



No.
611

PRICE 25p



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year Christmas Services at Caversham Churches



St. Barnabas, Emmer Green

Sun 6 Dec 9.30am Toy Service for
Reading Family Aid
Wed 16 Dec 7.00pm Christingle Service with 89th
Scout Group
Sun 20 Dec 4.30pm Christmas Carol Service
Christmas Eve 4.30pm Christmas Nativity
Christmas Eve 11.30pm Midnight Mass
Christmas Day 8.00am Christmas Day Communion
Christmas Day 9.30am Christmas Day Family
Communion

St John the Baptist, Caversham

Sun 13 Dec 10.00am All Age Christingle
Wed 16 Dec 7.30pm Carol Service
Sun 21 Dec 10.00am Parish Communion
Christmas Eve 4.00pm Nativity Live! Starting at
Baptist Church ending at
Methodist Church
Christmas Eve 11.30pm Midnight Mass
Christmas Day 10.00am All Age Christmas Eucharist
Sunday 27 Dec 9.30am Parish Wide service

St Peter, Caversham

Sun 29 Nov 09.30am Parade Service and Toy
Service
Sun 29 Nov 6.30pm Advent Carols
Sun 20 Dec 6.30pm Nine Lessons and Carols
Mon 21 Dec 7.30pm Carol Service in Caversham
Court
Christmas Eve 3.00pm Christingle
Christmas Eve 4.30pm Christingle
Christmas Eve 11.30pm Midnight Mass
Christmas Day 8.00am Holy Communion BCP
Christmas Day 9.30am Christmas Eucharist
Sunday 27 December No service

St Margaret, Mapledurham

Sun 13 Dec 6.30pm Carol Service
Sun 20 Dec 11.00am Parish Communion
Christmas Eve 4.00pm Christingle
Christmas Eve 11.30pm Midnight Mass
Christmas Day 11.15am Christmas Eucharist
Sun 27 Dec No service at St Margaret



St Andrew, Caversham

Sun 20 Dec 6.30pm Carols Service with
children's choir followed by
mulled wine and mince pies
Christmas Eve 3.30pm Nativity Service with a real
baby
Christmas Eve 8.00pm Christmas Night Service - like
midnight mass, but not so late
Christmas Day 8.00am Christmas Day service
Christmas Day 10.00am Christmas Day service

Our Lady & St Anne, Caversham

Sunday 20 Dec 3.00pm Service of Reconciliation
Christmas Eve 6.00pm Vigil Mass for Christmas
Christmas Eve 10.00pm Midnight Mass
Christmas Day 9.00am Mass of the Dawn
Christmas Day 11.00am Mass of Christmas Day

New Testament Church of God

Sun 20 Dec 11.00am Morning Service
Sun 20 Dec 6.00pm Carol Service
Christmas Day 10.00am Christmas Morning service
Sun 27 Dec 11.00am Morning Service
Wed 30 Dec 10.00pm Thanksgiving Service

Caversham Park LEP in Caversham Park Primary School

Sun 13 Dec 11.00am Carol Service
Christmas Eve 11.00am Christingle
Christmas Day 11.00am Christmas Morning Worship

Caversham Baptist Church (South Street)

Sun 20 Dec 10.30am Family Nativity Service
Tue 22 Dec 7.30pm Community Carol Service
Christmas Eve 4.00pm Nativity Live! - see page 3
- 6.00pm (with other Caversham
Churches)
Christmas Day 10.30am Christmas Day Service

Caversham Methodist Church (Gosbrook Road)

Sun 20 December 10.30am Family Carol Service
Christmas Eve 4.00pm Nativity Live!
Christmas Day 10.30am Family Worship

Caversham Heights Methodist Church

Thurs 17-19th Dec 'Advent Journey of
the Wise Men' at
Caversham Heights - in the
church -
Thurs 17th 2-4pm and 7-9 pm;
Friday 18th 10-12, 2-4pm and 7-9pm;
Saturday 19th 10-12 and 2-4pm
Sun 20 Dec All Day Church open for The journey of
the Wise Men - a meditative prayer walk to
do at your own pace.
Sun 20 Dec 10.30am All Age Worship
Sun 20 Dec 5.00pm Carols by Candlelight
Christmas Eve 11.15pm 'Midnight' Communion
service
Christmas Day 10.30am Family Worship

Grace Church

Sun 13 Dec 4.30pm Family carol service with lots
of noise, fun and celebration.
Followed by mulled wine and
mince pies.
Sun 20 Dec 6.30pm Carols by candlelight, a
traditional carol service.
Christmas Day 10.30am Christmas Day Service

St Michael, Sonning Common

Sun 6 Dec 4.00pm Pangbourne & District
Silver Band Christmas
Concert. Adults £5,
children free from the
parish office or on the door
Mon 21 Dec 7.30pm Reconciliation service in
preparation for Christmas
Christmas Eve 5.00pm Mass for families with
young children
Christmas Eve 8.30pm Readings and Christmas
Carols followed by 'Midnight'
Mass
Christmas Eve 9.00pm Midnight Mass
Christmas Day 10.30am Christmas Morning Mass
Sat 26 Dec 5.30pm Vigil Mass of the Holy Family
Sun 27 Dec 9.00am and
10.30am Mass of the Holy
Family



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D/EX1758/53/12

Caversham Clergy

ANGLICAN

St Barnabas

Revd Derek Chandler, 20 St Barnabas Road,
Tel: 947 8239.
www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

St Andrews

Revd Nigel Jones, St Andrews Vicarage,
Harrogate Road. Tel: 947 2788
www.standrewscaversham.org

St Peter, St Margaret, St John

Revd Mike Smith, The Rectory, 20 Church Road,
Caversham RG4 7AD Tel: 9479505
rector@ctmparish.org.uk

Revd Marion Pyke Tel: 9475834

Revd John Dudley Tel: 9470265

RIVERSIDE CHURCH (READING)

Revd Ray Coates Tel: 07894 545603
Email: ray.coates@ntlworld.com

CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP

Secretary: Dr Alison Johnston
Tel: 0118 947 5152

METHODIST TEAM MINISTRY

Revd Jenny Dowding, 72 Highmoor Road,
Tel: 947 2223

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

Transitional Minister Revd Jonathan Edwards
Church office tel 954 5353
Email Secretary: sue.cantwell@cavershambaptist
church.org.uk

GRACE CHURCH

(formerly Caversham Hill Chapel)
Crispin Fairbairn. Tel: 947 4529

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Fr Paul Martin, The Presbytery,
2 South View Avenue.
Tel: 947 1787.
Deacon: Hugh Anscombe
Fr Paul Rowan

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

Revd H R Gayle Tel: 946 3009 (contact)

The newspaper produced by the members of the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Free Churches of Caversham and Mapledurham for the local community.

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The Editors also would like to bring to readers' notice that the inclusion of advertisements in this paper does not mean an endorsement of the products or of the services offered.

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TALKING POINT

By Derek Chandler

"Bedding Down for Christmas"

I want to talk about beds. Do you like your bed? Do you want to change it? How about a 'memory foam', 'vibrating', or 'water' bed? Do you sleep a lot or a little? Do you suffer from a sleeping disorder? Beds are more important than we think. They probably symbolise to many of us, rest, relaxation, retreat, sanctuary.

Beds can be political. In 1969 the 'Beatles' star, John Lennon, stayed in bed for a fortnight with Yoko Ono in protest of the Vietnam war. Was this puerile tokenism or prophetic genius? What about the first bed that Jesus, the Son of God, slept in on that very first Christmas – a manger? What message does that still convey 2000 years on?

Primary school children are still surprised when I explain what a manger actually is. I sometimes ask them to imagine a new born baby is expected to arrive in their home and yet when it does there is no room in the house for it to stay. Would they ever imagine making its first bed in a pet basket, worse still, a pet bowl? That is what happened to Jesus. God longs to dwell with us but it seems there is no human space on Earth for God. Are we any different?

What might Christmas look like if we gave God a proper bed, or a proper place to dwell with us? Notice that. God wants to dwell with us, which is different from us visiting God in a church, however often or not, at Christmas or beyond. What might it really mean for God to dwell with us in the places where we dwell? What changes might that bring to all our dwelling places when we make that kind of room?

Christmas means so many things and yet they can easily squeeze out that which it seeks to truly celebrate, 'Emmanuel' which means 'God with us', (Matthew 1:23). But the choice is ours and Christmas can still bring us many wonderful surprises if we are prepared to do the one thing that did not happen on that first 'Silent Night' 2000 years ago. What is the one thing? Simple – give God a proper bed this Christmas in the places where we dwell.

Sleep on it.

Rev'd. Derek Chandler

Anglican Vicar of the parishes of St. Barnabas, Emmer Green and Caversham Park.

SUNDAY SERVICES

ANGLICAN

St Peter's, St Peter's Hill

8.00am Matins 1st and 3rd Sundays
Holy Communion 2nd and 4th Sundays
9.30am Holy Communion 1st, 2nd and 3rd Sundays
Morning Worship 4th Sunday
6.30pm Evensong

St John's, Gosbrook Road

9.30am Holy Communion 1st, 3rd and 4th Sundays
9.30am All Age Worship 2nd Sunday
Fifth Sunday Services as advertised

St Margaret's, Mapledurham

11.15am Morning Worship 1st Sunday
Holy Communion 2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays

St Andrew's, Harrogate Road

8.00am The Eucharist
10.00am Parish Eucharist (Sung)
First Sunday, Family Eucharist
11.30am The Eucharist first and third Sundays only, first Sunday BCP
6.30pm Evening Prayer (as announced)

St Barnabas, Grove Road, Emmer Green

8.00am Said Communion (BCP)
9.30am Parish Communion
9.30am COGS for all ages (1st Sunday of Month)

RIVERSIDE CHURCH (READING)

Meeting at Hemdean House School, Hemdean Road, Caversham
10.00am Morning Worship & Teaching

CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP

Meeting at Caversham Park School
11.00am Holy Communion (1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays)
Morning Worship (2nd and 4th Sundays)
All Age Worship (at Festival Times)

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH South Street

10.30am Morning Worship each Sunday
8.00pm House of Prayer (praise and prayer) –
2nd Sunday each month
3.45pm Messy Church – for all the family
First Sunday of the month

GRACE CHURCH Old Peppard Road

10.30am Worship and Ministry, Children's Church
6.30pm Prayer Meeting

THE METHODIST CHURCH IN CAVERSHAM

Caversham Heights, Highmoor Road

9.00am (first Sunday), 10.30am
6.30pm (second and fourth Sundays)

Gosbrook Road

10.30am

Woodcote Parish Church

9.45am (second Sunday)

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Our Lady and St Anne's, Southview Avenue

Saturday 5.30pm,
Sunday 10.00am and 6.30pm
Mapledurham House 6.00pm Mass (last Sunday of the month)

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers)

Church Street, Reading

10.30am
(House study groups Sept-June Tel: 9475783)

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

Church Street, Caversham

9.30am Sunday School
11.00am Divine Worship
6.00pm Evening Service

Caversham Bridge

Contributions for the January 2015 issue should be sent to the Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham parish office by **Monday 23rd November**. The date for the February 2016 issue is **Monday 4th January**. Email address is secretary@ctmparish.org.uk
Advertising copy for the January issue should be sent to Mr A Wright, Twiggmoor, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham, by **Friday 20th November**. The date for the February 2016 issue is **Friday 1st January**.

PARISH OFFICES

PARISH OF CAVERSHAM THAMESIDE AND MAPLEDURHAM

St Peter, St Margaret, St John
Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham RG4 8AX
Tuesday, and Friday 9.30am to 2pm
Tel: 947 1703 email: secretary@ctmparish.org.uk

ST BARNABAS

St Barnabas Centre
Tuesday and Thursday 8.30am-10.30am
Tel: 947 6310 Website: www.saintbarnabas.org.uk



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Nativity goes Live in Caversham

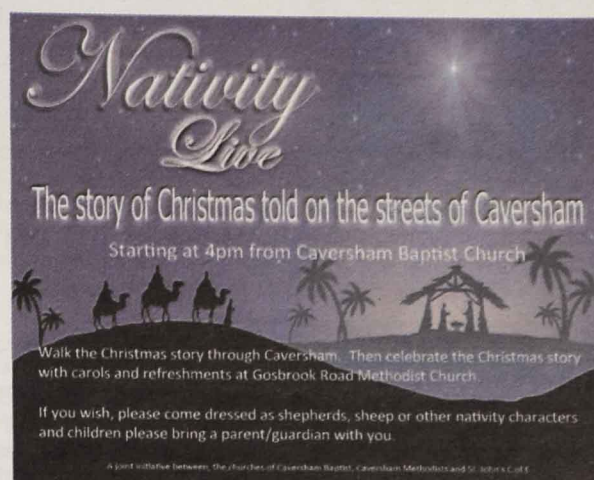
Churches in Caversham will join together on Christmas Eve to tell the Nativity story through the streets of the village.

For the third year running, the Methodist Church in Caversham and St John's C of E Church come together and will this year include central Caversham as members of Caversham Baptist Church join in with 'Nativity live'.

The walk will start at 4pm on Christmas Eve from Caversham Baptist Church, with Mary and Joseph walking to the Clifton Arms Pub to see if there is any room at the Inn. The Nativity story will then be told at various points along Caversham streets and parks as the Nativity characters are collected along the way. All led by Mary, Joseph and a Pony finishing at 6pm when we will then have a short time together in Gosbrook Road Methodist Church including refreshments to warm us up!

"Last year we had an amazing number of people turn up and we would like to build on that this year" one of the organisers has said

All are welcome to join the walk and if you wish to, please do come dressed as a shepherd, sheep, angel or Wise Man.



SCOUTS CHRISTMAS POST SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY AND SAVE MONEY AT CHRISTMAS!

The 89th Reading Scouts are once again providing the highly valued Christmas Post service for Caversham, Caversham Heights, Emmer Green and Caversham Park Village. This is a great opportunity to save money – at 30p per card, it is half the price of a stamp! At the same time this service supports the activities of your local Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers of the 89th Scout Group. Post boxes will be situated at a number of locations in the area including: Caversham Library, McColls Newsagents in Emmer Green, Balmore Park and Emmer Green Surgeries, Woodcote Way News, St Barnabas and St Andrew's Churches and number of local primary schools. You can post your cards in these locations from Monday 23rd November and the last collection will be on Thursday 17th December. All cards will be delivered in time for Christmas.



Background Information:

The 89th Reading Scouts have been running the Christmas Post for over 20 years, raising funds for our group and most importantly providing a great service to the local community. We don't take parcels, only cards and we only deliver to houses in the local Caversham, Caversham Heights, Caversham Park Village, and Emmer Green communities – we don't go south of Caversham or Reading Bridges and we don't cover Kidmore End or Tokers Green. The service is really valued by the local community, especially the older residents and all of the post is sorted and hand delivered by the Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers of the 89th Scout Group.

For more information please contact: Robin Kent 07770 588698

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New Wine – Shepton Mallett 2015

By Mrs. Veryan Evans

I'm not sure how we came to be camping at New Wine this year, along with 13,000 other Christian campers. The boys certainly needed some convincing to go and even I had my doubts when it was pouring down the day before departure. Still, I figured our job was to get us there and hand the rest over to God: if He wanted our boys to find a new way to worship God and discover His relevance for them in their lives, then it was up to Him!

And so we arrived and it was sunny! We pitched camp amongst the Greyfriars village with the kind help of the village leader, Steve, who must have helped put up at least 10 tents already that day. Ironically, he and Jane were in a caravan, so not proper campers at all! I must confess that we were slight cuckoos in the Greyfriars nest, as we worship at St. Anne's in Caversham, but since St. Anne's don't have a village presence at New Wine, it seemed logical to roost alongside another Reading church: as a 'mixed marriage' – Christianity has to come before denomination for us. We tell our boys it's like Burger King or Macdonalds – it's the same message, just with slightly different emphases! Forgive me if that sounds irreverent. All I can say is that our fellow campers were very welcoming which made all the difference to our experience of the week because, as we all know, it is in the fellowship of meeting people, that one develops a sense of belonging. To this end, there was a cheese and wine evening hosted by the village leaders and a BBQ later in the week to create more official opportunities for mixing and mingling, alongside the everyday 'Have you got a cheese grater I could borrow?'

The first full day was a windy and rainy one, which did mean that there was as sense of hunkering down initially, but as the week progressed and the rain dried up, we could all look up and engage with our neighbours for the week. The general timetable for the day creates a nice rhythm to life at New Wine: children's groups run from 8.45 until 12.30. We had brought three of our four boys and so had a child in 'ground breakers' (ages 5-7), 'boulder gang' (ages 10-11) and 'club one' (ages 12-13). The latter was less structured so Peter would decide with the two other boys from our village which bits they would go to, so he got to taste a bit of independence and freedom. One of his comments at the end of the week went something like: "One of the good things about New

Wine is that you can leave your skate board outside the venue and it will still be there when you come out!" And this feeling of it being a safe place in every sense, means that we could allow our children more free rein than usual, and get a taste of a brave new world where locking up one's belongings isn't necessary and allowing one's children greater independence is not coupled with any anxiety or dis-ease.

As for the younger boys, they were kept busy and entertained in all sorts of activities aimed at their age group. No complaints from them, and a high number of young people to child ratio means that it is all very slick and well run. Even now, I catch my children singing the songs they learned over the week which is wonderful.

Meanwhile, the adults can choose to attend any number of talks or worship venues throughout the morning – or not – as the feeling takes them. It is enormously refreshing to be released from childcare duties and to be able to soak up all that is going on. The quality of speakers is outstanding – inspiring and thought provoking. The music is not typical of what my husband and I are used to but we can go with it for a week, especially when our ultimate purpose for the week was to engage the boys and show them that there are alternative ways to worship God and enjoy it! Personally, I love the poetry and power of the words of a good old-fashioned hymn and New Wine music doesn't quite touch me in the same way, but I'm happy to accept that I'm getting longer in the tooth by the year and there is a place for all of it.

The afternoon is free for the children so although there are still plenty of talks going on, they are harder to attend for parents. There is a child's play area called the Stomping Ground which is good for entertaining the under 10s; there is a skate board park which kept my ten year old happy for hours over the course of the week and he came home with lots of new tricks up his sleeve. There is a cinema with a 5 and 9 o'clock film; an arts and crafts venue which we didn't attend because it's not our thing; a central 'place to eat' where you can buy anything from smoothies, donuts, coffees, to pizzas, chips, baguettes etc. (ie. all the usual less than healthy options!); and there is the market place with books, CDs, gifts and stands for all sorts of Christian charities and organisations. I'm sure there is more but I suspect it takes a few more visits to really take full advantage of all that is on offer.

Then, at 6.45 the children go to their evening group allowing parents to attend the evening worship in the biggest venue – the arena, with a significant keynote speaker. Other venues are offering alternative options, perhaps quieter more reflective worship, talks about urban mission or fostering or false gods or any number of things. And then at 9 o'clock we can either be winding down back in the village or seeking out more interest and input if we are not already saturated! We found ourselves dancing to a fantastic band doing cover versions in the main arena on one of the evenings – not something we find ourselves doing very often these days in our normal lives!

In a nutshell, there's so much on offer at New Wine, it is sometimes hard to discern what to attend and to be honest, sometimes one can get a bit overwhelmed by all that one has heard and seen, so that it is good just to take a bit of time out to reflect on it all. Incidentally, there is a day off from the schedule outlined above which is an opportunity to go off site for the day and have a breather. Ironically we met a lot of New Wine folk at the outlet village in Street nearby! The other 'god' in too many of our lives!

Will we be there next year? I reckon so! It is great and exhausting in equal measure but it definitely shakes things up and gets one experiencing and thinking in new ways. New Wine is more 'Holy Spirit' focused and less liturgy-focused than our church, and it certainly succeeds in making Christianity relevant to and engaging for our younger folk. In this regard, it has lots to offer and we count it a success against our initial criteria of showing our boys that there are many different ways to worship God. Although I personally didn't experience an epiphany this year, I was touched and moved many times by all that I saw and heard. I am glad to have gone and would certainly recommend anyone to put a toe in the water, ideally with at least one other family that you know so that you can brave the adventure together! Although New Wine is camping, it is camping with a twist, an added dimension that is the opportunity to re-evaluate and experience worship and your relationship with God. I also believe that an encounter with our Living God is more likely there, where we are slightly out of our comfort zone and vulnerable. Whilst this may not sound overly appealing, I challenge you to see you there next year and, who knows, anything could happen.

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Bible Friends**Jeremiah down the well**

Some men wanted to get Jeremiah into trouble. The king said they could punish Jeremiah. They put him into a deep, dark hole. The sides were steep and slippery. There was gooey mud at the bottom of the deep hole. Jeremiah could not get out.

But a good man, who worked for the king, heard about what had happened. He went to see the king. "Your Majesty," he said, "this is not fair. Jeremiah has done nothing wrong. If Jeremiah stays down that hole, he will have nothing to eat and he will die."

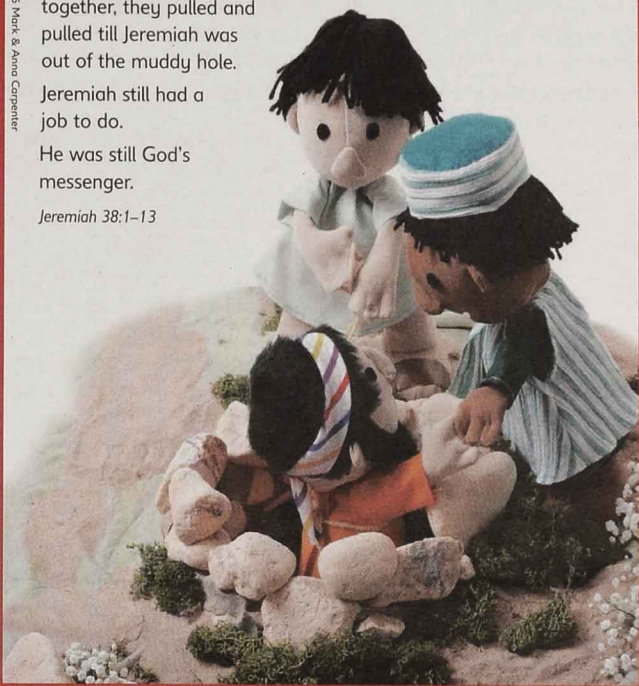
The king listened to what the good man said. "All right," he agreed. "Get Jeremiah out."

The good man found some ropes, took some men to help him and, together, they pulled and pulled till Jeremiah was out of the muddy hole.

Jeremiah still had a job to do.

He was still God's messenger.

Jeremiah 38:1-13

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Christmas Concert by Candlelight

Concerts in Caversham's annual Christmas Concert will take place on 5th December from 7.30pm at St Andrew's Church Caversham, to welcome in the season of Advent.

The Caversham Ensemble Chamber Orchestra will play: Winter from *The Four Seasons*, two arias from Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*, Howard Blake's *I'm Walking in the Air* from *The Snowman*, Pachelbel's *Canon*, extracts from Handel's *Messiah* including *The Trumpet Shall Sound* and much more.

Directed from the violin by Peter Fisher and other soloists will be, Jiafeng Chen (violin), Lawrence Halksworth (bass baritone), Tim Watts on oboe and d'amore, Gabriel Dias (trumpet) and Naomi Watts (cello).

Tickets are £16 or £18 in advance and £18 or £20 on the door. Seasonal interval refreshments included.

Buy with cash only from Waltons the Jewellers, Caversham (closed Mondays).

www.concertsincaversham.co.uk for more information.

WADRA Christmas Fayre

A date for your diaries: The annual Christmas Fayre organised by the Warren and District Residents Association (WADRA) is to be held at the Pavilion on Mapledurham Playing Fields, Woodcote Road, Caversham Heights on 6th December 2015, 10am – 2pm.

There will be something for all ages, and we may even have a visit from Santa Claus and of course a raffle with some great prizes. We are pleased to announce that St Peter's Church Choir will be joining us to sing carols and get us in the festive mood.

All proceeds go directly to the regeneration of the Mapledurham Playing Fields and Community Hall.

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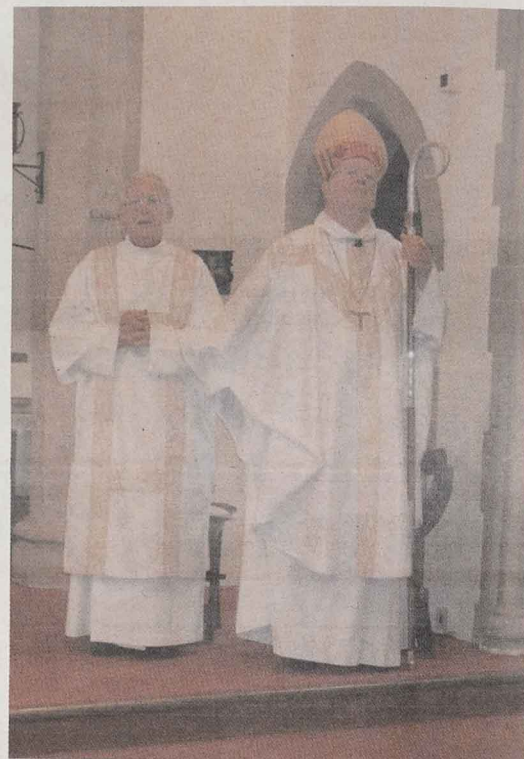
During the weekend of 31st October and 1st November, Bishop William Kenney came to the Parish of Our Lady and St Anne to carry out the Diocesan Visitation. He said all three Sunday masses (these included the Saturday evening Vigil mass).

In his homily on Sunday morning he stressed that the purpose of the visitation was not to find fault but to see all the things that were going right in the parish and he said how pleased he was with what he had learned. He particularly wanted the parishioners to know that, although the parish is at the very southern extremity of the diocese, it is still a very important part of that diocese.

The mass for the Sunday was that of All Saints. The Bishop talked about the gospel and the eight beatitudes and how important it was that we all should be blessed and not just those people who have become known as saints.

He had spent Saturday afternoon visiting the sick and housebound in their homes. He said that they are at the centre of the parish life: they have more time to pray for us all and they are interested in what goes on in the parish despite not being able to get to church regularly. He praised the members of the SVP (Society of Saint Vincent de Paul) who visit regularly but also made a plea for other parishioners to try to call in, even very briefly, to keep the housebound up to date with what is going on.

At the end of mass he welcomed the children who had earlier spent time attending their own liturgy and listened to what they had been doing. He then waited at the back of the church to speak to everyone as they left the church.



Deacon Hugh with Bishop William.

Gill Madeley NAHort.

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CHURCHES

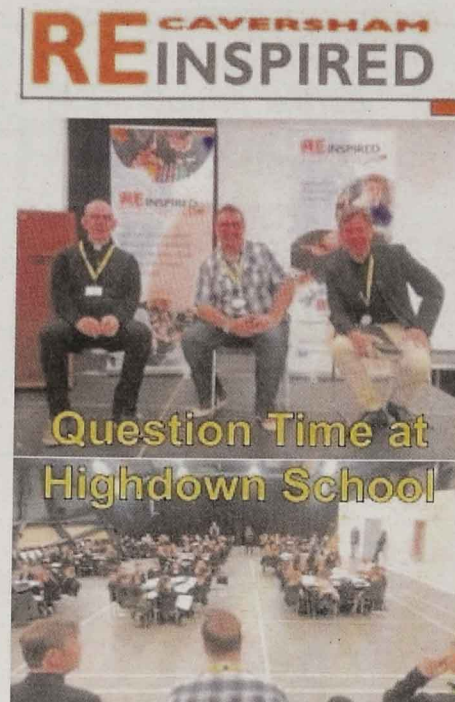
REInspired Caversham at Highdown School

Volunteers from across Churches Together in Caversham participated in a Religious Education Day on Christianity with Year 8 pupils (12-13 years old) at Highdown School in October. The format consisted of a 30 minute 'Question Time' hosted by Rev'd Derek Chandler with a panel consisting of Rev'd Nigel Jones, St. Andrew's Church, Caversham Methodist - Martyn Strong, Caversham Baptist Church and Rev'd David Little, St. Barnabas Church, Emmer Green. This was followed up by workshops and discussions between Highdown pupils and Christian volunteers on such topics as the Bible, Christian beliefs, and worship. Everybody agreed it was a fantastic day.

This is the first time since the REInspired Caversham project began 5 years ago that secondary school pupils have been engaged. REInspired seeks to help local schools with their RE Syllabus on Christianity by providing local Christian volunteers to come into schools and talk to pupils about their Christian faith.

REInspired began 13 years ago with local Christian churches in Earley and has developed in Woodley and other parts of the country as well as Caversham. To know more about REInspired go to www.reinspired.org.uk or contact Rev'd Derek Chandler as he is the current chairman of REInspired Caversham.

The Rev'd Derek Chandler



St Michael's Catholic Church, Peppard Road, Sonning Common

It was a great pleasure to welcome visitors from Caversham Park Village and Emmer Green to our open day on 26th September. Some were curious to have a look around a building they had passed many times but had never entered and others came because they didn't know we were here until they received our invitation leaflet. For some people it was an opportunity to reconnect to the Church after a long absence. Whatever the reason for coming we hope everyone enjoyed the tour of the church, the talk by Fr Paul and the ample supply of tea and cakes in the hall as they looked at the displays of the various activities in the parish.

If you want to know more about our parish community then follow us on our website at www.saintmichaelsonningcommon.org.uk and download the latest newsletter.

Shoobox Sunday at St John's Gosbrook Road



Shooboxes at St John's for Samaritan's Purse

Christmas came early at St John's, when 102 boxes of gifts were brought into church on 1st November for our annual 'Shoobox Sunday'. Members of the congregation had filled the boxes with toys, sweets, knitted hats and gloves and items to help with hygiene and education. The Rev'd Rachel Ross Smith

blessed the boxes, which will go to The Samaritan's Purse charity to be distributed through 'Operation Christmas Child' to children across the world who otherwise may not receive a present.

The Parish of Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham

A Barn Dance was held at St John's on Friday 15th October.

Local band Inisheer provided the music and caller Howard Ballard took us through the dances. It was a sell-out evening, with lots of fun and laughter with just under £300 raised for the parish funds.



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ENVIRONMENT

GEESE

This month's picture is from a paper-cut Christmas card which I designed some years back, to remind my friends of the old song which begins:

*Christmas is coming, the geese are getting fat,
Please put a penny in the old man's hat . . .*

The usual goose you see in Caversham these days is the Canada goose. Their growth in numbers on the Thames was remarked on by T. W. Marshall, whose nature notebooks, dating from the 1930s, are in the Berkshire Record Office. He calls them "black-necked geese," and says they had escaped from parks in the area. Another non-native one I sometimes see is the pretty Egyptian goose. This winter, there seem to be more Greylag geese than usual, especially by Caversham Bridge. It is from the Greylag that the domesticated goose has been bred, gaining in size, but losing its colour.

In days gone by, when most people lived in close proximity to livestock, geese must have been much more familiar than they are to most of us. My own home town had a Goose Hill, down which geese were driven to the river in the Middle Ages. Caversham had its Goose Brook, presumably for similar reasons: its name has come down to us preserved in the name of Gosbrook Road. The brothers Grimm wrote a rather gruesome story about a goose-girl, whose job was to take the birds down to the water and watch over them every day, and a few years back I actually saw a goose-girl doing just that, in a remote part of north-east Turkey, near the border with Georgia.

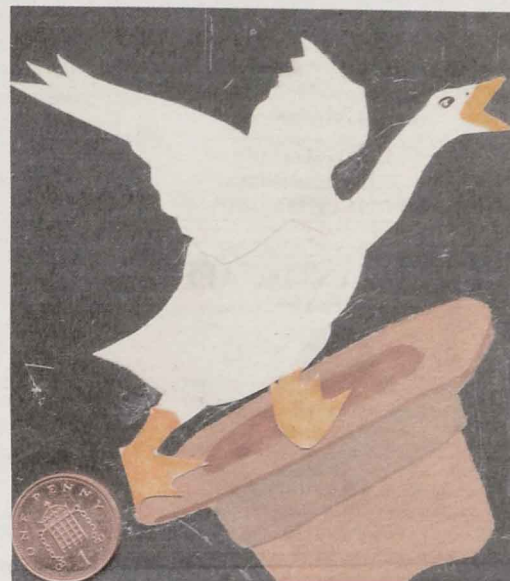
People used to write using goose-quills, and in the old song about Wrangle-Taggle Gypsies, the lady leaves her goose-feather bed with the sheets turned down so bravely-O. One of my aunts remembered that when she was a girl around 1920, if she had a cold in winter, her chest would be smeared with goose-grease, and wrapped in brown paper before going to bed. Now you can buy goose-grease in high-class supermarkets in which to fry your high-class chips - signs of the times!

In the 19th century, turkeys came to supplant geese as the bird of choice for the Christmas dinner-table - and this despite the fact that they were harder to keep, having come from a warmer part of the world. Followers of The Archers on Radio 4 will know all about this. The Fairbrother boys have moved into Ambridge, and started rearing geese for the Christmas market, and are seen as rivals by the Grundy family, with their long-established turkey business. I suppose that, with a turkey, you get more meat for your money, and don't have all that fat to deal with.

Of course, Charles Dickens may have had something to do with it. When Ebenezer Scrooge asked the boy out in the street to go and buy a bird so that he could give it to the Cratchit family, it was a turkey, and not a goose. A Christmas Carol was published in 1843 and achieved immediate popularity. A year later, and Dickens was in Reading, staying at the George Hotel, and giving one of his readings of the story in the New Hall in London Street. It is now The Great Expectations pub.

So, after all that, will you be having turkey or goose this year? Whichever you choose, be sure to enjoy it!

Happy Wanderer



Home Security

Unfortunately, as the Christmas season approaches, there seem to be increased incidence of burglaries at residential property. It would be prudent to be vigilant and maintain the security of our homes particularly at this time as we accumulate Christmas gifts. The examples below are a reminder of our need to be on the alert. Message sent by

Liz Herbert (Police, NHW (Neighbourhood Home Watch) & Community Messaging Co-ordinator, Reading LPA)

There has been a number of burglaries recently in the Caversham Area:

Between Thursday 29th October until Friday 30th October 21:45 -06:45 in Valentine Crescent:

Unknown offender broke into property via front door, overnight and stole wallet, phone and cheque.

On Friday 30th October at approx 03:10am in Kendal Avenue : Unknown offender gained entry via letterbox on front door and stole handbag .

On Saturday 31st October between 21:26-23:59 in Evesham Road: Unknown offender broke into caravan - smashed front window and forced lock on door.

Monday 2nd November - Tuesday 3rd November between 23.00-08.58 in Blenheim Road: Unknown offender entered property, front door found open and stole handbag.

Monday 2nd November - Tuesday 3rd November 22.30-05.00 in Hemdean Road:

Unknown offender broke into a garage via rear gate and then unlocked door, bicycle and alcohol stolen.

Sunday 15th November - Overnight a number of vehicles were broken into in the Caversham Heights area. Various property was stolen.

Please inform your NHW members and report any suspicious sightings, incidents or any information to The Thames Valley Police Enquiry Centre on 101.

For more about home security advice go to; www.thamesvalley.police.uk/home-garden-security

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Caversham Horticultural Society

Join us for our Christmas Social get together on Wednesday 9th December when we will be entertained by the Reading Rock Choir singing Festive and other songs. There will also be a Christmas floral decorations demonstration. After these events join us for refreshments. The event starts at 7.45pm at our usual venue, Caversham Primary School, Hemdean Road

Caversham Artists and Friends

Caversham Artists and Friends will be holding their Christmas Gala at St Andrew's Hall, Albert Rd, Caversham RG4 7AW on Sunday 6th December from 2.0 to 6.30pm. The event offers a one-stop opportunity for Christmas gifts and treats for all ages. There will be printmakers, painters, photographers, weavers, potters and jewellers; all offering totally unique and original art and crafts to suit all pockets.

The Ways and Means Trust volunteers will be offering home-made cakes, tea and coffee in the café. The trust provides services and training for adults with learning and physical disabilities and poor mental health. Proceeds from the café will go to the trust.

There is a car park on site. Entry is free.

Emmer Green Residents Association

In 2011 residents of Emmer Green were treated to a blaze of glory on the green opposite St Barnabas Church - the result of mass daffodil planting by Reading Borough Council. Sadly, some three years later these had all but disappeared. No-one knows why.

In October 2015 Emmer Green Residents Association decided to replant in a few trial areas. Teams of volunteers planted 1000 bulbs. These will not be on the scale of the initial planting but we look forward to next spring and will monitor success in the longer term, once the bulbs become established. Thanks go to all the volunteers, Reading Borough Council's Decent Neighbourhoods Fund for providing the bulbs and Carolyn Jenkins for her support.

More photos can be seen at www.egra.co.uk/daffodils

If you live in Emmer Green and would like to join EGRA, please contact egra.members@gmail.com



Residents at the planting

Rosehill WI

President Margaret Pyle welcomed members and visitors to our October meeting. The meeting took place after we had devoured our Harvest Lunch, which consisted of rolls, crusty bread, pork pies, several different pates and cheeses, chutneys and salad. There was also a selection of fruit juices to drink. Then came dessert, a selection of crumbles, cake and fruit salad, plus cream. All-in-all a very enjoyable meal. Once again thanks were given to those members of the committee who provided the food, especially Yvonne Wright - well done Yvonne.

Lunch was followed by a quiz which had been compiled by Pat and Richard Denney, many thanks to both of them for providing an entertaining game.

After this came the official business in which Margaret said that a record of the previous meeting was available for all to read. She reported that Marjorie Record had now moved into a care home in Northampton to be near her daughter - we wish her well in her new surroundings. She also reported that Janet Smith and Margaret Slade are both rather poorly and we wish them both a speedy recovery and also hope to see them back at WI soon.

The RBH Emergency Toiletry Packs continue to be in constant use, and to this end the raffle money from our November meeting was given to the committee who gather and send these items. Many thanks to all members in the past who have donated either money or items for these packs.

Secretary Mary Robinson drew our attention to several items in the Berkshire WI News: A Taste of Poland, speaker Jola Wisniewska; Kymira - A Revolutionary Fabric, speaker Timothy Brownstone; trip to Kew Gardens; Christmas Concert at Grazeley Village Hall on 5th December.

The meeting closed with a cup of tea, and the results of the raffle.

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Caversham Heights Society

During October members of the Caversham Heights Society enjoyed two very different, but equally fascinating, talks. The first, on October 7th, was on the History of the Oxford Colleges, by Alastair Lack, though in reality it was as much about their relationship and interaction with the university, the city of Oxford, the Crown and the Church as it was about the colleges per se. In the same way as Eton College started academic teachers began letting out rooms to students, often in their early 'teens, in their own houses from as early as 1167. The first colleges were founded in the 13th century - University (1249), Balliol (1263) and Merton (1264) - thus making it the oldest university in Britain and one of the oldest in the world. Apparently the University Church is the most visited church in England because of the large number of tourists as well as students.

The reasons for the growth and importance of Oxford relate to its proximity to London [about 50 miles away], its situation on the River Thames [Isis in Oxford], and its proximity to the royal hunting lodge at Blenheim. The colleges were essentially set up by a king or a bishop for the training of civil and royal servants or clergy. One result of this is that the university's most noted area of learning has been the humanities/arts. Even so the university has produced 54 Nobel Prize winners in the sciences and it boasts one of the largest biochemistry and chemistry departments in the UK. It has also produced 70 gold, 50 silver and 40 bronze medalists in various Olympic Games. Balliol College has produced over 40 MPs and 4 Viceroy of India while Christchurch can boast 13 Prime Ministers! The Bodleian Library is one of the greatest in the world and houses at least 13 million books, while the Ashmolean Museum (1683) is the oldest museum in the country. Each college is unique in the way it was established, in its charter and architecture, and its employment of staff, the courses it can offer and the right to award its own degrees. In reality many of these are now awarded by the university to which each college is affiliated. There is not the scope to elaborate here on what was a most interesting and illuminating talk. It is worth pointing out that Reading University began as an off shoot of Oxford University's Extra-mural Department and the two institutions still work closely together in running courses.

The second meeting, on the 21st October, was about the other extreme from the gleaming spires of Oxford, both socially and culturally when Jeff Rozelaar enthralled us with his experiences as a poor Jewish boy growing up in the East End of London in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. He also revealed the Jewish sense of humour which has been honed in spite of, or maybe as a coping mechanism because of the issues of anti-Semitism. His talk was entitled 'Bacon and Bagels' to illustrate both the cockney and the Jewish influences on his life. He pointed out that Jack the Ripper, Harold Pinter, Lionel Bart, and Barbara Windsor all grew up in his part of the East End. He described how everyone shared open public baths, because private bathrooms were unavailable in most properties, and how these received a direct hit by a German V2 rocket; how the Metropolitan Police and the City of London Police used to treat drunks by placing them in the other's territory: how a number 78 London double decker bus jumped across Tower Bridge as the two sides were being lifted up; and how Dr Rhodes Boyson broke the power of teddy boy gangs that were disrupting school life in one particular school and helped to raise the standards of this failing school. All in all a humorous and interesting talk on a subject that few, if any, of the audience, had any knowledge about.

Society meetings are held on alternate Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm in Caversham Heights Methodist church hall. New members are welcome and enquiries should be addressed to Jill Hodges on 959 5307 or by email to irishjill@southcote.net

CADRA Autumn open meeting

The autumn CADRA open meeting was held on Wednesday 21st October in Caversham Baptist Centre on the subject of Energy Saving in the Home. During an informative meeting CADRA welcomed a panel of three speakers, who were contacted after helpful discussions with GREN, the Greater Reading Environmental Network, the Reading Climate Change Partnership, SPAB, the Society of Protection for Ancient Buildings and STBA, the Sustainable Traditional Buildings Alliance.

Ian Gough, director of Reduce Energy, works with both Wokingham and Reading councils and gave a broad overview of the range of options and some potential pitfalls. Tony Cowling is involved in many local projects and

has built his own low energy house. Richard Oxley established the Oxley Conservation Historic Buildings Consultancy in Henley and covered energy saving issues specific to older buildings.

Energy costs represent significant levels of expenditure for all households and the topics covered were of interest to everyone who attended. Each of the speakers stressed that all properties are different. It is very important to understand how your house is constructed and how it works in terms of managing energy consumption. Draught proofing will always pay dividends - your home will be more comfortable and your heating system more efficient.

Ian Gough described low, medium and high cost methods of reducing energy consumption. The starting point is to make small, simple changes to our behaviour: turning lights and appliances off when not in use, full loads in the washing machine and dishwasher, adding a layer of clothing if chilly. Medium cost methods include annual boiler checks, installing loft and cavity wall insulation, using programmable heating controls and purchasing energy efficient appliances when renewing items. Payback would take about five years. High cost solutions would pay back in about 10 years, and would include upgrading to a new boiler or installing double or triple glazing.

Tony Cowling has built his own house in Sonning and every element of the design contributes to efficiency. His house has low energy use, low maintenance, is warm in winter, cool in summer and has very good air quality. He doesn't need a central heating system. Completed in 2009, it cost £195,000 to build.

Richard Oxley's expertise is in older buildings, including listed buildings, but also traditional housing stock which is about 100 years old, plentiful in Caversham. His slides illustrated the variety of housing types locally, illustrating that there are no standard solutions to energy efficiency. The key is to understand individual buildings - the original construction materials used and the intended airflow through the building. While it is good practice to eliminate draughts in older buildings it is vital that evaporation of moisture can still take place, so that mould does not develop creating an unhealthy environment for occupants. Keeping the windows, wall and gutters in good weatherproof condition is a basic first step.

Aesthetics are an important consideration, especially as modern building materials may not be easily compatible with the original structure. Repairing wooden frames rather than installing replacement UPVC windows will look better, give a longer life and be more compatible with a healthy building.



The CADRA panel and chairman

After the formal meeting the audience divided into groups with the opportunity to ask individual questions of the speakers. Rob Robson from the local Citizens Advice Bureau was also available to describe the services available on energy matters.

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