

**Welcome to the February 2023 issue
of Wateringbury Village Magazine.**

VILLAGE DIARY

February

- 3rd Jack and the Beanstalk** - panto - Village Hall
7.30pm
- 4th Jack and the Beanstalk** – Village Hall - 2pm
and 7.30 pm
- 5th Wateringbury Footpath Group** - Village Hall -
2pm
- 7th Parish Council meeting** - Village Hall - 7.30pm
followed by Planning Committee
- 9th WI meeting** - Village Hall - 2pm
- 10th. Coronation party planning meeting**-Village
Hall-7.30pm
- 13th Wateringbury Footpath Group** - Village Hall -
10am
- 15th History Society meeting** - Village Hall -
7.40pm
- 15th Flower Club AGM** – East Malling Institute –
7.30pm
- 19th Wateringbury Market** - Village Hall – 11am –
1pm

MARCH

- 5th Wateringbury Footpath Group** - Village Hall -
2pm
- 7th Parish Council meeting** - Village Hall - 7.30pm
followed by Planning Committee
- 11th Curry & Quiz Night** - Wateringbury School -
7.30pm
- 15th History Society meeting** - Village Hall –
7.40pm
- 19th Wateringbury Market** - Village Hall – 11am –
1pm
- 26th Charity Jazz Concert** - Village Hall – 2pm -
4.30 pm

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

The village panto will be performed on **Friday 3rd February at 7.30pm** and **Saturday 4th February at 2pm and 7.30pm** at Wateringbury Village Hall.

Tickets £11 but child concession (16 and under) for matinee at £6, available at Wateringbury Post Office and The Handy Store.
Cash Only

King Charles III's Coronation – 6th May 2023

Would village residents like to have a street party to celebrate the Coronation?

It would take place on Sunday 7th May, from 12pm – 4pm. There would be lots of entertainment – a bouncy castle, music etc., but I would need a bit of help in organising it. If you are interested in helping create a memorable afternoon for the families of Wateringbury, please could you join me for a brief meeting at Wateringbury Village Hall on **Friday 10th February at 7.30pm**. Here we can discuss suitable locations and get an idea of what is needed. If no one turns up, it won't happen!
Sarah Hudson

VILLAGE PEOPLE

Please let us have your news and tributes by 17th February for our March edition. Entries are free. Email www.rostrum2@hotmail.com or phone 01622 812023

RIP

Kenneth James Henry Warburton (2/02/39-12/10/22)

Many villagers will remember Ken for his kindness and help over many years when he was our village milkman working in all sorts of weather to deliver milk and more. He was still helping up until a few weeks before his death.

Edna Craig née Monckton (16/01/31-26/11/22)

Edna was born in Yalding where her father's family had a transport business. In WW2 when clothing was severely rationed Edna recalled sitting with her mother knitting. Edna knitted her own winter vests, each summer the vests were unwound, the wool washed then knitted up into a larger size. She also recalled the family having 2 soldiers, direct from the beaches of Dunkirk, billeted with the family. First during the war and for several spells during her life Edna and family lived happily in the Manchester area of Lancashire. Colin and Edna were married in New Hythe church on 5th June 1955 and came to live in Wateringbury with their sons Ross, Neil and Duncan in 1982. Edna was very active in the life of the church serving as treasurer, church warden and latterly for over 20 years as a pastoral assistant visiting many in times of joy and sorrow. A truly wonderful friend and example of Christian life as it should be lived.

Thank you to Joyce Nicholson who is stepping down as a Rostrum deliverer. Joyce is probably Rostrum's longest serving distributor having delivered the magazines to her neighbours in Danns Lane for over 30 years. We are now looking for someone to take over this task, so if you can help please contact Rostrum (details on back cover).

Welcome to Steve Hill, our new Wateringbury Parish Council Clerk. He can be contacted on 07860 721924.

Rostrum thanks its advertisers who have renewed their adverts for 2023 and welcomes a number of new advertisers: Warford Computers, Kent Roofing Services, Chill, Pawsome Parlour, Shires Heating, Solid Advice for Solid Construction and Kent Wardrobes. Thanks to all of them, Rostrum can continue to be delivered free to all homes in Wateringbury. When contacting them, please mention that you saw their advert in Rostrum.

CURRY & QUIZ NIGHT – SUPPORTING THE LOCAL SCHOOL!

Join The Friends of Wateringbury Primary School (FOWPS) for a curry and quiz night. The quiz will be hosted by the Quiz People with answers on electronic tablets.

Home cooked, authentic chicken or vegetarian curry with traditional extras will be served and a licensed bottle bar will be provided.

Don't delay! Book your table now with a maximum of 8 people!

Date – 11th March 2023

Location: Wateringbury Primary School

Timings - Doors open 7pm, Quiz starts at 7.30pm and all finish around 10pm

Price - £15 per person – maximum 8 per table / team

Optional raffle on the night

Book by using the weblink below. Please submit one booking per table – so if you're a group of 5 people, order 5 tickets in one transaction so we know to allocate tables correctly.

<https://buytickets.at/friendsofwateringburyprimaryschool1>

CHARITY CONCERT FOR MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS BY 'JAZZ ADVOCATES'

Sunday, 26th March, 2pm to 4.30pm at the Village Hall.

£5 per ticket available from Wateringbury Post Office, 'Memories' Café, Hicks Estate Agents, The Ramblers Rest or call 01622 290207.

Bring your own drinks and nibbles

A COMMUNITY MARKET IN WATERINGBURY

Every third Sunday of the month, 11am to 1pm, Wateringbury Community Market meets in Wateringbury 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 food and a wide range of other products for you to enjoy. Nicola - Community Market Volunteer.

UKRAINE APPEAL

Further to my appeal in last month's Rostrum, I just want to say a heartfelt thanks to the many of you in the village who donated so generously.

A special thanks to the ladies of the Church 'Coffee Break' who donated numerous hand knitted items for babies and children - not to mention the shoeboxes which will be individually filled for children. Unfortunately the need for items has not diminished. Therefore, we are still pleading for absolutely anything to be taken by articulated lorry to Ukraine or the hub in Tunbridge Wells. Medical items are urgently needed - even out of date, opened or partly used bandages, ointments etc; also items to support the pets abandoned by owners in their devastated country.

We have just had a request for 200 shoe boxes for 6-17 year olds to be sent on the next lorry to a school in Dubno, Ukraine. If you can spare anything suitable for this age group, which will then be put into boxes with a mixture of items. Please contact me if you can offer any items or have questions: svmcollins@live.co.uk, Next Door, Messenger or Facebook. Sue Collins

FIRST WATERINGBURY GUIDES

We ended the autumn term at Gravity in Maidstone enjoying trampolining. Five of our newest guides took the opportunity to make their guide promise while bouncing on the trampoline and we're delighted that Tiffany Allen also made her promise as a Leader in Training. She has worked hard on her leadership qualification and should finish later this term. Well done to her.

Many of the guides joined brownies and rainbows at a country wide screening of *Matilda Mighty Movie* and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. It's good to join such events as it helps girls realise just how many other guides, brownies and rainbows there are around.

Girls can stay at guides until they are 15, or they can become a Ranger (14-18), as well as, or instead of being a Young Leader or they can join Explorers which is a mixed Scouting unit.

Some of the older guides are beginning to move on. As a result, we do now have some spaces in guides so if you have a daughter that would be interested, do please contact me. We welcome visitors for a taster evening to see if they like it first and Guiding does help find new friends, learn leadership skills, enjoy the out of doors and much, much more. What's not to like?!

You can contact me on 01622 815416 or email to sheenastewartx3@gmail.com.

Sheena Stewart and team. 1st Wateringbury Guides

HISTORY SOCIETY

The Society invites you to its February meeting when Guy Bartlett will give a talk called **Flying Past – A History of Aviation in Kent**. The talk is in **Wateringbury Village Hall on Wednesday 15th February and starts at 8pm**. Free tea and coffee will be served from 7.40pm. Visitors very welcome at £5 per person.

The Society is pleased to have recently been given some interesting items to add to our archive from Syd Thompsett who has moved from the village. Some of the documents have been added to our website. Do take a look at [https://sites.google.com/site/wateringburylocal history](https://sites.google.com/site/wateringburylocalhistory).

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE – The WI Inspiring Women

At our January meeting Chris MacCooney visited to talk on *Scandals of Kent and Sussex*. The prize winners for the winter photo competition were Stroma and Janet T.

At our next meeting on 9th February we will welcome Melanie Gibson-Barton who will talk on The History of the Teddy Bear. Melanie is an accomplished speaker who previously gave us a memorable talk on Edith Cavell. The competition will be to bring a Teddy Bear. Visitors will be welcome at this meeting. Margaret Malsher

GARDENING FOR WILDLIFE

Well, we certainly did get a cold snap and those of us that continued to top up our bird feeders were hopefully rewarded by seeing some more unusual species. For me it was a very nervous Greater Spotted Woodpecker. Although these birds are rarely seen, they are frequently heard making their drumming sound on dead boughs of trees or telegraph poles, which is their way of proclaiming ownership of territory.

I often see the larger, Green Woodpeckers in my garden however, in fact they nest in the line of tall conifers nearby. These beautiful birds are commonly known as 'Yaffle' due to their loud, laughing call and are frequently seen on the ground as they are particularly partial to ants and their grubs and have been known to damage hives in search of bees and their grubs.

Although it is important to continue to feed our garden birds, the RSPB are asking that we clean all bird feeders meticulously and regularly to avoid the possible spread of avian flu. This deadly virus has killed thousands of wild birds and although garden birds are believed not to be at risk, they can spread it.

Many mammals choose to hibernate during the winter months with the exception of foxes, as this is their mating season. The dog fox and vixen can often be seen together for long periods of time during daylight hours and their calls, particularly the piercing scream of the vixen, may shatter the silence of the night. Their cubs will be born in early Spring and both parents will help to rear them. Pauline Knutton

TESTON & WATERINGBURY PRE-SCHOOL

Happy New Year from all of us at Teston and Wateringbury Preschool.

We have another fun packed term ahead. Our focus book this term is *Polar Bear, Polar Bear What do you Hear?* by Bill Martin Jr and Eric Carle.

We will be using our listening skills to identify animal sounds and using our voices to make animal noises. We will be learning where animals live, and using our builder's tray to create an interactive play experience for our children; incorporating sight, sound and texture. We will be exploring colour and creating our own colour wheel as the book progresses. We will be experimenting with snow and ice whilst learning about the North Pole. The book talks about colour and we will be making Polar Bears and Flamingos. We will be looking at patterns and stripes, using paint and printing patterns from the wild.

We celebrated Chinese New Year (22nd January) and we gave out red envelopes with chocolate coins. Our role play area gave our children the opportunity to learn all about this colourful festival and its customs.

Colouring, painting, decorating with a mosaic animal (or two) from our story. Wow! We had better get going.

If you would like your child to be part of this amazing preschool family please contact:

testonpreschooladmissions@gmail.com,

tandwngroup@gmail.com

Tina Driver 07805 796353. See us on Facebook too.

WATERINGBURY SCOUT GROUP

The year is already under way and so are the scouting adventures too! All the sections are welcoming new members, planning new adventures and activities and researching camps, weekends and sleepovers for the year ahead.

Beavers and Cubs both started their terms with games nights so we start as we mean to carry on and burn off any excess energy. Cubs have more games planned for the dark evenings during the term and are celebrating the Scottish Isles festival of Up Helly Aa at the end of January when they will go "all Viking" and burn a replica Viking longboat. With Shrove Tuesday just around the corner I'm sure there will be pancake fun and eating in February for the Cubs, if not all the sections.

If you have a child wishing to join our group from 6 to 18 years, or indeed you would like to volunteer some time to give local children the opportunity of learning new skills and having fun please contact us via the Wateringbury Scouts webpage.

Nicola Plane - Cub Scout Leader

NETTLESTEAD AND WATERINGBURY PRE-SCHOOL

It has been lovely welcoming all our children and families back after the Christmas break.

It's the year of the Rabbit in the Chinese New Year Calendar! The preschool children enjoyed learning about this through role-play, craft and books. For snacks they tried prawn crackers with sweet and sour noodles sharing them with their friends whilst practicing to use chop sticks! We even attempted making our own fortune cookies.

At the same time the wet weather hasn't stopped us exploring the outdoors. With the children wrapped up in puddle suits and wellies, we have taken them out to explore the seasonal changes around us. The children packed some

important tools that they felt would be needed for their adventure: binoculars, magnifying glasses to explore the different mini beasts in the muddy ground, mini garden tools to dig holes for treasure of course and, most importantly, some snacks to keep the intrepid explorers going. They explored rabbit holes to look for tunnels to see where they led. Later we collected sticks of all different sizes to place in a big pile to make a pretend camp fire. On the way back to the setting we found some muddy puddles that the children enjoyed jumping in and out of whilst singing the 'hokey cokey'.

Recruitment: we are looking for a Level 3 Childcare practitioner to join our busy and growing team. If this is something that would interest you then we would love to hear from you. Please contact: enquiries@nwps.org.uk

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING RAMBLERS

For full details of all our walks and walk leader contacts see www.tonbridgeandmallingsramblers.org.uk or email info@tonbridgeandmallingsramblers.org.uk.

CROSSROADS CARE KENT

Locally based Charity, Crossroads Care Kent, has been awarded £75,000 by the NHS Kent and Medway Cancer Alliance to support earlier and faster diagnosis of cancer across Kent and Medway.. With this funding, Crossroads Care Kent will be training its 200 staff and 150 volunteers to become 'Cancer Awareness Champions' who are actively informed of the signs and symptoms of cancer and encouraging Carers, the people they care for and their family and friends to attend those all-important screenings and GP appointments.

Crossroads Care Kent will be running a promotional campaign over the coming year, raising awareness of the importance of early cancer screening, and how people can get checked. To find out more, visit www.crossroadskent.org/cancer.

FROM OUR MP TOM TUGENDHAT

We're now over a month from Christmas and the New Year is well underway. There is much to look forward to in 2023. One of the highlights of the year is my annual Apprenticeships Fair, which a number of MPs across West Kent team up to organise. It is always a wonderful event that I know so many young people find very useful. This year's Fair takes place on Friday 10th March 2023 at Maidstone Leisure Centre. We have a number of students coming and if you would like to as well, please drop me an e-mail.

I will also be continuing with my role in Government as Security Minister. My work at the Home Office is all aimed at keeping us safe, and at the moment I am spending a lot of time working on the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Bill through Parliament. This Bill helps tackle dirty money, giving stronger powers for law enforcement to quickly seize and recover crypto assets, and cuts red tape, so businesses can share information more effectively to prevent economic crime.

My priority will always be our community here in Watlington and everyone I am lucky enough to represent across Tonbridge, Edenbridge and Malling. My office in Tonbridge remains open throughout the week and, if you have any issues that you would like my help with, please feel free to get in touch. As a reminder my contact details are:

E-mail – tom.tugendhat.mp@parliament.uk

Phone – 01732 441563

Address – 130 Vale Road, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1SP

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram - @TomTugendhat

FLOWER CLUB

Happy New Year to all our members.

The snow in December did not stop members enjoying our Christmas social evening at Iris Shaw's home. Food and drinks were served and members had a lovely time catching up with each other.

15th February at 7.30pm is our AGM at East Malling Village Hall. After business is concluded there will be a demonstration from committee members and food and drinks served for people to mingle and chat over our new exciting programme for 2023. There is no increase in membership fees this year and it is hoped our full and varied programme will encourage more members to join us. Jean Schofield for WFC

WATERINGBURY FOOTPATH GROUP

We had some lovely walking in good weather during December and January. In December we walked up the footpath that starts opposite the end of Love Lane and into Hoath Wood, then followed the permissive path that skirts Kings Hill and comes out at the top of Canon Lane. Our weekday repeat of this walk was the morning after we'd had a few inches of snow one Sunday evening. Nevertheless four of us completed the walk, finding that the conditions were perfect – the snow, whilst thick, was soft and powdery, beautifully decorating the twigs and branches of the trees and not at all icy so good to walk on. Despite it being mid-morning the day after the snowfall, an impressive jolly-looking snow bear about 6 feet tall had already been made on some open ground at the edge of Kings Hill.

In January our route took us along the road to Nettlestead, then followed footpaths over the fields to Pizien Well Road before climbing to the top of Gibbs Hill and returning via the waterfall and Old Road. Again, the weather was good for walking and the views beautiful. We enjoyed seeing and, once we'd stopped chatting, hearing skylarks in the hillside fields.

Our next walks will be leaving the village hall at:

2pm on Sunday 5th February

10am on Monday 13th February

2pm on Sunday 5th March

Everyone is welcome! Please contact me if you want more information. Lisa Dean 077 5953 9032

DECEMBER PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

Announcements At the start of the meeting the chairman Patrick Gregson introduced the new parish clerk, Steven Hill. He also expressed the sincere thanks of the Parish Council to retiring clerk Susan Cockburn for her 25 years of dedicated service to the village. The vice chair Michael Wells also expressed his thanks for the help he had personally received over the years and, on behalf of the Council, presented Sue with a beautiful crystal vase.

The new PCSO, Naomi Houghton, who covers Wateringbury, Kings Hill and surrounding area attended the meeting to introduce herself to the Council and those attending the meeting. She said she will be in-post until June 2023 when there will be changes in policing.

Mark Little, village warden, reported that it had been a quiet month. The new CCTV at the playing fields which covers the whole area was having a beneficial effect on the behaviour of those using the fields.

Crime Report – On 5th November farm buildings in Old Road had been broken into and on 23rd November a Camper Van stolen from Cobbs Close.

Borough Council report - Sarah Hudson said that T&M are developing ways to help vulnerable residents. Changes have been made by central government to the procedures for voting in elections. From May 2023 voters will need ID to vote, i.e. a passport or similar document. Those not possessing such documents can apply for a Voter Authority certificate. Those wishing to have a postal vote will need to apply every 3 years (at present it's every 5 years).

KCC report - Sarah said, as has already been reported in the media, KCC is struggling financially and needs to make cuts of £75 million from its expenditure. Among areas being considered are libraries, school crossing patrols, community wardens and Kent Saver bus passes. In answer to questions Sarah said the KCC rate increase would be the maximum allowed by central government plus Adult Social Care levy. To break even KCC would need to make an increase of 12.5% which it was not allowed to do. Adult Social care costs had a huge impact as more people with more complex needs were seeking help and it costs on average £200 per week per person more than in past years. Asked what impact Asylum Seekers had on the budget. Sarah said the costs were recovered from central government but KCC had to meet the costs until reimbursed.

Play Area Extension - Councillor Francis Fielding reported that a funding application had been made to the FCC Communities Foundation Action Fund to meet the project costs of £57,833. The survey to ascertain local support had been completed by 246 people. As required £6,300 has been promised in third party contributions. Frances thanked the donors: the Village Hall, NS Flooring, Bijou Nurseries, Ovenmeister Kent and the WSRA. A second grant application for £8,717 (max allowed is £10,000) has been made to the National Lottery Awards for All. It will be March before the outcome of the applications will be known.

Wateringbury Sports and Recreation Association (WSRA)
Lengthy and far-reaching discussions took place. Matters discussed were use of the fields, parking, access and the make-up of the committee and trustees. At present there are only two people and the need for more volunteers is an urgent one to meet the Constitution of the WSRA which is a registered charity. At the public discussion time many put forward their thoughts and suggestions and one person volunteered to join the committee.

The council looked favourable upon a suggestion that Wateringbury apply for a licence to erect Christmas Lights in the village in 2023.

JANUARY PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

Allotments - A site meeting had been held and plots were allocated into 3 sizes. It is proposed to vary the annual rental charge in line with plot size. Councillors are working towards the allotment rentals to cover the costs incurred.

Sarah Hudson reported T&M have launched a grant scheme to help shop and business premises upgrade the appearance of properties. Fifty percent of the cost up to a maximum of £3,500 is available under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund

KCC matters - Sarah informed the meeting that the draft KCC budget was due for approval on 9th February. KCC is seeking to make savings from the more efficient use of premises by sharing of buildings. A consultation is underway, for instance, libraries could also be used by Children's centres. Sarah's KCC Members Grant which allowed her to make local grants has been reduced from £10,000 a year to £3,600 or £300 a month.

Coronation Celebrations - Sarah put forward several suggestions and councillors will liaise with Sarah Hudson to formulate village activities to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III in May.

Christmas Tree at Sarah's suggestion Councillors agreed to fund the purchase of a large tree for 2023 and to provide a permanent fixing.

Cemetery – It was agreed that Mark Little, one of the village wardens, will liaise with prospective plot holders.

Fields - The CCTV had been damaged possibly with a catapult and will be repaired shortly. A wobbly gate-post is to be replaced.

Finance – Online banking is to be arranged with the United Trust Bank.

Office Equipment – Councillors agreed to stop renting a photocopier and to purchase a good quality printer. A new lap-top computer and office storage cabinet will also be bought for the use of the new clerk.

Policy Documents - It was agreed to review and update all policy documents starting with Standing Orders, Communications, Finance and Allotments

Planning Applications – Councillors had no objections to the following applications:

The Lodge 245 Tonbridge Road - Reduce height of 5 remaining Lawsoniana and Holly to approx 4.5m to form one continuous hedge.

5 The Orpines - Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: Removal of garage door & alleyway door & installation of windows at ground floor level to front elevation. Removal of first floor entry door & replacement of window to inward opening French doors with Juliette balcony and at ground floor, removal of external staircase and installation of bi-folding doors to rear elevation. Internal alterations

7 Redhouse Gardens - Removal of conservatory, single storey extension, erecting second storey side extension, garage conversion, roof light windows to front roof slope, adaptation to existing front extension and internal alterations

4 Love Lane – Ground floor porch extension. First floor extension over existing garage

Kilpins 14 Red Hill – Alterations and extension to existing bungalow to form first floor. Alterations to existing double garage to add a pitched roof.

Village Fete – Sunday 11th June - Councillors asked the Clerk to organise the portable toilets and the parish will meet the cost.

The next meeting of the Council will be in the village hall upper room on **Tuesday 7th February at 7.30pm**. Members of the public are very welcome.

Approved minutes of council meetings will appear on the Parish Council website www.wateringbury.pc.org.uk in due course

LOOK AFTER YOURSELF – WELLBEING HINTS AND TIPS

Why not try out some gratitude activity this month

A gratitude list

I find February a tricky month. Spring has not sprung and I have another birthday to accept is passing by. So I need things to lift me especially at this time. Here are a couple of things I do which help. Did you know, Gratitude is good for you? Ancient traditions have long incorporated it into prayer forms, and over the last 30 years researchers have found it can change how your brain manages with the challenges of the day.

In your journal or diary or somewhere special, make a list of the things you are grateful for, no matter how small they are. My list starts: an amazing wife who repeatedly puts up with all the grief I bring; two great kids; the cats; the smell of basil; the tree I can see outside my window; ... and so on. It's good to do first thing in the morning. If you begin to feel low, find it and read through it again. It has the power to lift you.

Here's how to start (or end) your day with gratitude:

1. Think of something, even something small, that you are grateful for: a tree; your pet; a friend.
2. Think of something else about yourself you are grateful for: maybe you had a good night's sleep; or you can enjoy the smell of burning wood in the fire.
3. Think of one more thing you are grateful for.
4. Write these thoughts down
5. Say to yourself three times, in silence or out aloud (which is sometimes more powerful) 'Give me happiness today' or 'Bless me'

6. Say to yourself 'May I bring happiness to others today' or
'May I pass blessings to others today'

I hope you can discover something to feel grateful for
each day.

Why not try out some gratitude activity this month and see
how you feel? *Bob Bowie*

REV GARY WRITES

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Lent Courses

Easter falls early this year and that means that Lent will begin soon. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent and this year it falls on the 22nd of February. Traditionally the season of Lent is a time for reflecting on our sins and redoubling our efforts to be rid of them. For many churches, including our own here in Wateringbury, it is also traditional to run Lent Courses. At the time of writing, I can say that we have one planned for this Lent and details can be found in this magazine, on the church website at mwwpchurches.org or in the notice sheets at St John the Baptist church. You could also ring or email me if you'd like to know more.

The lovely thing about Lent courses is that they run for a set period of time (6 sessions over 6 weeks) and so anyone wishing to commit knows there is a definite end! Also, they are an opportunity to get to meet new people or get to know better some familiar ones because the groups always have a social side to them – tea/coffee and cake are obligatory! I've been here long enough now to say hand on heart that the members of Wateringbury Church are friendly and welcoming and anyone, irrespective of what they believe or feel, would receive a warm welcome at the Lent Course. What is studied at Lent courses always varies but what is central to them all is Jesus Christ. So, anyone wanting to know more about Him and learn about Him in the company of others who already know and trust Him would do well to come on the Lent Course. And even if you discover 6 weeks will be too long you are allowed to drop out!

So, if you are interested do take a look at our website, give me a call, or ask someone you know who comes to church.

May God bless you this Lent.

Gary Townsend.

Priest-in-Charge of Mereworth, Wateringbury and West Peckham.

IN OUR SORROWS – Funerals from the Parish Registers

23rd November

Kenneth James Henry Warburton

Followed by cremation

22nd December

Edna Craig

Followed by burial in the cemetery

12th Night Quiz The winner was Liz Gummer and joint second were Susan Levett and Alastair Byron.

Answers are on the benefice website

www.mwwpchurches.org and a paper copy on the

church noticeboard. Thank you to Jan Pursey for

devising the quiz and to all who took part. £237 was

raised to help with the day-to-day running of our ancient church.

WATERINGBURY CHURCH SERVICES IN FEBRUARY

[SJB Church web site: www.wateringburychurch.org.uk](http://www.wateringburychurch.org.uk)

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

[Church Face Book Page: fb.me/wateringburychurch](https://fb.me/wateringburychurch)

[Friends of SJB Church web site www.fowc.org.uk](http://www.fowc.org.uk)

All Sunday morning services start at 10am

Saturday 4th - 3-5pm Messy Church (for children and their carers) –Bible story, action songs with Rev Gary and his guitar, prayer time, lots of crafts and ending with afternoon tea.

All welcome

Sunday 5th – Morning Praise led by Barry Fisher

Sunday 12th - Holy Communion led by Rev Gary
Messy Church on Sunday meets in the vestry during this service

Sunday 19th - All Age Worship

Sunday 26th – Holy Communion led by Rev Gary

Sunday 5th March - Matins led by Barry Fisher

REFRESH Benefice Services in Mereworth Church at 5pm on

5th, 19th and 26th February. For those who enjoy less formal worship. Young people attend for the first 30 minutes then go to The Rectory for social time. Adults remain to worship for about another 15 minutes.

Tuesday 21st February at 7pm in Wateringbury Church The Institution and Induction Service for Rev Gary Townsend

by The Venerable Sharon Copestake, Archdeacon of Tonbridge

When Gary came to our Benefice the nation was in the middle of the Covid lock-down so in order for him to start work a simple remote on-line service was held and he became our Priest in Charge.

Thankfully Covid restrictions have been lifted so a formal Service to install him as Rector of Mereworth, Wateringbury and West Peckham can now be held. Do come if you can.

ASH WEDNESDAY 22nd February – Service of Ashing and Communion at 7.30pm in Wateringbury Church

WEEKLY ZOOM BENEFICE BIBLE STUDY GROUP

Mondays at 7.30pm for about an hour

Rev Gary Townsend invites you to join him for bible study. To join please email gary.rev@outlook.com for the link to the meeting.

LENT COURSE - Wednesdays 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th March and 5th April

You are invited to come along to our 2023 Lent Course. Meetings will be in the Church and are on Wednesdays from

7.30-9pm. The video sessions are from 'Sycamore'. Each evening consists of a talk from the presenter, Father Stephen Wang, with discussion questions inserted so that the video will be paused at intervals for group discussion/reflection.

The subjects for the sessions are: 1 The existence of God; 2 Who is Jesus; 3 The Holy Spirit and the Church; 4 The gift of faith; 5 Finding true freedom and 6 The meaning of Love.

Each evening is "stand alone" so even if you can only come to one or two evenings you will still be able to enjoy them. Please don't be shy, if you do not wish to contribute to discussions, just want to listen and silently reflect, you will be most welcome to do so.

*Alastair Byron (01622 812023) and
Barry Fisher (01622 813206)*

**COFFEE BREAK - 8th and 22nd February and 8th March
10.30am-12.30pm in church**

We enjoyed meeting weekly in January which can be such a dreary month and return to meeting fortnightly in February. This is a friendly informal group so do come along. Tea, Coffee and home-made cake are served and those attending can make a £1 donation.

Some who come along have rekindled their knitting and crochet skills and we were delighted to be able to support the local appeal for Ukraine by donating, hats, scarves, a child's jumper or two and some knitted square blankets. From the £1 weekly donations 5 sleeping bags were purchased which were donated (along with some unwanted winter coats of coffee breakers) to help the homeless in Maidstone.

On 8th February there will be a White Elephant Stall which will have an eclectic mix of items to browse and buy at bargain prices. Do come along. **Proceeds will be divided equally between church funds and The Anthony Nolan charity.** The organisation links patients in need and incredible strangers ready to donate their life-saving stem cells.

MESSY CHURCH

In December we had fun making nativity figures and in January celebrated our 5th birthday and, thinking of the visit of the 3 kings to Bethlehem, made lots of crowns to wear. In February we will be thinking about Jesus as a young boy going to Jerusalem with his parents and getting lost. Mums and dads, grannies and granddads, aunts and uncles, carers are invited to come along with their young children and enjoy a pleasurable afternoon with lots of crafts, songs with Rev Gary and his guitar, bible story and prayer time and, of course, ending with afternoon tea. Just come along or for more details contact Ruth on ruth.dunn33@btinternet.com

RING FOR THE KING

Take part in celebrating the Coronation of King Charles III in May 2023 by ringing the bells at St John the Baptist Church, Wateringbury. *Interested in ringing the bells for this special occasion?*

Please call 07756 799372 for further information.

Tuition is available if you have never rung bells before or refresher sessions for those who may not have rung for a while. You don't need to be musical or religious to ring the bells.

Bell ringing is fun, provides a gentle workout both physically and mentally and is a great social activity.