

Welcome to the April edition of Rostrum

VILLAGE DIARY

APRIL

- 2nd** Parish Council Meeting – 7.30pm – Hall
7th Footpaths Walk – 2.30pm - note Summer time
– Hall
7th Jazz Advocates Charity Concert – 2-4.30pm -
Hall
10th Coffee Break – 10.30am-12.30pm – Church
16th Footpaths Walk – 10am – Hall
17th The 1960s - History Soc talk – 7.30pm – Hall
20th Village Hall Quiz Evening– 7pm for 7.30pm -
Hall
21st Village Market – 11am-1pm – Hall and Car
park
24th Coffee Break – 10.30am-12.30pm – Church
- #### MAY
- 5th** Footpaths Walk – 2.30pm - note Summer time
– Hall
7th Parish Council Meeting – 7.30pm – Hall
19th Village Market – 11am-1pm – Hall and Car
park
25th Annual Plant Sale – 10am-1pm - Churchyard
- #### JUNE
- 6th** DDay 80 – 6.30pm-9.30pm – Playing Fields

WATERINGBURY SUMMER FETE

Unfortunately and with great sadness and disappointment, we have had to make the decision **to cancel the fete this year** due to lack of response from our appeal for organisational support. We sincerely hope that the fete can continue in future years with enthusiastic support and can only apologise for any disappointment that this decision may cause.

Nicola - Wateringbury Summer Fete Chair

JAZZ ADVOCATES CHARITY CONCERT

**Wateringbury Village Hall Sunday 7th April –
2.4.30pm**

**Tickets £7 each from Post Office
Bring your own drinks and nibbles.**

DDAY80 CELEBRATIONS

Tickets are now on sale at £10 per head for the fish and chips supper for Thursday June 6th at 6.30pm. These are available from the Post Office and The Handy Stores. This is to ensure the fish and chip van caters for the right number of people. We have the East Peckham Brass Band playing music, a paying bar, the fish & chips, plus the lighting of the beacon at 9.15pm, along with 1,000s of other villages across the country in recognition of the bravery of that day 80 years ago. Bring your camping chairs and enjoy the event. We are also hoping for a fly past of a spitfire that evening too. Please do join us for a lovely evening. *Sarah Hudson*

VILLAGE PEOPLE *Please let us have your news and tributes by 17th April for our May magazine. Entries are free. Email www.rostrum2@hotmail.com*

New Home Best Wishes to Sue Cockburn as she leaves the village and moves to Berkshire to live close to family. Sue served the village as Parish Clerk and the WI in various capacities. We will miss you Sue and hope you enjoy the next chapter in your life.

Thank you from the Chitty Family

In memory of Ann Chitty, a beloved mum, grandmother and wife who sadly spent her last few days at the **Heart of Kent Hospice**.

The hospice had treated Ann with such love and kindness and supported the family on our darkest days so we wanted to give something back. So both her children took to part in charity events. Sam took to the skies and skydived 16,000 feet. Lloyd took on a charity boxing match in his mum's name, staged in Octagon. We as a family just wanted to share that our total amount of monies raised was **£12,192.05**.

Congratulations from Rostrum to Alan, Lloyd and Sam for raising this amazing sum to aid the special work of our local hospice.

WATERINGBURY HISTORY SOCIETY

What do you remember of the swinging 60s? Are the 1960s modern history to you or part of your youth? Do come along to the village hall on **Wednesday 17th April when Delia Taylor's topic is The 1960s**, a trip down memory lane for some, modern history to others. Members are free, visitors, who are most welcome £5 (cash please). Free tea or coffee from 7.40pm with the talk starting at 8pm.

WATERINGBURY SCOUT GROUP

As I sit writing this piece, the youngest section in our group, the Beaver Scouts, are having "A Blast" at their outer space themed sleepover. A wonderful experience for them all, making memories and gaining independence and confidence. I hope the Leaders got some sleep!

At the end of February, Wateringbury Cub Scouts joined 170 other Cubs from around Maidstone at The Mall Maidstone for a sponsored sleepover in aid of Maidstone Homeless Charity and found out what it was like to sleep in shop doorways. Altogether they raised over £1,000 - a remarkable amount from the 8-10 year olds Cubs around Maidstone.

These "nights away" from home are an integral part of scouting and are often the most quoted answer when scouts of any age are asked what is their best memory of scouting. May we continue to provide these opportunities for all the young people in our group and continue having AWESOME FUN!

Nicola - Cub Team Leader

UPDATE ON THE SWAN COMMUNITY PROJECT

As part of the application, a business plan and share prospectus have been put together, which includes an outline for the financial and operational plans for the Swan, which we plan to share with the public. On **18th April** we will be holding an event at the **Swan on the Green** where the team will talk through these plans and answer all of your questions. As this next part of the project is the most important yet - **as we officially launch the fundraising phase to make all of this a reality** - we're planning to make this event the biggest one yet!

We want to thank everyone  attended our update meeting in February at West Peckham Village Hall, we were overwhelmed by the turnout and the positive feedback we received post-event. The meeting focused on talking through the work done to-date for the project, including submitting our application for the Community Ownership Fund, a grant that if successful will add £250,000 to our fundraising to buy The Swan on the Green pub as a community asset. **Please email theswancommunityproject@gmail.com to book your place.** theswancommunityproject.co.uk

FRIENDS OF NETTLESTEAD HALL
present a night of live music
with local band PICKLED JOEY playing hits from '60s, '70s
and beyond
on Friday 5th April 8.30pm til late Bring your own drinks and
nibbles
£5 per ticket text Jean on 07762 610467 All proceeds to
Nettlestead Hall

WATERINGBURY GUIDES

February 22 was the joint birthday of Robert and Olave Baden-Powell who were responsible for starting Scouting and Guiding way back in the early 1900's. Guides all over the world are encouraged to think of members in other countries especially those who are not as fortunate as ourselves. The girls painted jam jars – on one side they painted the promise badge of another country, and on the other side something for Mother's Day.

On the Friday before Mothers' Day 30 mums came to be treated to a two-course meal of either Mediterranean chicken traybake or ratatouille and pasta. For afters they were offered strawberry and raspberry pavlova or banoffee pie. The evening was very successful and it was lovely to have a little time to chat with the mums and for them to chat to other mums.

We've got an Olympics opening ceremony evening where the girls chose a country and design a flag, find out about who runs the country, and dress up one of their patrol in national costume. Our final meeting is Ice Skating at Gillingham and we hope everyone has a good time.

Plans for camp are well underway, and with a Sailing Day, a Water Fun Day and a canal boat trip for the older ones, there's plenty coming up too. We are now full again but if your daughter would like to join our fun, you can contact me on 01622 815416 or email to wateringburyguides@hotmail.com
Sheena Stewart and team. 1st Wateringbury Guides

WATERINGBURY FOOTPATHS GROUP

Last month the weather for the Sunday walk was lovely, while for the weekday repeat it was dull with limited visibility. For both walks we were lucky that it didn't rain, although it was muddy in places. We took footpaths from the village pond to Pizien Well Road where some people opted for the steep climb up Park Road to the deer park at the top near Mereworth Castle's triumphal arch folly. Those who made the climb were rewarded by seeing large groups of deer not far from the road, unconcerned by our presence. We were delighted to see them so close, our view was good as the hedge was not in leaf. As usual many of us heard (and saw) skylarks in the fields. They are amazing small birds, energetically hovering way up high while singing beautifully. One of the walkers pointed out some Dog's Mercury, an early flowering native plant and a sign of ancient woodland.

Our next walks will be leaving the village hall at:
2.30pm on Sunday 7th April, 10am on Tuesday 16th April and
2.30pm on Sunday 5th May
Everyone is always welcome! Please contact me if you want any more information.
Lisa Dean 077 5953 9032

RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION LOCAL WALKS

Sunday 7th April Circular walk from Wateringbury along the Medway Valley then up over the hill past Roydon Hall and back down via Pizien Well. A 6 mile walk of moderate difficulty

Thursday 25th April Circular walk from Barming passing through Oakham Woods and the East Malling Research Station. A mainly flat, moderate walk of 6 miles but there may be some mud. Most Ramblers Association walks Start mid morning and are dog friendly. For full details visit their website

www.tonbridgeandmallingeramblers.org.uk.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES AT THE VILLAGE HALL

We are fortunate to have such a splendid village hall. Do think about joining one of the regular activities

Current Activities in Watringbury Village Hall			
Day	Activity	Time	Contact details
Weekly			
Monday	Phonics Time	11am-Noon	rebeccatrowell1@hotmail.com
Monday	Lyengar Yoga	1-2pm	Wendy Newell yoga@rothiemay.com
Monday	Table Tennis	7.30-9.30pm	Rick Schembri rick@schembri.biz rick@schembri.biz
Tuesday	Children Singing	10-11am	Tracey's Tunes traceymusicstudio@hotmail.com
Tuesday	Zumba	7-9pm	tanyagrafham@yahoo.com
Wednesday	Baby & Toddlers	10-12pm	wateringburytoddlergroup@gmail.com
Wednesday	60+ Fitness	12.50-2.10pm	carol.welfare@moveitorloseit.co.uk
Wednesday	Dance Exercise	6-7pm	Swing Train louisehiew@yahoo.com
Thursday	Pilates	9.45-10.45am	nicolawignall@hotmail.com
Thursday	Badminton Club	7.30-9.30pm	roddersmoodley@gmail.com
Friday	Pilates	9.30-10.30am	samantha_stevenson@hotmail.co.uk
Friday	Taekwondo	3.45-7.15pm	elibuckle@gmail.com
Saturday	Kent Acting Studios	Saturday Morning	Tudor Price www.kentactingstudio.co.uk 07899982392
Monthly			
1 st Tuesday	Parish Council	7.30pm	clerk@wateringbury.org.uk
3 rd Wednesday	History Society	7.30-9.30pm	wateringburyhsociety@gmail.com
2 nd Saturday	Sewing Bee	9:30-1pm	vsharp399@btinternet.com
3 rd Sunday	Community Market	10-2pm	Kent Farmers' Markets website
Annually			
Watringbury Players Pantomime plus			wateringburyplayers@hotmail.co.uk

If none of the above is for you think about joining us in looking after our splendid village hall. Contact Mike Hoiles mikejhoiles@aol.com 07956396985.

NEWS FROM TOM TUGENHATT MP

For many of us in Watringbury we use the facilities in Tonbridge as one of our nearest town. It is a wonderful town with plenty of facilities and a High Street that continues to look well, despite the challenges of larger towns including Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells.

Sainsbury's store in Tonbridge is central to the town. You may have heard over the last few weeks that Sainsbury's have committed to renovating the former Beales site, next door to their current store. Their plans include developing a much larger store which will see an investment of up to £20 million into the town which I know so many of us travel to on a regular basis.

Due to scale of this investment its impact will no doubt be felt far and wide across our community. The re-development of the former

Beales unit is something that I have been calling for ever since it was left empty, some four years ago. Last year I supported the '3 Years Empty Is Plenty' campaign which was backed by nearly 2,000 people and helped prompt Sainsbury's into taking action. Thank you to everyone across Waterringbury who signed this. The new development will take place over the next two years, with an intended opening date being around Christmas 2025. The new store will see improved ranges across groceries, homeware clothing, and Argos and will also go a long way to improving the look of the largest town across Tonbridge and Malling. It will also help to create up to 50 new jobs in the local community and help to regenerate a key central location while installing important amenities such as 6 ultra-rapid electric charging points for electric cars. Sainsbury's also plan on the store being entirely net-zero. If you would like to find out more about Sainsbury's plans please let me know using the contact details below and I would be pleased to send details to you

As always, you can let me know what you think about this, or anything that may matter to you. You can get in touch with me.
Email: tom.tugendhat.mp@parliament.uk Phone: 01732 441 563
Address: 130 Vale Road, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1SP

WATERINGBURY COMMUNITY MARKET

On the **third Sunday of every month, 11am to 1pm**, Waterringbury Community Market meets in Waterringbury Village Hall and car park. Local producers, charities and crafters from Kent come together for local people to see and buy their wares in a warm and friendly atmosphere. There is a wide variety of stalls selling sausages, meat pies, apple juice, preserves, honeys, greetings cards, books, jewellery, wooden craft, beauty products, vintage vehicle prints, fudge, felted pictures, antiques, bags and more. Hot and cold refreshments available too. Make a note of the dates - **21st April 19th May and 16th June** A COMMUNITY MARKET FOR THE COMMUNITY!

Nicola - Community Market Volunteer

TESTON AND WATERINGBURY PRE-SCHOOL

We have had another fun, busy time at preschool with our focus book 'There's No Dragon in This Story'. From author Lou Carter illustrations by Deborah Allwright. It appears that nobody wants poor old dragon in their story; but dragon doesn't give up. His boundless enthusiasm and perseverance surely won't get him into any trouble...

We have revisited some traditional fairytales: Goldilocks and the Three Bears, Hansel and Gretel, Little Red Riding Hood and Jack and the Beanstalk. The children have enjoyed making dragon puppets, gingerbread houses, acting out Goldilocks and the Three bears, and buying fruits and flowers to give to Grandma. Our tuff tray has held the three bears house, small, medium and large teddies, bowls, beds and chairs. Our Role play area was turned into shop where the children could buy fruits to give to Grandma. The children have really enjoyed listening to these timeless stories and singing new songs linked to them.

We introduced a matchbox challenge before the half term break, where we asked the children to see how many objects, they were able to get inside. We had an amazing response with some very interesting items including Big Ben and the Eifel Tower; while raising valuable funds for our preschool. Special prizes were given for the most items, the best decorated matchbox and the most unusual item. Every child that took part also got a small prize. A big thank you to all those who took part! We also made special Mother's Day cards for that super someone.

If you would like your child to be part of our amazing preschool 'family' please contact us to book a visit.testonpreschooladmissions@gmail.com tandwgroup@gmail.com
Tina Driver Tel: 07805796353 See us on facebook too.

1ST WATERINGBURY BROWNIES

The Brownie unit currently has spaces available for girls aged 7 to 10 years. Our Brownie meetings are on Thursday evenings during

term time - we run a variety of fun activities following the Girl Guiding values: this term we have learnt about staying safe, we've learnt some acting skills and we have planned a dance evening plus cake decorating just before the Easter holidays. Once the better weather arrives we shall be outside using our local countryside and facilities for active meetings, plus we have a weekend Brownie holiday planned in the summer to Greatstone.

Brownies is a wonderful way for girls to gain confidence, make new friends and enjoy new activities. If you would like to register for your daughter to join the unit (now or in the future), please do so through the Girl Guiding website: <http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-a-child/>

Carolyn Peal and Jane Bennion

GARDENING FOR WILDLIFE

Last month I attended a course entitled 'ObstacEELS', the purpose of which is to identify any barriers to young eels (elvers) swimming upstream to their feeding grounds and then investigate ways to mitigate these. I had no idea that eels were present in our stream (it seems that the adults are seen regularly locally) or that our stream flowed through so much of the village. I will be surveying my allotted section of the stream before the end of the month so will feedback in our May edition. Please let me know via the Wateringbury Facebook page if you have any further information.

You may have seen on the news recently that Wildlife Trusts and the RHS are suggesting that we should be more appreciative of slugs and snails! I accept that they help breakdown vegetation from our gardens which is why I frequently find them in my compost bins, but they also eat a lot of young plants and subsequently, there are some that I avoid planting altogether, such as hostas, and others, such as dahlias, that I can only grow in pots surrounded by grit or crumbled egg shells. I certainly avoid slug pellets as none of them are completely harmless to other wildlife and when I find snails, I throw them onto the patio for the thrushes to eat. Beer traps and barriers can help and late-night forays with a torch to pick them off can be a way of keeping the numbers in check.

This month we will all likely start regularly mowing the lawn. If you can leave an area uncut, this will benefit wildlife and any spent Spring flowering bulbs from pots or bedding schemes can be planted here to die down naturally and emerge next year giving an early meadow effect.

WATERINGBURY WI

Sadly the March meeting was the final meeting for Wateringbury Women's Institute. Falling membership numbers have made it impossible to keep the group, which was founded over 100 years ago, running. Thanks were given to all members and to the committee for their hard work and enthusiasm.

Our Final meeting was Competitions Day. There were excellent entries in all the categories. The competition winners were Sandy, Margaret and Janet for My Favourite Cake. The competition for a Spring Flower arrangement was won by Wendy and Gillian. The craft competition for any item using recycled materials was won by Gillian, Elizabeth and Kathy. The cakes were then enjoyed with tea.

Margaret Malsher

NETTLESTEAD AND WATERINGBURY PRESCHOOL

Over the last few months we have been busy adapting our setting and practice to continue following the Curiosity Approach. By observing how the children use the space around them we have started transforming the layout by removing the structured classroom look to give it a more warm, cosy home from home feel. The outdoor mud kitchen area is also now in use, where the children can explore nature through their play. The children made bug houses in a tyre using different natural materials around them.

With spring dancing around us the children have been busy planting some new seeds, exploring their life cycle. We have planted mint, coriander, carrots, spinach, cress and tomato seeds. The children will be learning how to care for them. Some children planted a bean in a jar observing the various stages of germination. The children linked

the bean to the story of Jack and the Beanstalk, watching how tall their beans grow!

Through baking the children have been using their mathematical skills to weigh ingredients and explore numbers. Following a picture recipe card the children helped make a winter soup cutting, peeling and grating the vegetables!

For World Book the older children from Watringbury Primary popped over to read to young preschoolers, who responded well by sharing their favourite books with them. The preschoolers also set up a little book shop to sell pre loved books to their friends. It was a great way for the children to explore the different coins donated.

Nisha Reed, Manager Tel: 01622 813120

WATERINGBURY FLOWER CLUB

In March we had a fabulous workshop with Chelsea Gold Medalist Mig Kimpton treating us to a design with buds branches and bulbs- a spring interpretation using all these components out of the garden. Members produced completely different designs from small to table size! But fabulous interpretations. Mig regaled us with tales from his theatre days and how he still dabbles in Panto along with his one man floral shows at Deal theatre.

April we have the very talented Robin White with another workshop - Robin - UK designer of the year 2019 - is so popular with Kent members it's always a pleasure. Visitors are always welcome £7 to join the workshop paid in advance for the worksheet.

Jean Schofield

FOOD NEWS

The village now has a **wet fish stall each week - Mikeys Plaice is at the Villiage hall car park every Tuesday from 1.45pm till 2.45pm.** Don't miss out and order ahead on 07427 549475. The reviews from the last couple of weeks are brilliant - lovely fresh food on our doorstep!

And the Community Fridge is still running every Tuesday evening at 6pm. Either Mereworth village hall in Butchers Lane or Jubilee Hall, Pippin Road, East Peckham. £5 and a bag for life.

LOOK AFTER YOURSELF – WELLBEING HINTS AND TIPS

As I write this Easter is hurtling towards us, that's for sure.

In Japan the tracking of the arrival of the cherry blossom is a national obsession, attended to in detail on news broadcasts, with celebrational blossom parties under the pink cherry blossom filled trees. When driving from Maidstone to Watringbury I remember this as I notice the cherry trees turn along the main road from the Hermitage Lane crossing to Barming. Slightly ahead of these are the magnolia of which there are already several to spot around and about the village. I am not remotely Japanese but am all in favour of some mild cultural appropriation. The trick is to have your tea ceremony (possibly with 'something' to eat - we have some excellent local bakers who can supply the goodies there) under the cherry tree blossom just as it goes full electric pink and starts to fall – it's a sort of petal bath and a meditation on the momentary nature of life, but don't dwell on that too much.

It's always possible to drop back and have a cold spell even in April. I have photos of sledging over the

Easter school vacation time in Wateringbury as evidence of that. Nonetheless, it feels as though the gloomy winter is finally behind us, the temperature is rising and the daylight hours are extending in both directions. Dog walkers and dawn runners are already feeling the benefit of that. Plus, gardeners everywhere are starting to limber up. Remember to stretch and warm up - don't rush out into the garden and injure yourself. It's easily done by Gardeners coming out of hibernation. Like a sensible runner, do some dynamic stretches before heading out.

No doubt there's more rain to come, but we live in the Garden of England. Pop your mobile phone aside and see the real.

Bob Bowie

MARCH PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

Announcements – Councillor Mandy Thwaites has resigned with immediate effect. There is now a vacancy. If you would like to serve the village by becoming a Parish Councillor please contact the clerk for further details.

A grant of £150 had been approved by T & M. £20 will be used for the monthly coffee mornings held in the village hall small room and £130 for the Community Fridge

A new rubbish bin has been erected by the bus stop at the junction of A26 and Pizienwell Road.

Allotments - It was agreed that the rent for the coming year would be £30 for small plots, £35 for medium and £40 for large plots. The income should then cover expenses of grass cutting and the water bill. The rubbish pile near the gate is awaiting removal. A T & M grant may be available to use and an application will be made.

Crime Report – One crime is recorded on the police website. A car parked in Hillside Court had had a window broken.

First Public Open Session

Wateringbury Sports and Recreation Association – A meeting had been held and new trustees appointed to conform with the requirements of the Charity Commission. Three of the new trustees were at the meeting and reported that the new Trustees were: Sam Killick (Chair), Kenneth Webster (Treasurer), James Boswell and Colin Simons. Richard Tripp has resigned from the Association. It was hoped to hold the Annual General Meeting in May. A new lease between the Parish Council and the Association will be drawn up. Later in the meeting Bob Edmunds was unanimously elected to serve as a Parish Council representative on the WRSA.

Bus Stop on Tonbridge Road between The Wateringbury and Teston Farm Shop. It was reported that this had been knocked down and buses were now failing to stop.

Blocked Drain in Old Road this had been reported by a resident but to date the drain had not been unblocked

Water leak by Petrol Station This had been reported about 2 months ago and is still awaiting repair.

Sarah Hudson agreed to chase the relevant organisations in an attempt to expedite the solving of the 3 problems

D-Day+80 Thursday 6th June 6.30-9.30pm Sarah Hudson hoped residents would enjoy participating in this village event which will be one of thousands throughout the country held to mark this milestone occasion. There will be music and a bar. The beacon will be lit at 9.15pm to link with beacons nationwide. Residents can take along their own refreshments or pre-order Fish and Chip suppers. Tickets for the Fish and Chips will be on sale nearer the event.

Planning Applications -TM/23/02049/FL

Wateringbury Hotel, Tonbridge Road. External improvement and enhancement works to front and rear of premises to include hard and soft landscaping, construction of covered pergola with lighting and timber arbours.. New planting and new lighting. Two residents whose properties back on to the site came to the meeting to tell councillors how the plans would affect their properties and made suggestions as to how the plans could be amended to lessen the impact on their homes. Councillors objected to the plans on the grounds of impact on neighbours, loss of privacy, possible air, light and sound pollution and health and safety issues.

Playing Fields The need for a safe storage unit to replace the present garage building was discussed. The clerk was asked to purchase a green container and when this was in place the old garage would be demolished. The chestnut fencing needs to be replaced and estimates will be obtained.

Speed Watch - During the past month Speed Watch volunteers carried out 9 one hour sessions. 5093 vehicles passed by of which 314 were speeding, 44 letters were sent to repeat offenders, 6 high end letters were sent to those driving at 45+ mph in 30mph areas and 2 vehicle details were passed to officers for active enforcement. Observations included 4 vehicles driven without valid road tax, 1 being driven without a valid MOT and 3 being driven with neither MOT or Tax.

Next meeting of Parish Council will be on Tuesday 2nd April at 7.30pm in the upper room of the village hall. Residents are welcomed to council meetings and there are two opportunities to raise matters of local interest one near the beginning of the meeting and one at the end. *Approved minutes of council meetings will appear on the Parish Council website www.wateringbury.pc.org.uk in due course*

**Save the date Sunday 22nd September 2.30pm
TIME TO REMEMBER**

We all experience the loss of beloved family and friends. No matter how recent or long ago the event, anniversaries and special dates cause us to pause and reflect.

On 22nd September there will be an opportunity to come to church and light a candle and have time to reflect and celebrate the special times we shared with those we loved who have passed from this world.

We all grieve in our own way.

We all heal in our own time.

For those who wish to stay, tea and home-made cake will be served after the service.

AN EASTER MESSAGE

In the months since the October attacks in Israel and the subsequent military response many Jewish and Muslim people living in the UK, and those close to Muslim and Jewish families and friends, have experienced fear and hatred directed at them. This is true for people in our village and surrounding areas. Intolerance, prejudice, and hatred, misunderstanding, incomprehension, and a lack of neighbourliness, mean that we live in communities where bubbles seal group apart from group. Inside those bubbles it is increasingly difficult to even speak with one another without words descending into anger and in some cases worse. It is as if, like in the story of the Tower of Babel, we speak but are unable to understand.

Jesus was a paradoxical figure, repeatedly breaking the norms and conventions of his time to cross boundaries, reach out to marginalised voices, and sit down and eat with the most unlikely of characters. He was also frequently unhappy with what religion could do to people, or what people in the name of religion did to each other. It shows an attitude and imagination of one capable of seeing beyond prejudice and assumption, and a personality that was prepared to reach out across walls that divide.

Part of the message he brought was one of peace. Peace is complicated because it involves climbing back down from defensive positions of certainty. It is risky as it is a stance of vulnerability, impossible if people are living in terrible fear. It can come at great price for those who have suffered injustice and desperately want to avenge the wrongs done to those they care about. This is why, when it seems so obvious it matters most, peace is not easy or obvious, and it can even feel wrong. It requires a leap of the imagination and, ultimately, is the hope for our world. It creates the possibility for a space in which we all can flourish together, including in our village.

This Easter message wishes for all, a new project of peace and understanding in our lives and our immediate communities, as well as in the wider world. May the peace of the risen Christ, the courage to step back from anger, the dissipation of fear and threat, and the rebirth of a feeling of safety and flourishing, come into all of our lives and those we care for.

Bob Bowie

WATERINGBURY CHURCH - SERVICES IN APRIL

[Benefice website](http://www.mwwwpchurches.org) www.mwwwpchurches.org

All Sunday morning services in Wateringbury start at 10am and have easy to follow printed service booklets. We hope you will be able to join us. Refreshments are served after our 10am services so do stay for a chat if you can.

Sunday 7th - 10am – Morning Praise by Barry Fisher

Sunday 14th – 10am - Holy Communion with Rev Gary
Messy Church on Sunday meets in the vestry during this service

Sunday 21st - 10am - All Age Worship

Sunday 28th - 10am – Communion with Rev Gary

Sunday 5th May - 10am – Matins with Barry Fisher

Every Sunday in term time Refresh Benefice Services in Mereworth Church at 5pm For those who enjoy less formal worship.

WEDNESDAYS 3RD, 10TH AND 17TH APRIL 10AM BENEFICE MID WEEK COMMUNION SERVICE in Mereworth Church For those who are able to stay the service is followed by Coffee and Chat.

COFFEE BREAK - 10th and 24th April and 8th May

Do go along to the church between 10.30am and 12.30pm and enjoy good company and home-made cake and tea or coffee. This is a friendly, informal group. Suggested donation £1.



MESSY CHURCH –There will be no Saturday meeting in April. Instead Messy Church joined the Easter Fun with Faith morning in church on Easter Saturday 30th March. Further details from Ruth at ruthdunn33@btinternet.com

DO YOU ENJOY SINGING?

If you do then you are welcome to join our church choir. We are a companionable group who rehearse on Thursday evenings 7.30-8.30pm and then sing at the 10am Church services. We occasionally sing at weddings and funerals. For more details phone Barry Fisher on 01622 813206

CHURCH THANKS to those who came along to the church just before Easter to Spring Clean the church and churchyard. There are seats in the churchyard for those who wish to pause from the business of life and just take time out.

NEED TO EXERCISE MORE?

Then think about becoming a bell-ringer. You don't need to be musical or a church-goer to ring the bells. Bell ringing is fun, provides a gentle workout both physically and mentally and is a great social activity.

The bellringers practice on some Tuesday evenings for about an hour and then they ring before the 10am Sunday service. For more details contact Sue Collins on 07756 799372.

Calling All Gardeners when dividing up clumps of perennial plants please pot up some to sell at the

ANNUAL PLANT SALE**Saturday 25th May****in the Churchyard****10am to 1pm****Beautiful plants to fill your garden with colour****bedding plants, perennials, and vegetables***All proceeds to help with the upkeep of our**beautiful ancient church building*