her assistance but by the time he gets there the man has run off, and so has the luggage!

Always be aware of people knocking on your door. Always ask for ID and if you are not sure do not let them in. We have had some reports of people offering to fix pipes and taps in the area. If you have any suspicious callers at your door please contact the Police immediately (999).

**Paul Bowyer 870 512**

## **Edited Minutes of Semington Parish Council (PC) 24/02/16**

**Present:** Councillor Robert Oglesby (Chairman) and Councillors P Bowyer, K Lockwood, R Robinson, W Scott, P Smith, B Smyth, C Wade and the Clerk, Roger Coleman. PCSO Maggie Ledbury (part-time).

**Apologies for absence:** Cllrs. S Rimmer and J Seed.

**Neighbourhood Policing:** PCSO Ledbury summarised the main points (italics below) providing more details regarding the Cyber Crime initiative.

*1. Hill View Farm in Seend 22/01/2016 had an attempt theft of Diesel from lorry parked up*

*2. Two vehicles parked in Highfield Close 30/01/2016 – criminal damage (vehicles were keyed)*

*3. We are part of the Cyber Crime awareness and have been going to primary schools, recently Keevil, delivering 'Op Polite' which covers aspects of internet safety, Cyber Crime and handing out information booklets as an aid to parents.*

*4. The 'no through' road monitoring is continuing to be a success. A special constable in February issued a £100 fine and 3 points to an offending driver. Since 10 September 52 advisory letters had been sent to motorists ignoring the No Through Road sign and 221 had been 'turned round'.*

Cllr. Smyth reported that the No Through Road administrative requirements had increased to an extent that it was proving difficult for Wiltshire Police to handle and they had requested support from volunteers.

PCSO Ledbury commented that parking at the corner of Church Street when 'Bridge Days' are held at the Village Hall is causing an obstruction. The Chairman would advise Mr Taylor.

### **Planning:**

15/09725/FUL The Old Pig Barn, High Street Demolition of existing barn and replacing with two storey office and store APPROVED

15/12704/FUL 29 High Street Conversion of outbuilding to create ancillary (annexe) accommodation (also 16/00054/LBC) PENDING

Cllr. Scott reported that the recently approved planning application for the Air Ambulance site (15/10766/OUT) did not carry any reference to a 'Control Gate – as required by the Parish Council' and they would be advised accordingly.

**Finance:** details available on request.

### **Highways/Environment:**

Potholes in Pound Lane would be reported to the Wiltshire Council (WC).

Cllr. Smyth stated that the weed clearing was in hand and progressing well.

Cllr. Smyth reported that the current Parish Steward scheme operated by WC has had to be suspended in some areas because of the lack of available personnel. It would be re-introduced when the new contractor (Ringway) takes over the highways contract in April.

Cllr. Smyth stated that there is a WC 'Involvement Evening' to be held on 12 April between 7.30pm and 9pm and all councillors are invited to attend.

Cllr. Robinson tabled revised A3 size paper prints of the proposed Information Board. Following comment, it needed amendment and would then be sent to the Clerk for it to be included in the order from FILCRIS, along with two A2 Recycled Plastic Interpretation Boards. An application would be made to the Melksham Area Board for a funding grant.

The PC proposed that the location of the Interpretation Boards and Lecterns could be on the Ragged Smock (near to the bench) and in the vicinity of The Somerset Arms/Brook House and if may be necessary to consult with WC on final location.

Cllr. Lockwood stated that he intended taking photographs of Wessex Close Play Area to show its poor condition and he requested that this item is deferred until the next meeting.

In relation to introducing road safety measures to improve the safety of pupils travelling to and from St Georges School, the PC supported the correspondence from Dr. Elizabeth Williamson (Chair of Governors at the school) and would advise her to direct her enquiries to WC, as it is their responsibility.

Cllr. Robinson stated that following representations from a parishioner he would examine the condition of footpath and the report of a tree partly obstructing that path.

**Community Emergency Plan:** Cllr. Smyth explained that at WC's Emergency Planning Workshop in December, it was emphasized that local communities needed to develop their own 'Emergency Plan' so that the effects of local emergencies, such as flooding, could be mitigated. The PC agreed to take no action at this stage except to notify WC that in the event of an emergency then the Village Hall would be the assembly point for parishioners.

#### **Melksham Community Area Board/Transport Group Meetings:**

Cllr. Robinson stated that there was a need to respond to the Public Transport consultation because the existing local bus services were vulnerable to cuts.

**Tennis Court:** Councillors noted the request from the tennis coach at Melksham House to allow him to hold coaching at the Semington Tennis Court. The PC agreed that to allow a dedicated group to use the Tennis Court on a regular basis would deprive the casual users from access and so it could not accede to that request.

#### **14. Any Other Business:**

Cllr. Smyth – An appeal for possible environmental projects.

Cllr. Robinson – A proposal to clear up the area around the Pill Box (gun emplacement) artefact near to the Ragged Smock.

Clerk – Correspondence from FISHER GERMAN in relation to the Esso pipeline.

**Date of Next Meeting:** 23 March 2016 at 8pm and 27th April.

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## **CATHOLIC NEWS**

### **ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST TROWBRIDGE & ST BERNADETTE'S WESTBURY (including VILLAGES).**

**Parish Priest Canon Liam O'Driscoll, Telephone 01225 752 152  
www.stjohnthebaptisttrowbridge.co.uk**

#### ***St John's Sunday Masses:***

Saturday (Vigil) 6pm; Sunday 10.30am & 6pm

#### ***Weekday Masses:***

Mon: 9am; Tues: 6pm; Wed: 8.30am; 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 2016**

Subscriptions: £50 annually - £13 quarterly - £4.33 monthly. New members are most welcome to join at any time. Prizes are: £200-£70-£50-£10 monthly. For information and application form contact Francis.

### **LIVING YOUR FAITH SUMMER CAMPS**

These weeks are intended to encourage children & young people to engage in their faith through fun, games and spiritual input. They take place in the beautiful surroundings of the Marist Centre Nympsfield. Children 7-11 from 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> August and 12-16 from 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> August. For more details contact Stephen Spurrell 07860 84946

### **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.

**Francis Geraghty 01380 871 083**

**email: f.geraghty303@btinternet.com**



## **The Canalside Benefice**

**St. Michael and All Angels, Hilpertown**

**with St. Mary the Virgin, Whaddon;**

**St. George's, Semington;**

**St Paul's, Staverton with St. Mary Magdalen, Hilpertown Marsh;**

**near the Kennet and Avon Canal, within the Dioceses of Salisbury**

Once again I have been wrestling with my computer and printer, both of which seem to have minds of their own. My printer had a wobble the other day. 'How old is it?' asked the technician. 'Three years old,' I replied. Much sucking of teeth and muttering about the need for a new model. I thought back to the good old days of the Gestetner printer, the long-arm typewriter for cutting the stencils and the toxic red correcting fluid. They never needed repair or upgrading.

And then my mind moved to thinking about cars. Cars have a life expectancy. Most 1948 Morris Minors have long been doomed to the scrapheap. Engines die, carburetors rust and models go out of style, so we trade them in for newer vehicles.

It seems to me that for many involved in Christian ministry there is a tendency to think the church needs no remodeling or renovation. Congregations expect to hum along perpetually for years and years, thinking the world will want to pile into a vintage Morris Minor and enjoy the retro ride, that the old duplicator will cope with all the printing a parish needs, that the old wineskins will always be accommodating.

No so. While the message of the gospel itself is both timeless and flawless, the packaging we wrap it in must adapt with the times or we will quickly lose relevance. Sadly, it seems, many churches and ministries today insist on pouring their new wine in the old models, again and again. We resist innovation and we fight progress. Have you heard the comment that if you want to be a popular preacher never use the word 'new' and never suggest change!

I'm willing to guess that a large percentage of what we are doing in church today needs a total makeover. We are facing the most daunting renovation project in the history of the church. (*I am not referring to the need for a new boiler at St Michael's.*) But the task is not impossible. It will require us to take some painful steps:

**We must break free from the fear of change.**

God is always on the move. He might lead us to camp in one spot for a while, but we can never get too comfortable in one place. His trumpet will eventually blow and the cloud of his presence will shift. I remember once seeing a bold sign outside a church: 'Don't park here. God is calling you to move on.' The challenge is to stay open to God's fresh directives, and expect him to stretch our faith. He is adventurous! Are we?

**We must be willing to defy tradition.**

People who are married to the past cannot embrace the future. 'The way we've always done it,' will not work in God's new season. I know it can be easy to choose the comfortable pews of nostalgia, but God is with the courageous few who are willing to blaze a new path into unreached territory .... and I find that a far more exciting place to be. Another bold sign outside a church reads: 'Don't look back, you're not going that way.'

**We must look to the Spirit to reveal the strategies.**

We cannot rely on church growth gurus, popular books or rock-star preachers to lead us into genuine change. Great as Rick Warren is ... attractive as the Vineyard Movement is ... wise as Brian McLaren and Richard Rohr are ... simply copying others doesn't get to the heart and real work of innovation and transformation in the place where God has placed us. We need to discern what God' plan is for us here and now ... recognizing our history, utilizing our resources, responding to our situation.

We now know that a new Rector will be coming to the Canalside Benefice at the end of June. I see this as a moment of opportunity to think afresh about old wineskins and new wine ... and the adventure of our ministry together in this place.

**Ivor Hughes. Associate Minister in the Canalside Benefice**

**BAPTISMS**

Isla Florence Wood on Sunday 28th February 2016 was welcomed into the church family at her baptism.

**And**

Emily, Harry and Sophia Davis on Sunday 6th March were welcomed into the church family at their baptism's.

We pray God will bless them all and their families as they grow and experience God's love for themselves.

**St. Michael's Hilperton with St. Mary's Whaddon  
St. George's, Semington**

**St. Paul's Staverton with St. Mary Magdalen, Hilperton Marsh**  
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**APRIL 2016 SERVICES**

**St. George's Semington**

3rd	8am	Cancelled (Holy Communion)
3rd	9.15am	Parish Communion
10th	9.15am	Morning Worship
17th	6pm	Evening Worship, APCM at 5pm
24th	9.15am	Together in Worship

**St. Michael's Hilperton**

3rd	11am	Together in Worship
10th	9.15am	Parish Communion
10th	11am	Methodist Service
17th	10am	Together in Worship, then APCM
20th	10am	TBC - Holy Communion
24th	9.15am	Parish Communion
24th	11am	Methodist Service

**St. Mary Magdalen Hilperton Marsh**

3rd	11am	Parish Communion
10th	6pm	Evening Worship
24th	11am	Parish Communion

**St. Mary's Whaddon**

10th	8am	BCP Communion
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