

GRASS

THE NEWSLETTER AT THE ROOTS OF THE UNITED BENEFICE OF BLISWORTH AND STOKE BRUERNE/ SHUTLANGER, WITH GRAFTON REGIS AND ALDERTON

Learning for Christians

Jesus is a great teacher and provoked the comment, “no one teaches like this man”. Therefore, it should not come as a surprise to us that the Christian faith has always placed a high value on education. When the early Puritan Settlers arrived in New England it was not very long before they set about forming some incredibly strong university type institutions which continue to this day. They did so because they were convinced that their vision of America as a “City set on Hill”. Within that tradition of the Church, learning and study has bequeathed us a rich resource. In another wing of the Church Monastic Orders kept the light of learning and Bible translation alive when most of the world had lost interest.

Today Churches are always at the forefront of resourcing learning. In our country alone there are countless theological colleges and university type institutions funded by and staffed by a large number of Christian academics and teachers. The commitment to learning by the Church is an integral part of her calling to “teach all nations” as Jesus put it in his “Great Commission”. There is in every Church an on-going programme of learning, on Sundays in regular services; in many evening study groups and children's clubs. We need more commitment, funding and passion an even greater passion for “loving God with all our mind” (Jesus).

The Churches are involved in the funding and running of a very large number of schools. The Church of England and the Church in Wales are responsible for over 5,000 schools, mainly primary but 6% of secondary schools are Church schools. Most “Faith Schools” are places coveted by many parents as very desirable for their children; in fact the record of Church schools is second to none. Many children of other faiths are welcomed in these all inclusive centres of learning.

Our own Church school in this Benefice at Stoke Bruerne has about 52 children on its roll and we do all we can to support and encourage its Head Teacher, staff and pupils, including a substantial financial commitment. As one of two Foundation Governors and as the local Parish Minister I spend a substantial amount of time on this aspect of our Church ministry.

As you all know, learning is important for me as a Christian minister and if I can offer any encouragement to any to pick up where you may have left off do let me know.

Roy Mellor

Service Schedule for February 2008

Sunday 3rd

Blisworth - 8.00 a m: Holy Communion, 10.0 a m: Sunday Club, 11.00 a m: Morning Worship
Shutlanger - 9.30 am: Holy Communion

Ash Wednesday 6th

Blisworth - 7.30 a m: Holy Communion with the Imposition of Ashes

Sunday 10th

Stoke Bruerne - 9.30 a m: Holy Communion, including Sunday Club
Blisworth – 11.00 a m: Holy Communion

Sunday 17th

Blisworth - 8.00 a m: Holy Communion, 11.00 a m: Morning Worship,
Stoke Bruerne - 10.00 a m: Sunday Club
Grafton Regis - 9.30 a m: Holy Communion

Sunday 24th

Blisworth - 11.00 a m: All age Worship with Communion
Alderton - 9.30 a m: Holy Communion.

Useful Telephone Numbers for the United Benefice of Blisworth and Stoke Bruerne with Grafton Regis and Alderton

Rector: The Revd Roy Mellor, tel 01604 879112

Churchwardens of Blisworth: Mrs Angela Cheesbrough, tel 01604 859839 and Mrs Fiona McKenzie, tel 01604 859541

Churchwardens of Stoke Bruerne: Mrs Jackie Evans, tel 01604 862473 and Mr Brian Lewthwaite, tel 01604 863500

Churchwarden of Grafton Regis: Lord Charles Fitzroy, tel 01908 542908

Churchwardens of Alderton: Mrs Amanda Selvey, tel 01327 811380 and Mrs Daryl Halsey, tel 01327 811040

GENERAL NEWS



STOKE BRUERNE

Donald Saunders Cockram

Mildred and family wish to thank their many friends who expressed sympathy at their sudden and sad loss of Don. Special thanks go to those who attended and officiated at the service – the kindness shown has been a great comfort at this sad time.

Mildred Cockram

Coffee Morning - Northants Greyhound Rescue



We are holding a coffee morning with a bring and buy and raffle on Thursday 28 February at 11.00 a m at Alison's place (The Bungalow, Church Lane, Stoke Bruerne). Everybody is very welcome to come along.

The Northants Greyhound Rescue van was stolen just after Christmas, with two dogs in the back. They were later found wandering, having been dumped, but there is no sign yet of the vehicle.

Alison and Hazel

St Mary the Virgin, Stoke Bruerne

Once again, it is almost time for our spring tidy for the Church and Churchyard and we would like to seek your assistance with this. This will take place on Friday 7 and Saturday 8 March and we will be pleased to see anyone who can spare an hour or so on these days, between 9.30 a m and 1.00 p m. Please bring your own tools with you (rakes, pruning shears, saws etc.)

If you get time, please let Brian Green on 01604 863592, or Jackie Evans on 01604 862473, know you are coming; otherwise just turn up and you will be welcome. Thank you.

Brian Green

SHUTLANGER



Carols by Lantern Light

A belated thank you from the Parish Council to those who attended the Carols by Lantern light event back in December. It was generally agreed that this was a very enjoyable hour and hopefully it can be repeated, so if you missed out for whatever reason in 2007, look forward to December 2008.

Speedwatch

The Council hopes that the Speedwatch initiative to monitor speeding traffic through the village will take place this year, so be aware that speed guns will be pointed in your direction as you drive through the village, and don't be surprised if you get contact from the Police if you are travelling at a speed above the set limit for the road.

Hopefully the outcome of the exercise will be beneficial to all.

Linda Paice



BLISWORTH

Christmas was celebrated at St John's in what has been its traditional and well-loved pattern in recent years.

Carol Service

The first event was our carol service on the evening of Thursday 20 December. The Church had been decorated and there was a good congregation which included friends from the Chapel. The readings (clearly and beautifully read) were interspersed with many of our favourite carols and there were lively contributions from our musicians. Everyone there seemed to enjoy the service, and afterwards, refreshments were served.

Christingle, Christmas Eve & Christmas Services

The afternoon of the following day had been booked for assembly of the Christingles. Fiona was CQ, and she gathered together half a dozen ladies, perhaps one or two more, at Candlebridge in Little Lane. There they worked steadily and assiduously, spurred on by continuous conversation, so that one and a half hours later, 100 Christingles were lined up in columns on their trays – looking rather like a miniature terracotta army – all ready for the Christingle service. This took place on Christmas Eve, in the late afternoon. It was a lovely service, much enjoyed by all the children and by all the grown-ups. There were just enough Christingles to go round, so someone had made an excellent job of guessing the number likely to be needed.

Our Rector certainly had to have his skates on, as you might say, throughout Christmas Eve. After the Christingle service at Blisworth, his next commitment was at 8.00 p m at St Mary's Church in Stoke Bruerne, where there was a service with carols and Communion. The large congregation there included several worshippers from Blisworth, who enjoyed the mulled wine which followed the service.

Then it was back to Blisworth for the Rector, to get ready for our midnight Communion service at St John's. He must have been relieved that Christmas Day was not so hectic, with the one family service in the morning at Alderton. The year drew to its close with a service for the whole Benefice at St John's on Sunday morning, 30 December. We look forward eagerly to our Christmas services, with their carols and their involvement of the children, and with their message of joy and hope. They involve lots of preparation, thought and hard work, and then, in what seems little more than the blinking of an eyelid, they have taken place and are just memories.

Giant Sale

However, we can now look forward to the giant sale. The date is Saturday 1 March, beginning at 2.00 p m. The village hall has been booked and all sorts of delights will be there to tempt you to spend your money, while, at the same time, you contribute to helping with the expenses of maintaining our Church. There will be a white elephant and bric a brac stall, books and toys and some very superior jumble. Then, you can sit down and enjoy a cup of tea and a natter. So please start to sort out anything that you can contribute for this sale. You can bring it to the village hall on the morning of the sale between 10.00 a m and 12.00 noon, or we will arrange to collect your contributions if this is easier for you – please telephone Angela Cheesbrough on 01604 859839 and she will organise collection. Then, if you can help with the setting up and the selling, please let Angela know. All help will be much appreciated. Finally, please encourage as many of your friends, neighbours and members of your family to come along on the afternoon. There will be so much on offer – in fact, everything you could possibly want will be there! The sale we had early in 2007 was such a success and we want this one to be just as good.

Joe Pyke is 80!

Congratulations to Joe Pyke, who celebrated his 80th birthday on 18 January. Every good wish, Joe, from us all, for your health and happiness in the coming years.

Saying of the Month

Our 'saying' this month, contributed by a reader who wishes to remain anonymous, is, in fact, a little poem:

*I said a prayer for you today
And know God must have heard
I felt the answer in my heart
Although He spoke no word
I didn't ask for wealth or fame
I know you wouldn't mind.
I asked Him to send treasures
Of a far more lasting kind.*

*I asked that He'd be near you
At the start of each new day,
To grant you health and blessings
And friends to share the way
I asked Him for your happiness
In all things great and small
But it was for His loving care
I prayed the most of all*



GRAFTON REGIS

Our Christmas Lunch and Carol Service

Our Lunch Club Christmas lunch was held on the same day as the Carol Service this year, so a few glasses of wine at the lunch helped to put everyone in a relaxed mood for the Carol service in the evening; I don't know if it helped with the singing, however.

At the lunch this year, we had a raffle in aid of St. Johns' Ambulance service and raised £60. We had a traditional Christmas dinner but replaced the Christmas pudding with some lighter offerings, followed by mince pies and chocolates. I think there was time for most people to have an afternoon doze before moving on to the Carol service.

The Church was decorated for the Carol service on the Saturday and our youngsters came along to decorate the Christmas tree and set up the Nativity scene. We were joined



at the service by a group of rambblers with one of the ladies agreeing to read a lesson for us. We also had some new readers from the village this year, so we would like to say a big thank you to Margaret, Geraldine and Jane for taking on the task. The biggest thank you has to go to Summar, the youngest of our readers, who obviously has a future in public speaking. Well done, Summar

Our usual offering of punch and mince pies followed the service. Again, a big thank you goes to the White Hart for supplying the mince pies.

I have to remember, also, to thank Liam who even brought his own electronic organ with him and provided the music for the singing. I think all those who came to the service would agree that the Church looked at its best in candle light. Jean Glanville



Grafton Regis Luncheon Club

Diary dates for forthcoming lunches:

- Monday 25 February - Chinese New Year Lunch
 - Sunday 30 March - Easter Family Lunch
 - Monday 21 April - Pre-St George's Day (23 April) lunch
- Jean Glanville, tel 01908 543463



ALDERTON

Church Cleaning Rota

- February Julie Taylor & Gwen & Martin
- March Margaret Hall Townley & Linda Dards

Lighting of Church over Christmas

The PCC would like to say a big thank you to Roger Gavan for once again lighting up our lovely Church over the Christmas period. It really makes those dark weeks very special and the Church looks wonderful as you approach it. The PCC does appreciate your efforts, Roger.

Shakespeare on The Mount 2008

A weekend earlier this year, 2 and 3 August are the magic dates for Heartbreak Productions' performances of HENRY V. We English put it over on the French long before Jonny Wilkinson's boot did it last year. So, please, get out those new diaries and make a note of the dates now. Derek Batten



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GENERAL KNOWLEDGE QUIZ No 85

1. What is the nearest British land to France?
2. What is Britain's smallest city?
3. The first single to sell over two million copies in Great Britain was written as a tribute to where in Great Britain?
4. What four cities in Great Britain have hosted the Commonwealth games?
5. Which animal has varieties called trapdoor, yellow sac, and Chinese bird?
6. Which movie features a space ship called the Nostromo?
7. Why is the Golden Gate Bridge painted plum colour?
8. What is Sherlock Holmes's sidekick, Dr. Watson's, first name?
9. Who were the last brothers to play in a World Cup winning team?
10. How many kilobytes are there in a megabyte?
11. Which 1981 film was the only Best Picture Oscar winner to contain all the letters of 'Oscar' in its title?
12. What are the names of the three ballets composed by Tchaikovsky?
13. Can you identify which letter comes next? V, I, B, G, Y, O,?
14. Behind U.S.A which country has the second longest road network in the world?
15. What is the only anagram of the word 'stationed'?
16. Identify the following artist from the cryptic clue – 'crazy kebab'?
17. In how many Bond films did Desmond Llewelyn play the character of 'Q'?
18. In 1985, which entertainer made the first ever mobile phone call in Britain?
19. How many years are celebrated in a demisesquicentennial?
20. Which type animal finds its way home using magnetism?

SNIPPETS:

Look before you leap – and look twice before you shred.

The time to find a plumber is not when you want one.

There would be no such thing as a nagging wife if husbands listened the first time.

Everyone wants to be famous, but fame doesn't want everyone.

It's better to hold out a hand than to point a finger.

Quizzy writes:

Thank you all for your entries this month and clearly questions 2 and 18 gave you all problems. Did you think I would give you such easy answer as £50? We had four great results with Derek and Jill Cornwell and Andrew Woodward leading the field with 17, Judy and Sarah Cave with 16 (only had 19 answers) and Henny Cameron with 15. On a lucky dip basis, Andrew gets the prize this time.

This month's prize will be a fruit cake to enjoy with your afternoon tea whilst taxing your brain, so best of luck and have fun doing the quiz.

Quizzy

Answers to last month's Quiz

1. Which country grows the most bananas in Europe?	Iceland
2. What is the largest bank note printed by the Bank of England?	£100 Million, of which there are 40, and which is known as the Titan
3. How was Robert Leroy Parker better known?	Butch Cassidy
4. Where is the only road in the UK where you have to drive on the right?	Savoy Hotel entrance
5. Who was Pauline Fowler's twin in Eastenders?	Pete Beale
6. In what year was The Bank of England founded?	1694
7. In rowing, what is the name of the short sleeve T- shirt with a front opening, where the opening and the sleeve ends are trimmed in the colour of the club?	Zephyr
8. Who played the third incarnation of the Doctor in the TV series Doctor Who?	Jon Pertwee
9. Which country is the largest exporter of Christmas trees?	Canada
10. What do Germans do with a 'handy'?	Make phone calls it's a mobile phone
11. If you walked one mile south, one mile west, and then one mile north, and you ended up where you started, where would you be?	The North Pole
12. Barwick Green is the name of the title music to which show?	The Archers
13. What is the more common name for the type of bear called the Ursus Maritimus?	Polar Bear
14. Which football team has the nickname of the Bluebirds?	Cardiff City
15. Which three actors have played Richard Hannay in the film '39 Steps'?	Robert Donat, Kenneth More and Robert Powell
16. What is the name of the parliament of the Isle of Man?	Tynwald
17. On a standard dart board, what is the lowest number that cannot be scored by a single dart?	23
18. What river has the second largest tidal bore in England?	The River Parrot
19. Who commanded the Scottish army at the Battle of Bannockburn?	Robert the Bruce
20. Which is the longest motorway in Great Britain?	M6

Pilates classes at Grafton Regis Village Hall

Pilates Classes

The popularity of the Pilates classes held locally at Grafton Regis village continues and the classes have become well established, there are however a number of places available in both classes for anyone interested.

The class times are:

Thursday evenings: 6.00 p m to 7.00 p m

7.15 p m to 8.15 p m

The classes are run with numbers being kept strictly to a maximum of 9 or 10 to ensure personal attention, and last 1 hour including a therapeutic relaxation session at the end.

Please contact Jane Aldred-Lock on 01908-543267

We look forward very much to hearing from you.



N.B. Grafton Regis Village Hall is a registered charity and any profits made by the Activity Zone go towards the upkeep of the hall.

How to Recognise a Stroke

We received the following article from Alan Richardson in Stoke Bruerne, who felt it would be of interest to GRASS readers:

Stroke Identification

During a barbecue, a friend stumbled and took a little fall – (the offer of a call to paramedics was made), but she assured everyone that she was fine and had just tripped over a brick because of her new shoes. Her friends got her cleaned up and gave her a new plate of food. While she appeared a bit shaken up, she then went about enjoying herself for the rest of the evening. Her husband telephoned later, telling everyone that his wife had been taken to the hospital, and at 6.00 p m, had passed away. She had suffered a stroke. Had they known how to identify the signs of a stroke, perhaps this lady would still be with us today.

Some victims do not die – they can often end up in a helpless, hopeless condition instead.

It only takes a minute to read this:

‘A neurologist says that if he can get to a stroke victim within 3 hours, he can reverse the effects of a stroke - totally. He said the trick was getting a stroke recognised, diagnosed and then getting the patient medically cared for within 3 hours, which is tough.

Recognising a Stroke

Thank God for the sense to remember the three steps, S T R. Read and learn!

Sometimes the symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer severe brain damage when people nearby fail to recognise the symptom of a stroke.

Now doctors say a bystander can recognise a stroke by asking three simple questions:

- ‘S’ Ask the individual to smile
- ‘T’ Ask the person to talk and speak a simple sentence, coherently, ie “it is sunny out today”
- ‘R’ Ask the person to raise both arms.

Note: Another sign of a stroke is this: ask the person to stick out their tongue. If the tongue is crooked, if it goes to one side or another, that is also an indication of a stroke.

If he or she has trouble with any one of these tasks, call for help immediately, and describe the symptoms to the despatcher.

A cardiologist says that if everyone who receives this information passes it on to 10 people, you can bet that at least one life will be saved’



Protect YOUR Home from Burglaries

It is well known that thieves are opportunistic by nature - looking for doors and windows left open, no lights on at home, and keys left out on display. With 1 in 3 household burglaries, the offender gains entry via an open or unlocked door or window. It is therefore important that homeowners take some simple measures to protect their home from unwanted visitors.

Following these simple steps can help protect your home from becoming a target.

- Keep all windows and doors locked even when you are in.
- Keep all keys out of reach and out of sight.
- Don't leave spare keys outside or in a garage or shed.
- Visible locks on windows will always deter a burglar. If your locks are not effective, get new ones installed, they are cheap to install!
- Glass panels on or around doors can be vulnerable places; make sure they are glazed so people can't see into your home.
- If you are installing new doors and windows, get ones that are certified to British Standards BS7950 (windows) or PAS 24-1 (doors).

- Keep fences and hedges below head height to ensure that the entrances to your house aren't hidden.

If you would like more advice on Crime prevention go to www.northants.police.uk. To find your local Neighbourhood Watch, or for help and advice on setting one up, contact Chris Lumbis, Community Safety Liaison Officer, 08453 700 700 Ext 3272.

If you see or hear anything unusual or suspicious please contact Northamptonshire Police on 08453 700700 or ring Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. The information that you supply may help to prevent and detect a crime.

Car Security

For many people their car can be a very important part of their lives, helping them to fulfil basic functions such as driving to work, taking the family out and many other day-to-day functions. All cars cost money, so it is therefore crucial and worthwhile that a few extra simple steps are taken to protect our cars.

- Do not leave any items on display in vehicles, and don't hide them under seats or in the boots as offenders will always look there.
- Never leave keys in the ignition, no matter how short a time you are leaving the vehicle for.
- Always lock all your doors and windows whenever your car is parked, even if you are just going to be a few minutes.
- Do not leave work tools in your vehicle, especially overnight.
- Don't leave electronic items on display including CD players and GPS systems.
- Park your car in a garage or in a well-lit area.
- Use a steering wheel lock, a car alarm or immobiliser, if not already fitted.
- Fit substantial gates or bollards if you leave your car on your drive.
- Hide your car keys when you get home so that they can not be seen through windows or doors.

If you see or hear anything unusual or suspicious, please contact Northamptonshire Police on 08453 700700 or ring Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. The information that you supply may help to prevent and detect a crime.

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United Benefice Calendar for 2008

All groups and organisations within the community are warmly invited to include events here.

February

- 9 Sponne Brass Band Concert, Sponne School
- 25 Grafton Regis Luncheon Club lunch to celebrate Chinese New Year, 12.30, GR Village Hall
- 28 Northants Greyhound Rescue coffee morning, The Bungalow, Church Lane, Stoke Bruerne, 11.00 a m

March

- 1 Giant sale of bric a brac & superior jumble, Blisworth Village Hall, 2.00 p m
- 2 County Youth Brass Band Spectacular, Spinney Hill Theatre, Northampton
- 7 Spring tidy of Churchyard, Stoke Bruerne, 9.30 a m to 1.00 p m
- 8 Spring tidy of Churchyard, Stoke Bruerne, 9.30 a m to 1.00 p m
- 30 Grafton Regis Luncheon Club Easter family lunch, 12.30 p m GR Village Hall

April

- 21 Grafton Regis Luncheon Club pre-St George's Day lunch, 12.30 p m G R Village Hall

May

- 16 County Youth Brass mid-term concert, Spinney Hill Hall, Northampton

July

- 6 County Youth Brass Summer Concert, Derngate Theatre, Northampton
- 19 Northampton Relay for Life, Roade School, starts 2.00 p m
- 20 Northampton Relay for Life, Roade School, ends 10.00 a m

August

- 2 Shakespeare on The Mount, Alderton - Henry V
- 3 Shakespeare on The Mount, Alderton - Henry V

Horse Manure for Sale

Horse manure, off the pasture, 50p per bag. (PYO. free!)

Proceeds to Brooke Horse Charity. Phone Mercia Cooper on 01604 863397, 8 Rookery Lane, Stoke Bruerne

Thanks again to Jackie Grundon for proof reading

THE CLOSING DATE FOR THE NEXT EDITION OF GRASS is 14 February 2008

If you can get any copy to us earlier than that it would be very much appreciated.

Please send any copy to:

Linda Dards, Moorend, Spring Lane, Alderton NN12 7LW tel 01327 811265, fax 811874, e-mail: linda@dards.net

Could you please include your name & phone number with entries in case we have any problems

If you would like to add photographs or drawings to your text these are welcome and can be supplied via email or as photos, and returned after scanning. Contributions by email are most welcome, we can accept most formats; please request a response from us on receipt – so you are sure that we have your submission.

Word (any version) is preferred.