

Happy Easter - Welcome to the April issue of
Wateringbury Village Magazine

VILLAGE DIARY

APRIL

- 2** **Footpaths walk** – meet outside Hall – 2.30pm
4 **Parish Council Meeting** – Hall - 7.30pm followed by
 Planning Committee
5 **Coffee Break** – Church – 10.30am-12.30pm
8 **Easter Fun With Faith Activities for primary
school children** – Church - 9.30am-12.30pm
11 **Footpaths walk** – meet outside Hall – 10am
13 **"In Full Flight"** – WI talk – Hall – 2pm
16 **Community Market** – Hall and Car Park –
 11am-1pm
19 **Coffee Break** – Church – 10.30am-12.30pm
19 **"Fruit of our Labours" talk on East Malling
Research Station** – History Society – Hall –
 7.40 for 8pm
22 **Wildlife Open Garden** – 45 Mill Lane – 1-5pm

MAY

- 2** **Parish Council Meeting** – Hall - 7.30pm followed by
 Planning Committee
3 **Coffee Break** – Church – 10.30am-12.30pm
4 **Local Elections voting at Village Hall**
7 **Footpaths walk** – meet outside Hall – 2.30pm
21 **Community Market** – Hall and Car Park –
 11am-1pm
27 **Annual Plant Sale** – Churchyard - 10am-1pm

JUNE

- 11** **Village Fete** – Playing Fields – 12.30-5pm

GREAT NEWS FOR THE CHILDREN OF OUR VILLAGE

Wateringbury Parish Council is delighted to announce that they will be receiving a **grant of £57,833** from the FCC Community Foundation Action Fund* to put new play equipment into an extended play area on the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields. The grant will pay for new swings and springies, a roundabout, a see-saw, a play panel and a modular multi-play tower, for the younger age groups. **This is in addition to the grant of £8,717** received recently from the National Lottery Community Fund. This funding is for the existing play area to be enhanced in the coming months by adding junior swings, two springy sheep and a play panel for children of the village to use and enjoy.

The Parish Council would like to thank our third-party contributors and everyone who completed our play users opinion survey. Without all your help and support this would not have been possible. Get ready to enjoy the new facilities in a few months time!

**FCC Communities Foundation is a not-for-profit business that awards grants for community projects through the Landfill Communities Fund*

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

RIP

**Felicity Jane Bevan (known as Jane)
16th June 1963 - 19th February 2023**

Jane was born in Hull, but lived in Singapore and Germany as well as all over the UK when she was growing up as her father was in the RAF. She joined Kent police 1987,

first serving in Rochester. She moved to one of the Police Houses in Watlington, in 1987, whilst serving as Village Bobby in East Peckham, where she met Linda. They moved back to Watlington in 2002. They were the first couple in Maidstone to have their Civil Partnership in December 2005, which was then converted to a marriage. Jane was diagnosed with MS when she was 30 years old. Together they faced all the ups and downs associated with MS, but with the full support of Kent Police, she stayed in the Force until her retirement in September 2009. She sadly passed away at home with Linda holding her hand on Sunday 19th February. Jane's funeral took place on 16th March at Vinters Park Crematorium.

Rostrum sends its condolences to Linda and all who knew and loved Jane

David Evans

26th June 1939 - 9th March 2023

What a man, what a very very good man. In the words inscribed on Spike Milligan's gravestone: "I told you I was ill" ... You may or may not know that the hugely convivial, truly brilliant, funny, loving, kind, generous, fabulously clever, dearly beloved David Evans of The Riverside (formerly Restaurant), Watlington had a severe stroke last October. We all, his family, friends, neighbours and colleagues, are very sad to say that, although we maintained so much hope for a different outcome, on Thursday 9th March 2023 David took his last breath, slipped away peacefully, checked out and left this plane. The celebration of his wonderful life will take place on **Thursday 13th April 2023 at 12.30pm at Vinters Crematorium**. In David's honour please tell each other your best and worst jokes, continue to hear his glorious laughter and keep calm and carry on gardening! Love and peace. Margaret, Mandy, Darren and all the family. XXX

Many of us will have special memories of good food and happy times spent at the Riverside Restaurant where David and Margaret have lived since October 1983. His hanging baskets were also a joy to behold.

Thank You to our Parish Councillors (especially Frances Fielding) for their hard work in completing the grant applications to enable the new equipment for the children's play areas at the Playing Fields to be funded from grants obtained.

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK.

Fresh from our sell out performances of Jack and the Beanstalk, we would like to thank you all for your continued support. Jack and his escapades were very popular this year but to be honest we think Daisy the Cow was the star of the show! We really liked performing this traditional pantomime and judging by our audience feedback, it was enjoyed at each and every performance.

Once again a big thank you and keep your eye on the Rostrum for upcoming shows. *The Watlington Players*

WI – Inspiring Women

The next meeting on **13th April at 2pm** in the Village Hall will welcome **former B.A. pilot Eddie Asquith with his talk "In Full Flight"**. Visitors will be most welcome to come along.

At our March meeting which was Competitions Day we welcomed three visitors from the West Kent Federation Office who helped to judge the entries for the baking competition for a tray bake. The winner of the Freda Robbins plate was Margaret M with Gillian and Janet T as runners up. The Hickman cup for a seasonal greetings card was won by Joyce.

Stroma won the flower arrangement award with her entry of Spring flowers. The Vera Thompsett 'Tree of Life' was awarded to Stroma as winner of most competition during the last year. The cakes were then enjoyed with tea during social time. *Margaret Malsher*

HISTORY SOCIETY

Our next talk is in the village hall on **Wednesday 19th April** when Peter Batty will tell us about the **world famous East Malling Research Station**. His talk is titled "Fruits of our Labours" and subtitled "EMR – The Research Station that changed History".

The talk starts at 8pm and free tea and coffee is available from 7.40pm. Visitors are most welcome at £5.

On 17th May we are holding our annual Wine and Cheese evening, for members and their guests, in a local house which has a delightful garden and there will be a short 10 min talk about some of the interesting properties near-by. Entrance is by ticket only and these will be on sale (£6) at our April meeting.

KING CHARLES CORONATION CELEBRATIONS **Please note the proposed Street Party has been cancelled.**

Sarah Hudson TMBC Borough Councillor for Wateringbury

VILLAGE FETE 11TH JUNE - RAFFLE PRIZES FOR THE PRIZE DRAW NEEDED

The organising committee would much appreciate donations of prizes for the raffle from local businesses and individuals. If you are able to help please contact

wateringburyfetecommittee@gmail.com

There are currently vacancies on Wateringbury Parish Council

The council would normally fill these vacancies by co-option, which is a process whereby the council considers applications from interested persons and can then select someone to fill the seat. However, as there are elections on the 4th May you can nominate yourselves to stand.

If you want to find out about what councillors do and how they go about it, please contact the Clerk via email

clerk@wateringburypc.org.uk or Tel: 07860 721924

The work of a councillor

If appointed, you will attend initial councillor training (mainly on-line), and further courses depending on your role in the council. Between Parish meetings, which are once a month, you will be discussing issues with other councillors, informally or in working parties on bespoke projects. It's not just turning up for a meeting once a month! To accommodate more families and those that enjoy the summer there is no parish meeting August.

Meetings are the 1st Tuesday of each month at the Village Hall but communication via email is a huge part of the role. Councillors are often mixed ages and with diverse skills which helps the Council understand the views and needs of the community. We want to attract people that represent all age ranges and backgrounds of our residents within the parish and spread the net as widely as possible, so please tell your friends or family members about this vacancy, especially if you think they have something unique to offer.

As you can see, the job is potentially a very interesting one, serving the community, meeting people, and doing a range of activities. If after reading this information, you think it's for you, write to the Council, via the Clerk,

email address is on the advert, explaining why you would like to be a councillor, and what you think you could offer.

You will be invited to attend an interview in person, where you will be asked to give a short introduction about yourself and answer a few questions from the councillors present. After that, the Council will quickly make a decision about the appointment.

The Wateringbury Summer Fete will be held on Sunday 11th June 12.30 - 17.00, at the Wateringbury Playing Fields.

The committee is working hard to make it a really fun event for the whole village. There will be a fun dog show, bouncy castle, face-painting, a band, as well as lots of stalls to browse! If you are interested in having a pitch, or would like to sponsor the event, please contact the committee on wateringburyfetecommittee@gmail.com. We are also in need of volunteers to help out on the day - any time at all would be very much appreciated. 'Many hands make light work' as they say and these events can only run if we have volunteers to support them.

Sarah Tucker

FIRST WATERINGBURY GUIDES

We have welcomed two new guides recently and some of the brownies also visited as they are joining us after Easter. Our pancake evening was a great success with a range of scotch pancakes successfully made – blueberry and lemon, banana and caramel drizzle and rainbow pancakes among others. We've been to Ninja Warriors at Chatham and had an exhausting but fun evening climbing, balancing, jumping and swinging across different obstacles.

The Patrol leaders planned and ran an evening of fun games, and at the time of writing we're in the final stages of planning our Mother's Day treat meal. The girls have chosen the menu and the table decorations and hopefully many of the mums will be able to come and join us for the evening. At that time, we will also be presenting Hayleigh with her Going Away licence. We're delighted with her success as she worked very hard for it. She is going on to complete one extra module by planning and running our summer camp this year.

Our camps for this year are booked and we are going to Spooks and Sparklers at Blacklands, East Grinstead in October and we have a 'back to basics' camp in July at Paxwood, Swanley. We also have a Water Fun Day and a Sailing Day coming up so plenty to challenge the girls.

We do have a few spaces in guides so if you have a daughter between 10-14 that would be interested in joining us, 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. You can contact me on 01622 815416 or email to wateringburyguides@hotmail.com

WATERINGBURY & NETTLESTEAD PRE-SCHOOL AND OUT OF SCHOOL CLUB

Term 4 began with the setting organising a 'Children's disco' a fundraising event, with support from our committee and parents to raise funds for the victims of the Earthquake Disaster in Turkey/Syria. It was lovely to see all the community pull together to support and show great generosity. We are proud to say that we raised a fantastic amount of £740 for the charity AHBAP based in Turkey who can provide direct relief to where it is needed. We had lots of fantastic little dancers, who taught the adults some new moves☺. The children took part in games/face painting and dressing up as their favourite characters! Thank you again for everyone's support in making this event such a success.

As spring creeps up on us with the help of our children we have started clearing out our outdoor area. The children have been using wheel barrows and spades to collect up all the old leaves getting ready to plant some new seeds. Together we have been observing the changes slowly happening around us and sharing why they are happening. We have started looking at life cycles and in Term 5 the children should have some lovely little caterpillars to look after and observe them as they move into each stage of their cycle.

One of our parents also kindly gifted us Giant African Land snails. All the children over the next few terms will get the opportunity to take the snails' home over the weekend and take care of them.

Kay Severn (Manager) 01622 813120 manager@nwps.org.uk

WATERINGBURY FLOWER CLUB

We were treated to a wonderful evening last month by the lovely Gaenor Circus - Chairman of Sussex Area of NAFAS - with her demonstration entitled "Through the Ages." We had many visitors from other clubs as Gaenor has not been to our club before - different designs depicting the different years in flower arranging was a real treat and her colour palette was fabulous. There were many happy people who went home after winning one of Gaenor's arrangements in the raffle.

In April we have a treat with Kent Area demonstrator Helga Cukure with her title "From my drinks cabinet" a wacky title which will be sure to keep us all waiting and wondering what is coming next! May is going to be our talented demonstrator Graham King with his title "Wacky Collars." Graham is known for making the most fantastic containers and decorating them with such amazing details.

Come along and join us for some friendship through flowers - £8 for guests and £40 for annual membership. We meet in East Malling Institute Hall on the third Wednesday evening of each month.

Jean Schofield Secretary WFC

TESTON AND WATERINGBURY PRESCHOOL

Inspiring young minds to grow and shine

A typical day at our preschool. Wait a minute! A typical day? Working with children is rewarding, interesting but never typical.

At our preschool we learn through play, circle time, singing, yoga and phonics.

Our book this term is "What the Ladybird Heard", by Julia Donaldson. A farmyard full of noisy animals, except one very quiet Ladybird who comes up with a plan to fool the robbers. The message in this book is about teamwork and that we can't always handle every situation on our own. We've been busy learning about different animals, using our small world play to create a farmyard. We have made Ladybirds, Mother's Day cards, pebble painting and map making. We have worked together using wood construction, junk modelling and parachute games.

At our preschool we encourage a strong sense of community and belonging; promoting health and wellbeing for all of us. If you would like your child to be part of this amazing preschool 'family' we have limited places left for September please be quick to avoid disappointment. Book your visit as soon as possible, details below:

testonpreschooladmissions@gmail.com

tandwngroup@gmail.com *Tina Driver 07805796353*

GARDENING FOR WILDLIFE

Firstly, apologies that there was no article from me last month but I was in Mexico observing some very different wildlife, including manatees, snakes, monkeys, crocodiles, iguanas and spiders/tarantula! It's a bit of a shock to the system being home but despite the cold temperatures, the increase in daylight hours has triggered clear signs of Spring. These are particularly apparent in birds as the males fight over the females and then the pairs search for nesting material. Much of the material they choose will be natural such as twigs, lichen and moss but some, such as Long Tailed Tits, will also use other materials if available and it's interesting to put a small selection in a suitable spot to see what they choose; human hair is a favourite! Toads and Frogs are also on the move, making their way back to their original ponds so do look out for them on the roads. These creatures are good friends to gardeners as they eat slugs and snails and although we associate them with ponds they spend most of the year out of the water in damp dark places so if you can find a suitable spot to construct a small log pile, you may attract them into your garden regardless of whether you have a pond or not. I already have toad spawn in my pond so there should be plenty of tadpoles on show in time for my

'Open Garden' which takes place on 22nd April from 1 – 5pm at The Roundels, 45 Mill Lane, ME185PE

This year, as well as the opportunity to view an organic, nature friendly garden, the KMG will be attending along with some baby hedgehogs! and our volunteers will be available to answer any questions you might have or even arrange a visit to your own garden. There will be a plant stall and refreshments available and more information is available on the KWT website www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk I hope to see some of you there.

Pauline Knutton

FOOTPATH GROUP

We were lucky with the weather again in March and on both days the walk along the riverside to Yalding was well attended. Once you get to Bow Bridge, this is a lovely flat footpath away from roads, but it can be under water in the winter and very muddy in places at any time of year. We'd had a very dry February this year so we took the chance to enjoy it.

On the Sunday walk as we got back to Bow Bridge we came across a couple of young men with an enormous pike they had just caught. It looked to me to be well over a metre long and the fisherman said it was 17lbs 7oz, which was certainly believable. They put it back in the river, giving pause for thought for anyone thinking of going wild swimming!

Our next walks will be leaving the village hall at:

- 2.30pm on Sunday 2nd April
- 10am on Tuesday 11th April
- 2.30pm on Sunday 7th May

Everyone is welcome! Please contact me if you want more information.

Lisa Dean 077 5953 9032

Home (For Priya)

I remember the first time, not knowing what we would find
At the end of a lane, the village behind
The colours were turning, autumn well on her way
As we drove up the hill at the eve of the day.

So it's right at the church, down the lane to the pond
To the ducks and the swans and the copper-beech beyond
Up the hill to the corn, where the crab apple grows
With the chaffinch, the robin, the wren and the rose.

When winter comes in, skies heavy and grey
We'll watch rain sweep the valley, see the sparrows at play
The starlings they murmur of lands warm and far
As they swoop and they dive and then wait on the wire.

So it's right at the church, down the lane to the pond
With the heron, the geese and the church spire beyond
There's snow on the hill where the crab apple grows
With the holly, the ivy, the wren and the rose.

Daffodils and tulips, ceanothus and fern
The bee and the butterfly, springs welcome return
The blue tits are flirting, dragonflies dart down the trees
And honeysuckle and sweet pea scent summers soft breeze.

So it's right at the church, down the lane to the pond
To the carp and the coots, to the signets and swans
Where the woodpecker flies and the crab apple grows
With the fig and the bay, the wren and the rose.

The hedgerows are laden with blackberry and sloe
As in soft evening light a walking we'll go
Cross the stream, through the wood, past the lone walnut tree
To a stained-glass front door with a four and a three.

So it's right at the church, down the lane to the pond
Where the kingfisher watches, where all nature belongs
Chase the sun up the hill, to where the crab apple grows
With the chaffinch, the robin, the wren and the rose.

I'll never tire of being here with you
Of morning mist on the river, sunrise pink-powder blue
Of the deer and the fox and the blackbird in song
Calling us back to where we belong.

Tom Carling wrote this poem for his wife Priya recently to describe living near the Mill Pond. It was suggested to him that Rostrum readers, who also know how lucky we all are to live in such a delightful village, might enjoy the poem too. So thank you Tom for sharing it with us.

MARCH PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

Election of Parish Councillors - Elections are scheduled to take place on 4th May for those wishing to serve on our Parish Council. There are 9 vacancies. Those wishing to enhance our village by becoming a Parish Councillor need to submit their applications by 4pm on 4th April to T & M Borough Council Elections Officer. If less than 9 applications are received those applying, who meet the criteria, will automatically become Parish Councillors. Elections for T & M Borough Councillors will also take place on 4th May.

Sarah Hudson reported on TMBC matters and gave a snapshot of the good things that have been happening in the Borough:
TMBC Council Tax increase - Our portion of the Council Tax for 2023/24 is to increase by 3% equating to £6.73 for a Band D household.

Grants - West Kent Business Support Grant is to be distributed during April 2023. The Football Foundation has provided £2m to T&M in support for Aylesford and Tonbridge Angels Football Clubs. TMBC, with some funding received through grants, has distributed £6m in

support for vulnerable residents via various projects during this financial year.

Climate Change Initiatives - 56 solar panels were recently fitted to the roof of Larkfield Leisure Centre. 100 additional Electric Car Charging Points are to be installed across the Borough.

Crime - The Borough continues to have the lowest crime, antisocial behaviour and fly-tipping figures in Kent. The OpAssist project has seen a 17% decrease in fly-tipping. Six mobile CCTV cameras have been granted for use within TMBC. Sarah has requested use of one or two of them, however the locations are not to be publicised in order to maximise their effect.

Good spaces - Both Leybourne Lakes and Haysden Country Park have received accreditation recently for being amongst the top three open spaces in the country.

Allotments - Councillors approved, with minor amendments, the new Annual Agreements for renting Old Road Allotment plots.

Christmas Light Decorations - Confirmation of costs to fix lights to street lamps near the cross roads was still awaited from KCC.

Crime Report - Two crimes were listed on the police website - the theft of a mobile phone from a shop and loss of a mountain bike from Red Hill.

Defibrillator - The machine on the wall of the village hall is at present out of action. It is hoped it will be operational soon. The Clerk has ordered notices which will be placed around the village giving details of its location.

Drayhorse Meadow - Councillors had met with the present leaseholder of the stables and land who expressed a wish to renew the lease. Problems with cars parking across the access gate on football match days are still being experienced. Councillors agreed the tenant could submit ideas to prevent this happening for them to consider. Some of the boundary fencing needs to be repaired and the Clerk was asked to obtain quotes. The tenant also requested that the overflow car park which adjoins the meadow be locked on non-match days.

Finance - £250 had been received from NatWest Bank as compensation for poor service. Lionel Robbins was appointed to internally audit the accounts.

Sequencing of Traffic Lights - it was reported that KCC had accepted that there was a problem with the sequencing which causes a build-up of cars on Bow Road coming from Nettlestead. Solving the problem needs the road at the junction to be dug up. Equipment can be fitted to the traffic lights to monitor cars jumping the lights.

Parcel of land in Bow Road - The small area of land close to the footpath in Bow Road was discussed as concerns had been expressed about its condition. The land is owned by the Pear Orchard consortium of residents. It was suggested that the Community pay-back team could be approached to tidy the area up. The pavement has also been narrowed by a build-up of soil. It was agreed this was a matter for the KCC who are responsible for the state of the pavements.

Public discussion time

A resident voiced concerns about the bus stop shelter on Tonbridge Road which had been in a state of disrepair for several months. She had phoned the bus company, KCC and T & M Borough council and each had disclaimed responsibility and suggested she try another organisation. One had referred her to the Parish Council as the responsible authority. Councillor Hudson said it was the responsibility of KCC and repairs were scheduled for the end of March.

Starting in April it was agreed to allow members of the public to raise matters of local concern at two points in the general meetings. Firstly, at the beginning so that those who were not able to attend the whole meeting could raise their concerns then leave and, secondly, just before the close of the meeting so that members of the public could comment on matters which had been discussed during the evening.

Speed Watch - Volunteers carried out 11 sessions during the past month. 2,831 vehicles passed the check-points 285 of which were speeding. From Lodge Close 7.68% of vehicles travelling west were speeding and 10.04% travelling east. In Red Hill travelling downhill 16.44% of vehicles were speeding and uphill 8.92%. The chairman thanked the volunteers for helping to keep our village roads safe.

Planning Applications - the following were discussed at the meeting which followed the General Council meeting:

Claremont House, 200 Tonbridge Road conversion of loft space into one residential unit. This month the application, which came before the council in February, is for Listed Building Consent. *Councillors still object to this application and support all neighbour concerns. Additional concerns were raised about parking and difficulties of carrying out major building works at a street-line property close to the traffic lights.*

Panyun Chow former Cromar Nursery, Livesey Street redevelopment of former nursery with 4 detached houses. This application related to Conditions 11 and 12 of the previously submitted planning application and concerns site investigations about the condition of the land. *Councillors had no comments to make*

The next meeting of the Council will be in the village hall upper room on **Tuesday 4th April at 7.30pm**. Members of the public are very welcome.

CONCERT East Malling Singers and guest singers are performing **Handel's Messiah on Saturday 1st April at St James the Great Church, East Malling**. The concert starts at 7.30pm and will include soloists as well as more than 70 singers. Tickets are £12, schoolchildren are free. Tickets are available from boxoffice@eastmallingsingers.co.uk or telephone 01622 750 943.

Any experienced singers who are familiar with the work and would like to sing in the concert as guests, please contact robertgreenham@proton.me or telephone the box office number above.

REV GARY WRITES

The Rectory, 72 The Street, Mereworth ME18 5NA
gary.rev@outlook.com ☎ 01622 813178

The Freshness of Easter

Towards the end of February this year I was walking up Butchers Lane in Mereworth. I have quite a keen sense of smell and in the coolness of the early evening I picked up a beautiful, sweet scent. It was coming from some plants growing out of the bank. The plants were unfamiliar to me, and I took a picture to try and identify them when I got home. I discovered - assuming my identification to be accurate! - that they were winter heliotropes. I'd heard the word 'heliotrope' before and was familiar with it in the name of the great Scott Joplin's *Heliotrope Bouquet*, but I'd never actually encountered the plant for myself, and I had no idea the fragrance was so lovely. It was a wonderful, fresh early promise of the delights of Spring, and I loved it. I shall be making a yearly visit to the lower end of Butchers Lane from now on to get a seasonal 'fix' of heliotrope!

Some people make a yearly or twice yearly visit to church and for those that do Easter is often the main one. I'm sorry that we can't offer four services across the Benefice again this year on Easter Day but there will be a service in all three parishes which is pretty good going for rural communities.

Easter, along with Spring itself, always strikes me as a time of great freshness and a glorious promise of the resurrection of all who receive Christ as Saviour and Lord. He is risen! The resurrection of Him who suffered and died remains the great bedrock of the Christian faith and the new life on offer to all through His death and resurrection brings hope, joy, peace, and a freshness to life. As with my heliotrope experience you may have heard of Jesus and the resurrection but

not experienced anything of either. The range of services and activities on offer across the Benefice during Holy week and Easter are not only there to encourage and strengthen the believers but also to help all those who in earnest are looking for newness of life. I give you all a warm welcome to our services over the Easter period and look forward to seeing you. Have a blessed and joyful Easter.

Rev Gary Townsend

Rector of Mereworth, Wateringbury and West Peckham

WATERINGBURY CHURCH - SERVICES IN APRIL

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

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

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

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.

Saturday 1st April – 3-5pm - Messy Church There will be craft activities, a short bible story and prayer times plus Rev Gary with his guitar. At about 4.30pm we enjoy afternoon tea.

Palm Sunday 2nd April – Morning Praise led by Barry Fisher

A less formal service with well-known hymns. The traditional Palm Crosses will be distributed during the service.

Maundy Thursday 6th April

8pm at Mereworth Church Taizé Holy Communion Service led by Bob and Becky Bowie and Rev Gary

Good Friday 7th April

11am at St Thomas More Roman Catholic Church, West Malling – Churches Together Walk of Witness. Join with other Christians from across our area to carry the cross, pray and sing at various places in West Malling.

2pm – An Hour at the Cross led by Barry Fisher
A quiet service of prayer and short reflections.

Easter Sunday 9th April

10am - Holy Communion led by Rev Gary
Messy Church on Sunday (for all children) meets in the Vestry during the service

Other Easter Services in the Benefice

11.30am – Sunday 45 in West Peckham

A short informal service led by Rev Gary.

5pm - Refresh in Mereworth led by Rev Gary & Caroline Chalk

For those who enjoy informal worship.

Sunday 16th April - All Age Worship

A less formal service led by Becky, Ruth and Kate.

Sunday 23rd April - Holy Communion Service led by Rev Gary

A Communion service with easy to follow service booklet.

Sunday 30th April - As this is the 5th Sunday in the month the 3 churches in our benefice hold a joint communion service. The service will be in St Dunstan's church, West Peckham at 10am

REFRESH Benefice Services every Sunday at 5pm in Mereworth Church for those who enjoy less formal worship.

**LOOK AFTER YOURSELF –
WELLBEING HINTS AND TIPS
FOREST BATHING**

We are lucky to have a number of woodland spots around. Forestry England encourages us to start forest bathing, a Japanese practice of relaxation (shinrin yoku). It is about being calm and quiet amongst the trees, observing nature around you whilst breathing deeply to de-stress and boost health and wellbeing. There is some science behind these practices as exposure to forests boosts our immune systems with as little as 30 minutes in the woods a week leading to measurably better outcomes. These tips come from Forestry England:

- Turn off your devices to give yourself the best chance of relaxing, being mindful and enjoying a sensory forest-based experience.
- Slow down. Move through the forest slowly so you can see and feel more.
- Take long breaths deep into the abdomen. Extending the exhalation of air to twice the length of the inhalation sends a message to the body that it can relax.
- Stop, stand or sit, smell what's around you, what can you smell?

Did you know that a number of National Trust Parks and Gardens offer mobility help for those who need it? On trips through wooded spots, I have enjoyed seeing both my mother and mother-in-law experiencing new freedoms zooming off ahead of their respective husbands.

Bob Bowie

(PS our local woods should be full of bluebells to enhance your bathing)



**CHURCH PEW FOR SALE –
BY SEALED BID AUCTION**

A reorganisation at the village church of St John the Baptist, Watringbury, has resulted in a pew being removed, and this is now offered for sale which will be by sealed bid auction. The wood is Pine and the overall dimensions are 2.58 metres long (8' 5 1/2") : 0.52m deep (1' 8 1/4") : 0.84m high (2' 9") This is a very old,

beautifully crafted piece of furniture. Bids can be made by e-mail or sealed envelope.

E-mail treasurer@watingburychurch.org.uk using 'PEW BID' in the subject line These will not be opened until the auction has closed. Alternatively, your bid can be made in a sealed envelope and delivered to either

6 Allington Gardens ME18 5DG or
86 Phoenix Drive, ME18 5RS

These should be similarly marked **PEW BID**, on the front of the envelope. All bids will remain unopened until after the deadline for receipt. **All bids must be delivered by midday on Friday 14th April 2023. No bids received after this time will be considered. Offers should be in excess of £200.**

Following conclusion of the auction, assistance with delivery within the village may be possible.

Easter Fun with Faith

Calling all primary school aged children in Wateringbury village.
Join us to help celebrate and hear the
Easter story.

A morning filled with fun, songs, and craft activities.

Saturday 8th April @ 9.30am until 12.30pm

at St John the Baptist church.

£2 per child to be paid in cash on the day.

Booking is essential because of numbers. To book a place
please email Debbie at easterfun@wateringburychurch.org.uk

To download a Registration Form go to our church website
www.pchurches.org

I look forward to hearing from you. Debbie Bond

COFFEE BREAK - 5th and 19th April and 3rd 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 -

Saturday 1st April - 3pm to 5pm

Young children and their carers are invited to go
along to the church to celebrate the first Easter with
crafts, games, story and prayer time and songs with
Rev Gary on his guitar. We always end with afternoon
tea.

In May we will meet on Saturday 13th a
change of date as the King's Coronation takes place on
the first Saturday in May (6th) so please make a note
of the change.

For more information please email
ruth.dunn33@btinternet.com

ANNUAL PLANT SALE

Saturday 27th May

in the Churchyard

10am to 1pm

Beautiful plants to fill your garden with colour

