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HOUSE NEWS

December 2023

Barnes Tree Services

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REGULAR VILLAGE ACTIVITIES

1st Wednesday in each month	7 pm Wednesday Sisters Supper Club. For more details please phone Rosie on 781046.	The Sun
Every Tuesday	7.30pm Table Tennis Club	Village Hall
2nd Tuesday every other month	7.30pm Parish Council Meetings (Jan/Mar/May/July/Sept/Nov)	Committee Room

CHURCH OFFICERS

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

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

A Christmas Reflection

Revd Paolo Di Leo

Even in the 21st century, Christmas remains a global phenomenon, celebrated in myriad ways by billions of people worldwide. Even in regions where its observance is prohibited, many clandestinely uphold the Christmas tradition.¹ What is it about Christmas that renders it so important and uniquely significant? Irrespective of religious, ideological or political affiliations, there is little doubt that the cultural traditions associated with Christmas contribute to a shared sense of joy and celebration. Festive decorations, presents, carols, and culinary delights create a collective experience. But Christmas can embody and encourage a more profound feeling and experience that transcends and enriches our lives and community.

Christmas above all fosters hope and a time for peace, even in the depths and despair of war, as exemplified late on Christmas Eve 1914, when men of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) heard German troops in the trenches opposite them singing carols and patriotic songs and saw lanterns and small fir trees along their trenches. Messages began to be shouted between the trenches. The following day, Christmas Day, British and German soldiers met in no man's land and exchanged gifts, took photographs and some played impromptu games of football. Together they buried casualties and repaired trenches and dugouts.² Christmas fosters a sense of common hope, values, belonging and a shared humanity that at times feels other worldly.

Christmas embodies and encourages the spirit of generosity and giving, emphasizing the joy of sharing with others. The exchange of gifts, whether big or small, symbolizes and expresses love, gratitude, and thoughtfulness. (Ctd.)

Wishing All Our Readers

A Very Happy Christmas

**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 DECEMBER

Sun 3 Dec	9.00am	Said Holy Communion at St Mary's
	10.30am	Choral Communion at St Peter's (ZOOM'd)
	3.00pm	Ouse Valley Christmas Concert at St Peter's
Wed 6 Dec	9.30am	Holy Communion at St Peter's
Sun 10 Dec	9.00am	Said Holy Communion at St Peter's
	10.30am	Choral Holy Communion at St Mary's (ZOOM'd)
	3.00pm	Faith Explorers at St Mary's
Wed 13 Dec	9.30am	Holy Communion at St Mary's
Sun 17 Dec	9.00am	Said Holy Communion at St Mary's
	10.30am	Choral Holy Communion at St Peter's (ZOOM'd)
	6.00pm	Nine Lessons & Carols at St Mary's
Wed 20 Dec	9.30am	Holy Communion at St Peter's
Sun 24 Dec	10.30am	Said Holy Communion at St Mary's
	3.00pm	Crib Service at St Mary's
	6.00pm	Nine Lessons & Carols at St Peter's
	11.30pm	Midnight Mass at St Mary's
Sun 25 Dec	9.00pm	Christmas Family Communion at All Saints
	10.30am	Benefice Christmas Communion at St Peter's
Sun 31 Dec	10.30am	Choral Holy Communion at St Peter's (ZOOM'd)



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Community Care	07786 344 176	Animal Care and Dog Walking	Annette Court- ney 783164
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Our 2024 Season



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Tickets (limited) £17.00 including a Fish & Chips supper from Douglas Pope
01933 356974 or

mail@douglaspoppe.com

A fundraising event for Sharnbrook Mill Theatre

TAKE ANOTHER DIP!
A cabaret to celebrate our 80th Anniversary!
SHARNBROOK MILL THEATRE
8th & 9th December at 7.30pm
Tickets £17 including a Fish and Chips supper!
This is a fundraising event for Sharnbrook Mill Theatre
Tickets available from:
Douglas Pope on 01933 356974
or mail@douglaspoppe.com
Sharnbrook Mill Theatre is a registered charity

1943

The Sharnbrook Players
Founded at Church Hall

Later renamed: Sharnbrook & North Bedfordshire Operatic Society

1965

Charitable Trust formed:
Sharnbrook Amateur Theatre Trust Ltd

1974 – 79: Mill conversion creating 'A Home of Our Own':
Sharnbrook Mill Theatre

2023

www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk

(Ctd. from overleaf) The act of giving during Christmas fosters a sense of connection and strengthens bonds, reminding us of the importance of generosity. It is a time, if only once a year, to give to those in need and often forgotten. It's a time we may turn and pray and provide to the many who are bereft of peace, hope and comfort, in a world that has become for them a place of loneliness, persecution, hurt, hate, suffering and hopelessness.

Christmas serves as a powerful catalyst for bringing families, friends and communities together. Whether through shared meals, festive fayres, or simple moments of togetherness, in the pub, the church or simply at home. The Christmas season creates a unique atmosphere that strengthens and sustains social bonds. The emphasis on family, friends and community during Christmas reinforces the importance of all the connections in our lives. Perhaps Christmas may offer an opportunity to reconcile and redeem relationships that have been battered, bruised and broken by the events of life.

As the year draws to a close, Christmas provides a natural pause for reflection. It offers an opportunity to look back on the challenges and successes of the past year. Moreover, the anticipation of a new year brings a sense of hope and renewal, making it an opportunity for a time for personal and collective refreshing. It is a time and opportunity to perhaps take a respite from the hectic 'hustle and bustle' of life and to pause and reflect on matters spiritual and eternal.

Christmas, with its focus on the birth of Jesus Christ in humble circumstances, exemplifies love, compassion, generosity and forgiveness. It serves as a timeless reminder of the love, presence and forgiveness of God, who in Jesus came among us and became God with us. It is a time of reflection on the redemption and reconciliation that is open to all through faith in Jesus as God's revelation and presence with us.

Christmas is a time to not look heavenward to find God, but to experience God's presence with us, and in us, and amongst us, in the here and now.

**May the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the perseverance of the wise men,
the obedience of Joseph and Mary,
and the peace of the Christ child
be yours this Christmas.**

1 Bowler, G. Christmas in the Crosshairs, p.3

2 <https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/the-real-story-of-the-christmas-truce>

ALSO

Thursdays 7, 14, 21 December

9.30am

Morning Prayer on ZOOM

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BEDFORD CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL 2023

Over 60 trees decorated in the theme of...

KINGS & QUEENS

On:
Wed 6 Dec to Sat 9 Dec - 10am till 5pm
Sun 10 Dec - 12 noon till 4pm

Venue:
St Paul's Church, Bedford, MK40 1SQ

Admission:
£3 (Children under 16 free)

Find out more:

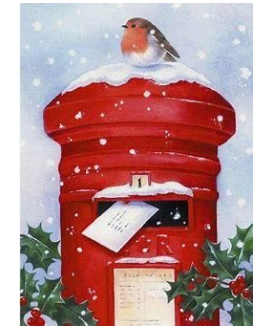
📍 Bedford Christmas Tree Festival
E: treefestival@stpaulschurchbedford.org.uk
T: 01234 340163



Festival
Concert
7:30pm
Friday 8th
December



Daily music & performances by community groups, refreshments, competitions and raffle.



Christmas

POSTAL DEADLINES

Monday 18 December

Royal Mail 2nd Class including
Signed For

Wednesday 20 December

Royal Mail 1st Class

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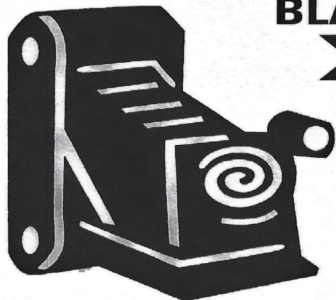
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PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: 14 NOVEMBER 2023

EDITED HIGHLIGHTS

Paula Radcliffe Way

Highway works are continuing to progress but, following testing and inspection of the crash barrier system, it was identified that the entire system needs to be replaced. The original scope of the work allowed for replacing some damaged sections of barrier, however, the damage was far more extensive than expected. This is a major safety concern, and the entire system is now being replaced. During this period the road will still be open in each direction, but a lane of the dual carriageway will be closed in each direction to allow the works to be completed. The new barrier being installed has additional protection to prevent corrosion of the posts. This is an unforeseen delay and these additional works are planned to be completed by 15 December 2023 at the latest.

Parish Roadside Verges

All roadside verges have been cut by the Borough Council's contractor and now look tidier. General litter exposed by this process has generally been removed by litter pickers.

Hedge cutting

The appointed contractor had completed the cutting of the beech hedge in the Parish Burial Ground and the mixed thorn hedge on the north side of the Village Play Area to a high standard.

Inconsiderate Parking

There have been further complaints about inconsiderate parking in the narrow Hunts Lane, Pavenham Road and Grange Road. There is no footpath in Pavenham Road and, as such, pedestrians have to walk in the middle of the road into Grange Road, potentially straight into the path of oncoming vehicles. Residents are kindly requested to think of other highway users and to always park vehicles in a considerate manner throughout the villages.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on **Tuesday 9 January 2024 commencing at 7.30pm.**

The schedule of meeting dates for the remainder of 2024 is as follows:

Tuesday 12 March 2024

Tuesday 14 May 2024

Tuesday 9 July 2024

Tuesday 10 September 2024

Tuesday 12 November 2024

All meetings are scheduled to commence at 7.30pm.

Additional Compline Services during Advent

On-line Compline every Wed and Fri at 9pm
for 3 weeks, starting Wed 6th December

[Via Zoom on the Benefice Services Link](#)

St Peter's Christmas Tree Festival weekend

1st to 3rd December

This year's Theme **PEACE ON EARTH**

Fri 1st Dec 3:30pm - 8:30pm Christmas Tree Festival

Sat 2nd Dec 11am - 3:30pm Christmas Tree Festival
4.00pm Christingle Service

Sun 3rd Dec 10.30am Choral Communion

3.00pm Ouse Valley Advent & Christmas Concert

With proceeds going to the Children's Society

Tickets are £7 to include wine and mince pies, and can be
obtained from Janet Welsh on 781010.

Soloists are Bridget Peirson-Davis and Alan McKenzie so do come
along and sing some of your favourite carols with us.

ADVENT Study Groups—The Songs of ADVENT

Zechariah: A Song of Faith 7.30pm 28th Nov 2023

Angels: A Song of Peace 7.30pm 5th Dec 2023

Mary: A Song of Trust 7.30pm 12th Dec 2023

Simeon: A Song of Hope 7.30pm 19th Dec 2023

[Zoomed from St. Peter's Church on the
Benefice Services Link](#)

ADVENT WINDOW TRAIL

Can you spot all the windows? Throughout December, 25 different angel themed window displays will be appearing around the village. Enjoy looking for the windows each day or take a walk on Christmas Day to see the full host of angels.

A THANK YOU FROM THE HULATT FAMILY

Please could we thank everyone who came to Geoff's funeral on Friday 10th November.

We were overwhelmed with how many came. It gives us all comfort in knowing that he was a lovely man who obviously made a mark on lots of people. We were also amazed with the fabulous donations to the Palliative Care Hub, whose work is invaluable to families. Thank you again.

LUNCH TOGETHER

A Reminder from Jane Rhodes

The first Lunch Together (see the November Ouse News) will be on Friday, January 12th at 12.30pm at The Sun.

Please ring Jane R on 782138 if you would like to be there as we need to give Pete numbers in good time. It will be a lovely opportunity for a get-together.

THANK YOU

Marjorie Pipe

I would like to say a big thank you to all those who sent cards and good wishes for my 80th birthday.

Also thank you to the ladies who arranged a surprise tea party at the Garden Centre for me and the many ladies of the village who attended. Very much appreciated.

Online Link for Church Services

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



Ouse Valley Mothers' Union



Our Christmas Party

Please bring a small gift for a silent auction

Thursday 14 December 2.30pm

St Peter's Room

Visitors welcome (suggested donation £4 for MU charities)
Details: contact Jackie Biggs (782517) or Hazel Scott (781559)
We welcome anyone who would like to know about Mothers' Union
Charity No.249814



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