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REGULAR VILLAGE ACTIVITIES

1st Wednesday in each month	7 pm Wednesday Sisters. For more details please phone Rosie on 781046.	The Sun
Every Tuesday	7.30pm Table Tennis	Village Hall
2nd Wednesday 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)
Lay Leader of Worship	Rosemary Drewery	(07792 926 004)
Churchwarden	Sue Whitehouse	(781300)
Treasurer	Stephen Hill	(781064)

Editor of Ouse News: 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



OUSE NEWS

February 2026

www.felmersham.net

February

Revd Paolo Di Leo

Most months of the year carry a clear identity. December glows with celebration and joy. January announces itself boldly with fresh resolutions and hopeful beginnings. March and April arrive with the stirrings of spring and the promise of new life.

But February is different. It stands quietly between these confident months with an unusual shape. It has fewer days than the others, and every few years it stretches itself unexpectedly with an extra day. We often glance past February, eager for the brighter days ahead coloured by the snowdrops of March or the blossoms of April. If any month might understand what it feels like to be unimportant and overlooked, it is surely February.

Yet history tells us a different story. Long before our modern calendar, February held a position of great importance, as Februa, the month of purification. It completed the Roman year. It gathered the loose ends, set things right, and prepared people for the new year to begin. It concluded the year with dignity and prestige. Then the calendar shifted. Months moved, systems changed, and February was demoted, shortened and sidelined. The once-honoured month now became a quiet, overlooked interval. Its previous prestige forgotten.

How often do we feel the same in life? How often have unwelcomed circumstances, betrayals, failures, or losses left us feeling forgotten, pushed aside, undervalued, or demoted in the eyes of the world? Perhaps a job we once held with pride, a relationship we valued, or a role in our community has been taken from us. Many of us have known the sting of being forgotten, sidelined, overlooked, or diminished.

(Ctd overleaf)

*Header photo: A Felmersham Robin
 with thanks to Sarah Royal*

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 FOR FEBRUARY

Sun 1 February	9.00am	Said Holy Communion at St Mary's
Candlemas	10.30am	Choral Holy Communion at St Peter's
Presentation of Christ	3.00pm	Faith Explorers at St Mary's
	3.00pm	Evensong at St Peter's
Wed 4 February	9.30am	Holy Communion at St Mary's
Sun 8 February	9.00am	Said Holy Communion at St Peter's
2nd before Lent	10.30 am	Holy Communion at All Saint's
	10.30am	Choral Holy Communion at St Mary's
	3.00pm	Faith Explorers at St Mary's
	3.00pm	Evensong at St Peter's
Wed 11 February	9.30am	Holy Communion at St Peter's
Sun 15 February	9.00am	Said Holy Communion at St Mary's
Next before Lent	10.30am	Choral Holy Communion at Peter's
	3.00pm	Faith Explorers at All Saints
Wed 18 February	7.30pm	Communion and Imposition of Ashes at St Peter's
Ash Wednesday		
Sun 22 February	9.00am	Said Holy Communion at St Peter's
Lent 1	10.30am	Choral Holy Communion at St Mary's
	3.00pm	Evensong at St Peter's
Wed 25 February	9.30am	Holy Communion at St Peter's

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Coming soon to your local theatre!

WAITING FOR GODOT
by Samuel Beckett

SHARNBROOK MILL THEATRE
3RD-7TH MARCH 2026
Tickets available online from www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk

This amateur production of "Waiting for Godot" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Samuel French Ltd www.concordtheatricals.co.uk

Sharnbrook Mill Theatre is a registered charity

Lerner and Loewe's My Fair Lady

Book & Lyrics by ALAN JAY LERNER Music by FREDERICK LOEWE

Adapted from George Bernard Shaw's play and Gabriel Pascal's motion picture "Pygmalion"
Original production directed and staged by Moss Hart

This amateur production is presented by Sharnbrook Mill Theatre International
All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI
www.mtishows.co.uk

SHARNBROOK MILL THEATRE
12th-16th May 2026
Tickets available online from: www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk

Sharnbrook Mill Theatre is a registered charity

Later in 2026...

Dinner - 15th-19th September

Matilda Jr - 29th-31st October

Come From Away - 8th-12th December

Tickets and more information from www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk
Sharnbrook Mill Theatre is a registered charity

(Ctd from page1)

Yet just like February, this process can become a source of transformation. February may have a story to tell us. February's unique placement, its irregularity, and even its diminishment allows the present calendar to hold together beautifully. In the same way, our moments of being set aside or overlooked can reveal hidden gifts, unexpected purpose, and unseen possibilities. What seems like a demotion, a displacement and a painful dislocation may be a preparation for a new role in life, a new life we would have never believed. A gift alongside the tragedy.

February's quiet work remains essential. Its unusual shape and new position keep the year aligned, its leap years protect the rhythm of the seasons, and its place between winter's depth and spring's first stirrings gives the world a moment of pause and rest. February does not hold the calendar together despite being wounded and different, it holds it together because it is wounded and different.

And so, for anyone who feels invisible, diminished, or out of place today, take heart: your difference, your lowering, your unusual path may be exactly what allows a transformed life to emerge. You are not broken, wasted, or unimportant without a purpose. You are being shaped, refined, and loved by God in a way that carries value beyond what you can feel. To see this is to have faith in God. It's that simple.

The ever-present wisdom of the Bible tells us "The parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable." (1 Corinthians 12:22)

Just like February, your difference, your apparent weakness, and even your moments of being overlooked are seen by God and loved to the extent that they become valued, indispensable and purposeful. You are essential. You are cherished. And in God's hands, your life is loved, beautiful, meaningful and something the world could not do without. Have faith.

Sun 1 March	9.00am	Said Holy Communion at St Mary's
Lent 2 /St David	10.30am	Choral Holy Communion at St Peter's

Compline begins at 9pm on Fri 20 February
and on Wed 25 Feb and Fri 27 Feb on Zoom

Remember Thursdays 9.30am Morning Prayer on Zoom

Zoom Link for our Benefice Online Services <https://zoom.us/j/763110804>

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Further Minor Changes to Bus Times



Some minor changes to the route 50 timetable were made from 5th January.

The service pattern remains unchanged, but some times are shifted by up to 5 minutes.

What do robins eat?

A robin's diet consists of seeds, fruits, insects, worms and other invertebrates.

Robins are natural ground feeders so feeding trays are the best way to encourage them into your garden. You may also observe them clearing up scraps that have fallen from hanging feeders. Mealworms are a particular favourite of robins, but they also find sunflower hearts very palatable.

Relatively unafraid of people, robins often follow gardeners around to take advantage of freshly dug-up worms and even feed from people's hands.

Where do robins live?

Robins are widespread throughout the UK, inhabiting farmland and woodland, as well as gardens and parks in towns and cities.

Robin behaviour, breeding and nesting

Both male and female robins hold territories, as a pair in summer and as individuals in winter. They will defend these with surprising ferocity, driving off intruders and making their presence known by singing loudly from conspicuous perches.

During courting, the female is permitted to enter the male's territory. The breeding season usually starts in March, but courting can begin in January if it's mild. The male supplies more than a third of his mate's food throughout this period.

Using dead leaves, moss and hair, the female builds a cup-shaped nest low to the ground. She hides it in nooks and crannies in tree roots, or among shrubs and climbers, such as ivy. More unusual nesting locations include old wellies and plant pots.

Robins are sensitive to disturbance during nest building and egg laying and will easily desert their nest if they think it's been discovered.

The female typically lays four to six eggs, which she incubates for 13 days. Once chicks hatch, the female immediately removes the eggshells from the nest.

Both parents look after the nestlings, which are dependent on them for food and warmth. The chicks fledge at 14 days but continue to be cared for, predominantly by the male, for a further three weeks.

Robins have at least two broods a year, with nestlings around as late as the end of July.

Did you know?

The robin became the iconic bird of Christmas in the Victorian era, when postmen were nicknamed robins due to their red waistcoats. Robins began to appear on Christmas cards to represent the postmen who delivered them.

The Big Blunham Book Sale

Saturday 28th February 2026, 10.00am to 3.00pm
in Blunham Parish Church, MK44 3NQ

There will be an enormous selection of nearly new books
- specialist and fiction, sorted into categories.

Homemade soup, homemade cakes, hot dogs,
teas and coffees served all day.

All profits to Blunham Church Fabric Fund.

For further details please ring

Sue and Peter Holden 01767 640572

The Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*)

The RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch has just taken place again in January. In 2025, 9.1 million birds were counted at this weekend with 590 000+ people taking part. Choosing one hour to take part you are asked to count the birds you see in your garden, from your balcony, or in your local park. You can only count birds that land. Last year in 2025 the robin came in 6th on the list of birds most seen in people's gardens.



With Sarah's photograph of the Felmersham Robin as our header picture for this month, here is some information about one of our favourite garden birds.

Some Robin fast facts (taken from the website of the Natural History Museum, [www. nhm.ac.uk](http://www.nhm.ac.uk))

- **Alternative common name:** European robin
- **Length:** 14cm
- **Wingspan:** 20-22cm
- **Weight:** 14-21g
- **Average lifespan:** 2 years
- **UK population:** 6,700,000 territories

Lunch Together

Maggie Spoor, Jane Rhodes, Jane Wells

The Sun Pub will be hosting the next Lunch Together on **Friday 13th February at 12.30pm**. The cost is **£7 for homemade soup with a roll, sandwich, or toastie**. Drinks are not included.

Thank you to Pete and his team at The Sun who welcome and look after us so well.

Please phone **Jane Wells (01234 782462)** by **Wednesday 11th February** if you would like to come so Pete can be given an approximate number of those attending.

Grave misunderstandings

Sue Whitehouse

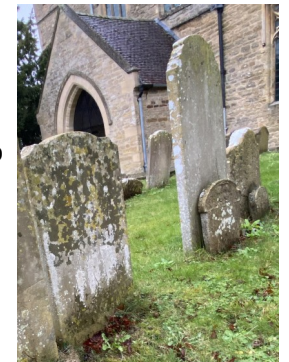
A few short years ago I watched an item on local tv news about a woman in dispute with a local authority cemetery about a grave she had laid out over her departed relative. She felt strongly that she should be able to do as she pleased in demonstration of her devotion. I felt for her in her obvious distress but also for those visiting nearby graves who had to look upon the garish creation and for the council whose thankless task was to find a path between regulation and sensitivity.

The Church of England also has regulations denoting what may be done in churchyards but many people appear to be unaware of these. It hardly seems appropriate when meeting with the newly bereaved to hand them a list of dos and don'ts so these things never really get addressed with consequent misunderstandings in the years that follow.

The regulations can be downloaded from <https://www.stalbansdiocese.org/churchyard> guide for families or copies are available in the church.

I would encourage anyone with a family grave to read them to help us avoid future misunderstandings, but I would like to reassure where I can those visiting or maintaining graves.

The responsibilities and regulations between cemeteries and churchyards are different. I cannot comment on the cemeteries but in the Church of England the mortal remains and headstone are the property of the next of kin, whilst the grave is the property of the Rector and thus the church has responsibility for maintaining the whole. The regulations are designed (Ctd overleaf)



(ctd) to be clear and straightforward so that by limiting what can be done on the surface of the grave, a calm and restful vista can be created and maintained across the churchyard.

As an example, spring bulbs are encouraged as a sign of new life which will disappear underground in later months to enable mowing. Shrubs of any kind are not permitted and neither are plastic or silk flowers, plaster mementoes, jam jars and a host of other things, but most churches, including our own, will turn a blind eye to this for a while rather than cause upset.

It is often not clear which graves still have surviving family when there is no sign of a visit over a long period and we have no means of contacting them. Very often the succeeding generation moves away from the village and visits thereafter become sporadic or cease, leaving overgrown plants and rotting mementoes.

Over the years I have heard grumbles from those who think the family grave should be entirely their own business and also from one who was appalled that the rarely visited grave of her ancestor was not neatly maintained in her absence. There is no pleasing everybody but where I see dead flowers, broken glass or ceramic items, crumbling baskets and items obviously long abandoned I will remove them and have a duty under the regulations to do so.

The PCC is most grateful to the Parish Council who fund the grass cutting throughout the year which makes a great contribution to the maintenance of the place but there are too few of us volunteering our time to keep on top of the invasive weeds, brambles, pathways and trees. Any new help would be much appreciated.

I hope this helps make things a little clearer but if you have any comments or questions please contact me either by email: susiem17@gmail.com or using my number on the back of Ouse News.

CARERS TOGETHER

Come and join us for tea, cake, and a chat.

The next meetings will be at 2.30pm on Monday **2nd & 16th February**

Meet with other Carers knowing the person you care for is enjoying activities in a safe and friendly environment.

The Methodist Church, Park Lane, Sharnbrook

For more information contact the group's Co-ordinator

Linda Hoar 07791214148 lindahoar@hotmail.co.uk



Ouse Valley Mothers' Union



Early TV & Radio theme tunes

A talk by Paul Keeble

Thursday 12th February 2.30pm

St Peter's Room

We welcome anyone who would like to know about Mothers' Union

Details: contact **Jackie Biggs** (782517) or **Hazel Scott** (781559)

Charity No.249814

