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REGULAR VILLAGE ACTIVITIES

Tuesday	7.30pm	Table Tennis Club	Village Hall
Thursday	Currently closed	Book Barn	Barn next to The Sun
Saturday	See page 6	Book Barn	Barn next to The Sun

REGULAR MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

1st Wednesday in each month	7.30pm Wednesday Sisters	The Sun
2nd Tuesday every other month	7.30pm Parish Council Meetings (Jan/Mar/May/July/Sept/Nov)	Committee Room
3rd Tuesday in each month	7.30pm WI	Pinchmill School

CHURCH OFFICERS

Rector	Revd Paolo Di Leo	(782000, 07968 606 377)
Curate	Revd Dr Diana Stretton	(07807 341 638)
Lay Leaders of Worship	Rosemary Drewery	(07792 926 004)
	Jane Templeman	(07885 617 583)
Churchwarden	Sue Whitehouse	(781300)
Treasurer	Stephen Hill	(781064)

Editor : Jane Carwithen (782185) or email janecarwithen@gmail.com
 Items to be with the Editor for the next edition by NOON on 25th of the month



HOUSE NEWS

January 2023

Parish Online www.felmersham.net

From Rev Dr Diana Stretton

The Gate of the Year

Here we are, at the start of 2023. The Christmas lights are coming down and the festivities are turning back to a more regular pattern of life. Walking through the doorway of the new year can be a time of mixed emotions. Looking forward to new things whilst reflecting on what has come before. Depending on our individual situation, we may be looking at the future and the coming year with hope or anxiety. The new year is a time of resolutions and reminding ourselves of our priorities. The new year can also be a time of uncertainty, when we don't know exactly what the coming months will bring us.

That feeling of uncertainty and trepidation coming into the new year, is reflected in the famous poem 'The Gate of the Year' by Minnie Louise Haskins:

"I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:

'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown'"

This year perhaps even more than many years, many of us may be hoping for a bit of light to guide us as we move forwards. Hoping for a good year ahead but maybe feeling a bit tentative about the next steps.

In the poem, the man at the gate of the year encourages the poet to put her hand into God's for safe guidance through the way ahead. The poet does this and steps confidently out into the darkness. I find this really powerful as an image, because there is not any particular indication that only good things will happen once we have entrusted our way to God. There are no guarantees that everything will be perfect or work out as we would want. The only guarantee is that we have a trusted guide who can bring us through the challenges on the best possible path. Who will fall with us when we stumble and help us to get up again.

(Ctd Overleaf)

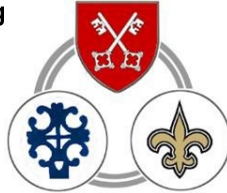
**The United Benefice of Sharnbrook, Felmersham
and Knotting with Souldrop**

St Peter's Church, Sharnbrook MK44 1HU, St Mary's Church, Felmersham MK43 7JP All Saints Church, Souldrop MK44 1EX

www.sharnbrookcofechurches.org



Welcome



FORTHCOMING CHURCH SERVICES JANUARY

Sun 1 Jan	10.30am	Holy Communion and Hymns at St Mary's
Wed 4 Jan	9.30am	Holy Communion at St Peter's
Sun 8 Jan <i>Epiphany</i>	9.00am 10.30am 10.30am	Said Holy Communion at St Mary's Choral Holy Communion at St Peter's (ZOOM'd) Holy Communion at All Saints, Souldrop
Sun 15 Jan	9.00am 9.00am 3.00pm	Said Holy Communion at St Peter's Choral Holy Communion at The Sun PH Evensong at St Peter's
Wed 18 Jan	9.30am	Holy Communion at St Peter's
Sun 22 Jan <i>Week of Payer for Christian Unity</i>	10.30am	Churches Together Ecumenical Service for Christian Unity at St Peter's
Sun 29 Jan <i>Presentation of Christ</i> <i>Candlemas</i>	9.00am 9.00am 3.00pm	Said Holy Communion at St Peter's Choral Holy Communion at The Sun PH Evensong at St Peter's
Also every		
Monday	10.00am	Christian Meditation at St Peter's Room
Thursday	9.30am	Morning Prayer on Zoom



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Thank you for your valuable support during 2022!
We send you Christmas Greetings and our very best wishes for the New Year

Tuesday 28th March – Saturday 1st April, 2023

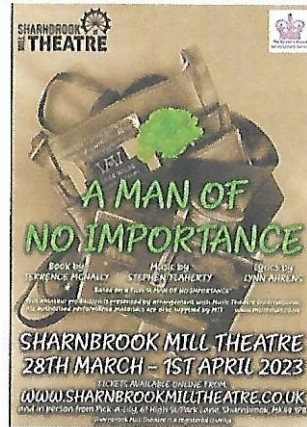
A MAN OF NO IMPORTANCE

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A musical drama set in Dublin, 1964.

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*CHARITY NIGHT will be Tuesday 28th March 2023, in support of

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Visit: coop.co.uk/membership Thank you!

For our future plans at 'The Mill', we need plenty of Volunteers.

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We are currently raising funds for several on-going projects!

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Please contact Christine Summerling Telephone: 01933 353282

fundraising@sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk

www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk

(Ctd) I believe that God gives us this help and guidance in many ways, and one of the ways that we can receive this is through the support of the people around us. People in our families, our friends and people in our local communities. It has struck me since moving here that people really do look out for each other, help each other out and support each other. That is such an incredible blessing and something that we can all hold on to as we move through the gate of the year.

Online Link for Church Services

<https://zoom.us/j/763110804> The Password is: 079014

- **WARM SPACE** St. Peter's Church on **Wednesdays** from 9am to 6pm.

MIDWEEK AND SUNDAY 9AM SERVICES DURING THE CLOSURE OF ST MARY'S CHURCH

Sue Whitehouse

As detailed in the December edition of Ouse News, work starts on the Pew Project on 10th January and St Mary's will remain closed until the end of February.

Due to the Village Hall being unavailable on one or two of the occasions when we would normally host a Benefice Service at 10.30am, we have arranged, by kind permission of Pete Pestell at The Sun, to hold our four missing services from 9am in the back room of the pub. By starting early we can be out of the way before he needs to set up for Sunday lunches.

The last Benefice Service in the church before work starts will be on 1st January. Those held at The Sun will be on 15th and 29th January and 12th and 26th February. The Bishop of Bedford, the Rt Revd Richard Atkinson will be joining us on 12th February.

Funerals arranged before 10th January will go ahead as normal. The churchyard will continue to be open for visitors.

Midweek services in Felmersham will be suspended for the time being, but they will continue to be held fortnightly at St Peter's in Sharnbrook.

If anyone is unsure of arrangements or would like a lift to St Peter's for services in Sharnbrook, please phone me on 781300.

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**Wildlife Trust for
Beds, Cambs
& Northants**

**Did you miss this
news of 2022?**

The acquisition of Strawberry Hill, a unique Bedfordshire farm, is set to unlock a wealth of amazing future opportunities, thanks to generous funding

The purchase of a Bedfordshire farm which has been left to rewild for 25 years is one of the most exciting land acquisitions in our Trust's history. Surrounded by arable farmland, the 150 -hectare **Strawberry Hill at Knotting Green, Bedfordshire**, is a unique opportunity to save a site rich in nature and create a wild visitor destination.

In the 1990s an enlightened farmer gave up sowing crops and turned his land over to nature - Strawberry Hill has now been transformed from arable fields to the largest area of scrub and young woodland in the region.

A bird survey has shown healthy populations of nightingales, willow warblers, whitethroats and garden warblers with habitat ideal for turtle doves.

In order to give the Trust time to raise the funds to purchase the freehold of the site, we are hugely grateful that it has initially been bought by the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation and Julia Davies, founder of 'We Have the POWER' with help from some generous philanthropic lenders through her Funding Nature Project.

Pinchmill
INTERIORS

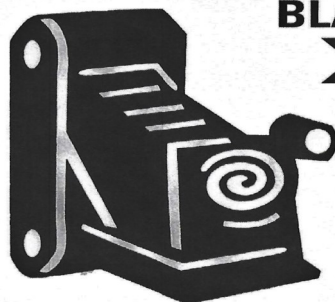
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CLAPHAM SCHOOL FOR SENIORS

We are ready to welcome back members and new members (over 45 yrs) on Wednesday 11th January 2023, who want to start a new hobby or continue a hobby.

We meet on Wednesday (term time only) at Clapham Methodist Church on the High Street 9.15am – 4.00pm. The fee is £20 per term payable on enrolment day which is the 5th January.

Group subjects include: Scrabble, Dominoes, Lace making, reading, singing, Arts & Crafts (of all types), knitting, crochet, painting and a couple of new classes of card making and a card school. Plus many more not listed! Bonuses are you get to meet new people/friends and join in the community spirit! And of course, learn a new hobby.

Please note we do not supply the materials you will need to bring them along.

Any questions or queries please give us a call:
Berta Barnes or Miriam Pulman
07704 850974 07790 267176

TREE WORKS IN THE CHURCHYARD

Sue Whitehouse

Application has been made to The Diocese of St. Albans and Bedford Borough Council for the removal of the large conifer at the east end of the church. This is in response to a number of factors: the request of a number of people in the Parish who think it is ugly and overgrown; the fact that one of its main stems is now pressing down on grave stones and the advice of tree surgeons that removal of that stem will cause the tree to die in any case.

The Diocese has stipulated that part of the remains are to be kept for wildlife.

The PCC plan to plant a lower growing native tree or two, to provide a better contribution to wildlife and the beauty of the churchyard.

If you have comments or objections, please address them in writing to:

The Diocesan Registrar at Winckworth Sherwood LLP,
Minerva House, 5 Montague Close, London SE1 9BB or by email to stalbansregistry@wslaw.co.uk.



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Everybody needs good neighbours and friends, and never more so when life in our village communities is changing so fast. That is why Felmersham and Radwell organised their own village care scheme in 1997 in order to extend any existing help offered by family and friends in an organised way through local village volunteers.

Beneficiaries have varied from elderly and isolated persons, to parents with young children who may need short-term help.

Should you need help at any time, please ring us on 07786 344176, leaving your name, address and telephone number, and we will return your call as soon as we can. If possible, we would be grateful for at least twenty-four hours notice.

If you are not sure whether we are able to help you, then give us a ring anyway. If we cannot help, then we may know someone who can.

Enclosed is a new Help Card to keep by your telephone.

THE LATEST NEWS FROM GORDON

Gordon the Binman is delighted to announce that as a result of the latest weigh-in at Bedford Food Bank, a mighty 97 kg, he has reached his target of half-a-ton of donations since the end of October from the villages, church and school. You have helped provide support to 1,250 people, a truly stunning effort and the food bank and their customers wish everyone who gave a big thank you.

Regrettably the need for food bank assistance will continue to be vital to so many in 2023, so expect to see him collecting again in the New Year.

HARROLD-ODELL COUNTRY PARK

Edward Green

Happy New Year from everyone at Harrold-Odell Country Park. The last year or so has seen changes in the park staff (both Janet Munro and Richard Dowsett have retired), however the work around the park hasn't changed. We've been busy laying hedges, building dry stone walls, coppicing, cutting and raking grass and generally making the place safer and nicer for everyone!

In 2022 we were awarded the Green Flag for the 15th year in a row! It takes a lot of hard work by a dedicated and friendly bunch of volunteers. If anyone is interested in helping out, please call Ed Green on 01234 720016 or e-mail hocp@bedford.gov.uk

Every other Thursday, there are health walks around the park and/or local area. Meeting at 10:30am at the woodland entrance to the Dragonfly Café, they last about 1 hour. The dates are 29th December, 12th & 26th January, 9th & 23rd February and 9th and 23rd March. More info can be found at <https://hocp.co.uk/get-involved/health-walks/>

Designed by a volunteer and available to buy in the park for £1, we have an I Spot activity booklet – ideal for children to take them into different areas of the park & spot various sculptures and wildlife. Points are available for each 'spot' and add them up for a bronze, silver or gold star!

BOOK BARN UPDATE

The Book Barn will remain closed for the time being whilst the weather is chilly .

Watch this space for further news....

OUSE VALLEY MOTHERS' UNION



OUR NEXT MEETING

will be on January 12th 2023 at 2.30pm

St Peter's Church Room, Sharnbrook

"MEMBERS ONLY MEETING"

This will be discussions for the coming year and to form a Committee.

We also have the pleasure of enrolling two more members and welcoming two members who are transferring from another branch and joining our well supportive team.

WE WISH ALL READERS:

"A PEACEFUL AND HAPPY NEW YEAR"

Please feel free to contact us with your views or a chat, discussions or help

Jackie Biggs 782517 and Hazel Scott 781559



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