

# Berkhamsted. *review*

*In this issue*

**Local Choice  
and Local  
Priorities**

**The Cost of  
Caring**

**Codes,  
Computers  
and White  
Collars**

**Closing the  
Gap**

**A Cause for  
Celebration**

**Faith and  
Doubt**

**This Month's  
Notes and  
Events**



**February 2010**



*for Town and Parish*

**30p**



## *The Parish Magazine of St Peter's Great Berkhamsted*

### **Welcome to the February 2010 issue of the Berkhamsted review**

As I write in mid-January, there has been snow on the ground for four weeks – probably longer than in any year since 1963. The Chiltern Hills had three heavy falls before Christmas and two more (so far) in January – nothing like the several feet in parts of Yorkshire and Cumbria, but enough to make local travel difficult, especially within the town. Enough to affect congregations and audiences in St Peter's. Some of us love the snow, some of us hate it. Some take up the challenges enthusiastically, and some seize the chance to miss a day at work. However you react, when the snow first falls, only the stony-hearted could deny its beauty – every surface laden with snow; even the smallest twigs piled high; ice crystals cloaking the spiders' webs, like exquisite Christmas decorations – and the silence. And how have we been served in these conditions by our local council? There's general agreement that there's been less gritting of residential roads. Why? Is there a shortage of salt and grit? Does the council lack the funds to undertake the work? Has Health & Safety paralysed the response? Residents would like to know the answers.

**Christopher Green**

### **IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE...**

#### **LOCAL CHOICE AND LOCAL PRIORITIES**

**Father Luke Geoghegan** looks ahead to  
the election ..... **p3**

#### **THE COST OF CARING**

**Margaret Burbidge** writes ..... **p5**

#### **CODES, COMPUTERS AND WHITE COLLARS**

**Ian Reay** reflects on discipline and  
individuality ..... **p7**

#### **CLOSING THE GAP**

**David Pearce** reports ..... **p11**

#### **A CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION**

Mass in B Minor by JS Bach  
**Richard Grylls** writes..... **p14**

#### **FAITH AND DOUBT**

**The Revd Jonathan Gordon** writes.. **p21**

**plus our regular features,  
notes & notices and diary dates**

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Cover: Cowper Road

*photo - Christopher Green*

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*Responsibility for opinions expressed in articles and letters published in this review and for the accuracy of any statements in them rests solely with the individual contributor*

**Next copy dates (all Fridays)**

**5 Feb 6 Mar 2 Apr**



## Local Choice and Local Priorities

**Father Luke  
Geoghegan** looks  
ahead to the election

Within the next six months there will be a general election. Already there are signs of fatigue among the electorate about its relevance, or the difference that a new government – of whatever

persuasion -will make.

But there are important issues – the question is whether our politicians are brave enough to put them forward and whether we as voters are prepared to do the right thing in deciding what is best for all the community, rather than doing the easy thing of sinking back into lethargy and *me first*.

Take for example, the balance of power between national government and local government.

Over the last sixty years there has been a gradual shift to central state control. After the Second World War, to get the country moving again, central planning in health, welfare, housing and agriculture made sense. The growth of welfare in the sixties and seventies required ever greater central state structures. Both Labour and Conservative were active in this process. Even **Margaret Thatcher** in her avowed attempt to roll back the state ended up taking even more central state power as she dismantled London's Government and instructed local authorities how much money they could spend – no matter what local voters thought – the process called *rate-capping*.

Letting individuals, and by extension, their communities, make their own decisions (and their own mistakes) is actually very Christian. The joy (and the tragedy) of humanity is the freedom of

# *review* leader

choice and the dignity and development achieved through this. So an overbearing, all-seeing state is actually a problem for the Christian.

Both Conservative and Labour claim to want more power to be passed down from central government to local communities. **David Cameron** in his speech on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010 promised that:

*Within months of a Conservative victory there would start the most radical decentralisation of power this country has seen for generations.*

With the biggest budget deficit in living memory, and huge public sector cuts required, the first fear is that this might translate into *We're going to pass all the impossible decisions down to you.*

But actually, this issue is first and foremost about us. It's easy to be micro-managed from the top. We get someone to moan at and avoid all responsibility ourselves. Local choice is about local priorities - you can't keep your cake and eat it. The media, and we their audience, kick against this by endless complaints about *the postcode lottery* - the term given to any service which is not exactly the same as somewhere else in England. The result is to drive politicians and public services into ever more standardisation and centralisation.

Yes, if you give different communities the freedom to choose, often they will choose different priorities. So, our postcode may well make a difference but it will certainly not be a lottery.

If a politician is brave enough to make a stand on real decentralisation, are we brave enough to respond? Or is it easier to sink back into moaning and lethargy and say *Politics just isn't relevant anymore?* ❖

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Mothers' Union members are a generous lot! In over 20 years of being actively involved, I have never ceased to be amazed at the amount of money members raise. Donations and imaginative fund-raising swell the funds throughout the year. Money is ear-marked for the Women's Refuge in Bedford and holidays for families in great need in this

diocese, as well as for the *Overseas and Relief Funds* and the *Literacy and Development* and *Family Life Programmes*. There are also the one-off projects like mosquito nets for Nebbi in Uganda and training people to help with pregnancy and childbirth in rural Burundi. The recent appeal for money to help the famine stricken people of East Africa, launched in the autumn and written about in last month's *review*, has already raised over £1,600 from branches and deaneries in this diocese alone.

The Mothers' Union, like many charities has constantly to look at funding its work. As a membership organisation, its money for both home and overseas projects came traditionally from the generosity of members in the UK and Ireland. In 2010 Mothers' Union has a worldwide membership of over 3.5 million. With most of them living in developing countries where their needs are great, it is increasingly difficult for the decreasing membership in these shores to support the wide range of project work. So the Mothers' Union is looking at new ways to bring in funds to make Christian Care for Families a reality in many, many people's lives. The East Africa Appeal was open not just to members, but to anyone who

## THE COST OF CARING

Margaret Burbidge writes

wished to contribute, to help those whose lives are dependent on the rains that do not come. Donations via the MU website make this easy.



Another new initiative is the *Global Village Fair*; a scheme to offer ethical gifts all the year round. *Honey I'm home*, *Cow know-how*, and *A stitch in time* are among the gifts with a difference available for birthdays,

anniversaries and other special occasions. They too can be ordered online at <http://theglobalvillagefair.org>.

Ethical gifts were first offered by the Mothers' Union for Mothering Sunday three years ago and popular they proved to be. To be able to buy gifts that help other mothers in great need, and receive a card in memory of our mothers or grandmothers is particularly appreciated. Over £186,000 was raised in 2009, more than in 2008, and orders were received from beyond the membership, raising the profile of Mothers' Union in churches and communities. *Make a Mother's Day* catalogues for Mothering Sunday will be available again this year, in church and online. Consider another ethical gift; latrines and handwashing, birthing kits and seeds were on the list last year to make another mother's day, and that mother will be one living in tough circumstances that we can hardly begin to imagine.

Fund-raising and donations are just two of the ways Mothers' Union members show Christian Care for Families, not only at home but around the world. The unfailing generosity of members and others to this cause is a continued source of amazement.



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Bletchley Park, a manor house close by Bletchley railway station, was the home of Britain's code breaking activities during World War II. Its role was kept secret after the war for thirty years because of the sensitivity of its activities, particularly during the Cold War. Now, however, it is kept

as a museum, of code breaking and of the history of computing, and we are allowed to wander around and see the conditions in which the code breakers worked during the war, and the machinery that they used. It was at Bletchley Park that the very first semi-programmable electronic computer was designed and built, for use in code breaking. Here was the birthplace from which all the electronic gadgetry, from mobile phones to the internet, that now dominate the way in which we conduct our lives, has grown.

Thousands of people worked at Bletchley Park during the war and they were all selected to be of the highest calibre in their fields: mathematicians, engineers, linguists and military personnel. But to be of the highest calibre meant different things in the different fields. For example, a top rank mathematician would be one who was highly innovative and ingenious in solving logical or numerical puzzles. But, as I was told when given a guided tour of the Park recently, the highest calibre of military personnel meant those who were the most punctilious in following discipline. The machines used in breaking codes were complex to operate and a single mistake could waste a great deal of time and this could be literally fatal to the soldiers and sailors on the battlefield. They had to turn up for their duty in starched white collars and well polished shoes and then they had to stand by noisy machines for hours on end in a hot, airless atmosphere, paying complete attention to what they were

# Ian Reay's &news &views

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## Codes, Computers and White Collars

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**Ian Reay** reflects on discipline and individuality

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doing. I could immediately see the need for discipline and self control in such circumstances but the need for immaculateness in dress seemed less obvious. But the two are clearly linked because the armed forces have paid, and even now still do pay, a great deal of attention to detail and

formality and this is seen as a necessary prerequisite for the military life – unfashionable as these things may be to the rest of us. They seem to many people to be unnecessary and ritualistic.

But rituals, rites and formal behaviour of all kinds can still be seen in the way we conduct ourselves, particularly in civic and social traditions. We lay wreaths at the memorial on Remembrance Sunday. In church, the presiding priest dresses in special robes and there is the taking of the bread and wine of the Sacrament. In law courts the barristers and the judge all wear special gowns and wigs and the judge is addressed in a particularly deferential way. In the Council chamber the Mayor wears a chain and special gown and certain procedural rules of engagement are followed. We still have rites of passage such as marriage and degree conferring ceremonies – not just the *passing out parades* for newly qualified military recruits.

What all these rites, rituals and formalities have in common is the renunciation of a personal identity in their enactment. And I suspect it is because we cling so desperately to our own individuality in modern society that such behaviour is growing less and less fashionable. But unfashionable though it may be, the example of the fortitude of our armed services and their self sacrifice show how much we depend on it and why renunciation is not just a matter of tradition but is still the mark of the highest calibre.



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# ANTHONY JOHN YOUL ROBERTS

1936-2009

*From the Eulogy prepared by  
his family for Tony's Requiem  
Eucharist*

Except for the first few years of his life Tony grew up in Enfield, now a part of Greater London. Tony and Gwen both attended the local Primary and Junior Schools and the same Congregational Church and Sunday School where both became teachers. Tony also joined the very large 1<sup>st</sup> Enfield Boys' Brigade company which was attached to the church.

As a young man he took a course in selling which he became very good at and which gave him access to a number of companies who gave generously to sundry church and charity fund-raising events. His first effort in the late 1950s was to arrange a fund-raising effort for the church at which the then very popular singer **Frank Ifield** attended. *Health & Safety* would not have been amused at the 600 young people who crammed into the hall to see their idol and have hot dogs & Coke which were given away free.

After coming to Berkhamsted in 1965 Tony moved on from selling office sundries to working as PA to the Honorary Director of *Help the Aged*. At that time the Charity owned several Estate Agencies which, among other duties, Tony managed. A proud moment came after he was asked to take over the arrangements, which were in chaos, for the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the charity - just three weeks before the event in Westminster Abbey. This Tony did very successfully and ended up after the event walking down the aisle of the Abbey with Gwen and a lot of VIPs! A very special day.

When many things changed within the Charity, Tony moved on to selling chocolate - in bulk - i.e. large tankers full. A lot of people benefited from this particular phase of his life, including his children. When the chocolate company

was taken over several times by bigger and bigger companies Tony moved into selling lifts and again this brought him into contact with interesting people and situations. One particular pleasure was being given the freedom to roam

*Chartwell*, **Sir Winston Churchill's** home, and especially the library. Tony enjoyed providing lifts of many kinds for disabled people but a particular joy was finding the lift that now comes out of the hillside at the Aberdulais Falls in South Wales.

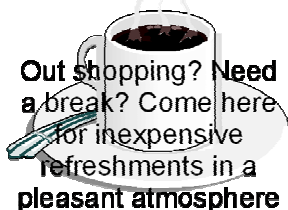
In the last recession, lift companies fell rapidly and Tony fell with them, five times in seven years, and so, in a complete change of direction, he began working for the police, mainly on the Front Desk - his last full time and extraordinary employment. He was even hailed *Hi Tone* in the street by some of his ex *customers*. Then after retirement he started yet again and became an Exam Invigilator which he found intriguing and loved the interaction with the children.

Life with Tony was never boring. He loved poetry and books - everything from *The History of the English Speaking Peoples* by **Sir Winston Churchill** to *Harry Potter* which he could share with his grandchildren. He was good at pontificating and explaining how things should be done - sometimes with hilarious consequences as when he demonstrated how to toboggan, using a tin tray which suddenly took off down the garden. The tin tray was never the same again and the roses took a battering - but Tony survived. In Corfu he demonstrated the correct way to get on to a Lilo in the sea. The Lilo shot up in the air and Tony fell flat on his face to the amusement of all onlookers.

In the early 1970s Tony set up a Boys'

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The *Mind the Gap* Stewardship Campaign was embarked upon in order that the deficit in the Parish Budget should be made good.

At the last Annual Parochial Church Meeting the deficit was defined as being £17,000. That figure, therefore, was our target for an increase in Stewardship Pledging. We have to realise, though, that there have been inevitable reductions in the total of Pledged Contributions caused by recent deaths and departures.

Three talks were given during Family Eucharists in September and October last year. The purpose of these was to raise awareness of the financial position and to encourage both new pledges to be made and old pledges to be reconsidered. The aim must always be to include as many as possible churchgoers in the scheme. People are often very willing to contribute, but are sometimes not aware of the mechanism of **regular** giving. It is this **regularity** of giving that is so important. No *pledged* amount is insignificant. No one should feel under pressure, but everyone should be aware of the scheme and its importance for our parish life.

At the first *Presentation* there was an encouraging response of interest, and those who filled in slips with their

## CLOSING THE GAP

David Pearce reports

addresses were later contacted. Two further speakers reinforced the message with eloquent enthusiasm and considered the initiative in the light of their own

personal experiences. More recently packages of information were sent to those who had not been present in church on the three Family Eucharist occasions.

The result of all this is that the number of those who have committed themselves to help has risen by eighteen to a total of 185 people, and the pledges of many already in Stewardship have been increased. We have not quite reached our £17,000 target, but we do know that - with the Gift Aid tax relief - there will be a guaranteed additional pledge of £16,500.

This is a marvellous response so far. It is one sign of the vibrancy of our communal loyalty to St Peter's. We may all take heart in this willingness and generosity.

For the future, we should encourage those who are frequent worshippers with us to consider joining the Scheme. Remember that it is the **regularity** of contribution that matters. This is much less off-putting than an emphasis on *large* pledges. The *Mind the Gap* campaign should be a continuing aspect of our worship, rather than an emergency measure to which we have to resort from time to time. ❖

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←p9

Anthony John Youl Roberts

Brigade Company in the Town. One of his boys now runs his own Boys' Brigade Company and others have gone on to use the skills they learnt in the band. In the 1980s he became involved more in St Peters, taking part in an historical play, being a member of the PCC and running Stewardship campaigns. He also became Town Crier for a number of years, particularly under **David Sherratt** and **John Cook**.

Tony was an only child but he was

immensely proud of all his own children and always stressed that the family is everything and should stick together no matter what happened. He took his older grandchildren to many places in London and the younger ones were always ready for a tickle, usually leaving stressed parents to pick up the pieces.

He was a larger than life character who never forgot how to have fun. He befriended many and his friendship was returned a hundredfold. ❖

This account could as well be entitled *The Wandering Vestry*. As part of his restoration of St Peter's in the 1870s, Butterfield pulled down the old vestry that

## RESTORATION & RE-ORDERING

**St Peter's in the 20<sup>th</sup> century**  
**Christopher Green writes**

stood on the north side of the chancel and the vestry was accommodated, together with the organ, in St Catherine's Chapel. But not for long. By the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, St Catherine's Chapel was being refurbished and the organ and vestry had been moved again to form a gloomy area behind a dark oak screen in the Lady Chapel and the north transept. There they remained until the re-ordering of the church in the 1980s. But elsewhere in the church, there were to be major alterations in the middle years of the century – some to make good the fabric of the building, some in response to changing styles of worship. In 1958 the timbers forming the roof of the nave were found to be in a disastrous state of disrepair. When the lead was rolled back, much of the wood beneath was little more than dust. Complete replacement of the roof was judged to be the only way forward. There seems to be no record or detailed description of the ancient roof nor any indication of its age. Photographs show that it was a tie-beam roof with exposed rafters and curved braces beneath the tie beams. The space between the braces and the beams were filled in with posts and simple tracery – perhaps a 15<sup>th</sup> or early 16<sup>th</sup> century structure. In the restoration, although the structural tie-beam configuration was retained, there was no attempt to reproduce the curved braces and the tracery.

The new roof structure was much more utilitarian in character, in keeping with the architectural style of its time, even to the extent that some of the timber components were replaced with pre-stressed concrete, though stained to resemble wood! Oral tradition records that the most controversial aspect of this major

restoration was the choice of colour for the new ceiling in the nave – blue or red? Finally decided by vote in a stormy meeting of the PCC!

At much the same time as the restoration of the roof, there was a major re-ordering of the interior of the church. The old chancel was transformed into a chapel and the present Sanctuary was created in the crossing beneath the tower. To separate the two areas, an ancient screen, probably of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, was handsomely restored and gilded, forming the very fine *rededos* we see today. The floor of the old chancel was raised and a new marble floor was laid in the crossing. New choir stalls and a new organ console were placed in the St John's Chantry - the organ console and the organist concealed in a sunken pit.

And so to the 1980s and a major public appeal that eventually raised over £300,000. The external stonework of the church was cleaned, monuments and memorials within the church were repainted and re-gilded and once again the vestry was moved – for the third time in a hundred years. The vestry was transferred into the old chancel, where it remains, the old organ was dismantled and the present organ was built in the St John's Chantry. Removing all this dark woodwork from the north transept and the Lady Chapel revealed a space full of natural light, satisfying both for worship and performance and architecturally intriguing.

Now, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century there is still work to be done. The south transept cries out for attention. Sensitive re-ordering here has the potential to create another fine space. It can never be as light as the Lady Chapel but with a refurbished south porch it can form a fitting and welcoming entrance from the town's main thoroughfare into St Peter's. ❖



The Rector, Canon Robert Brown, discusses the way forward with Donald Lockhart, whose firm undertook the reconstruction of the nave roof



The lead is rolled back



Health and Safety?

On the evening of 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2009, in St. Peter's Church, Berkhamsted, a large audience of well-wrapped up people was privileged to hear a fine performance of the

majestic B Minor Mass of J S Bach, given by The Chiltern Chamber Choir, four solo singers and the Bridgewater Sinfonia, all directed by Adrian Davis. Despite the intense cold – against which at least one choir member took colourful extra precautions(!) – the performance was of such quality that it succeeded admirably in warming the hearts of all the listeners.

It seems that the B Minor Mass was not performed at all in Bach's lifetime, and that he had little expectation that it would be. In fact the demands it makes upon the singers were almost certainly beyond the capabilities of the performers Bach could muster in Leipzig. But it is those demands that make the piece nowadays one of the peaks of the choral repertoire, and such a hugely satisfying piece for a chorus to master. The Chiltern Chamber Choir certainly looked at ease, and sang with great confidence and character throughout.

There is in the B Minor Mass a lot of music written in three time – or the beat is subdivided into three as in the *Sanctus*. These divisions into three provide a dance-like lilt to many sections of the work. The choir and orchestra fully entered into the spirit of the dance – some of the singers couldn't resist swaying as they sang the end of the *Gloria*. The splendid but very challenging unison passage for the basses near the end of the *Credo* was thrown off with delight and precision.

## A CAUSE FOR

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### B Minor Mass by J S Bach

Performed by the Chiltern

Chamber Choir

Richard Grylls writes

---

The dance-like quality the performers brought to these passages contrasted all the more with the majestic and noble passages Bach wrote in four time, among them the final *Dona*

*nobis pacem* which was sung and played with gradually increasing fervour, grandeur and magnificence.

The solo arias Bach included in his cantatas, passions and this mass tend to cause problems for both the performers and the audience alike. They are never straightforward, they are full of intricate counterpoint, and they usually require some virtuoso playing from one or two instrumentalists in addition to the singing. The four soloists **Kathryn Jenkin** (soprano), **Jeanette Ager** (alto), **Philip Conway Brown** (tenor) and **Charles Gibbs** (bass), all sang well, but were not always able to inspire the listeners in the same way that the choir did. However, **Jeanette Ager's** performance of the very moving *Agnus Dei* was glorious, and the two ladies obviously enjoyed the lovely echo effects in their duet near the beginning the *Credo*. The instrumental obbligato parts in these arias and duets – for flute, oboes d'amore, bassoon and horn – were brilliantly performed by members of the orchestra. [The sounds that the orchestra made in some of these pieces were so delightful one almost wished that Bach had left out the solo vocal line!]

The members of the Bridgewater Sinfonia were obviously kept more than sufficiently busy to keep some of the cold at bay. They played excellently throughout the evening, providing constantly changing orchestral colour, ranging from the



rich, low sound of just horn, bassoons, cello and organ, to the full orchestra with three high trumpets adding brilliance at the top. **Adrian Davis** kept all these diverse elements – choir, soloists and orchestra – together with great skill, to make the whole a splendidly cumulative experience.

Every time the B Minor Mass is performed audience and performers alike owe a great debt of gratitude to a huge number of people – firstly to Bach's sons who hung onto their father's manuscripts despite the fact that J S Bach's music had gone totally out of fashion, then to the scholars in Germany and later in England who in the early 1800s realised the treasure that had survived and started compiling complete editions of his works, and then to the musicians who slightly later began to perform the works –

Mendelssohn in Germany, the Wesleys in England. Though parts of the B Minor Mass were performed in England in 1838, the first complete performance did not take place until 1876. That performance provided the origins of The Bach Choir, which still flourishes, while a performance 10 years later at the Leeds Festival, conducted by **Arthur Sullivan**, put the work firmly on the map in this country.

The B Minor Mass might not have survived at all. So, every performance of it is a cause for celebration. The audience in Berkhamsted just before Christmas 2009 have very good reason to celebrate and be very grateful for the splendid performance they heard, prepared and given with such conviction by **Adrian Davis**, his choir, the orchestra and the soloists. ❖

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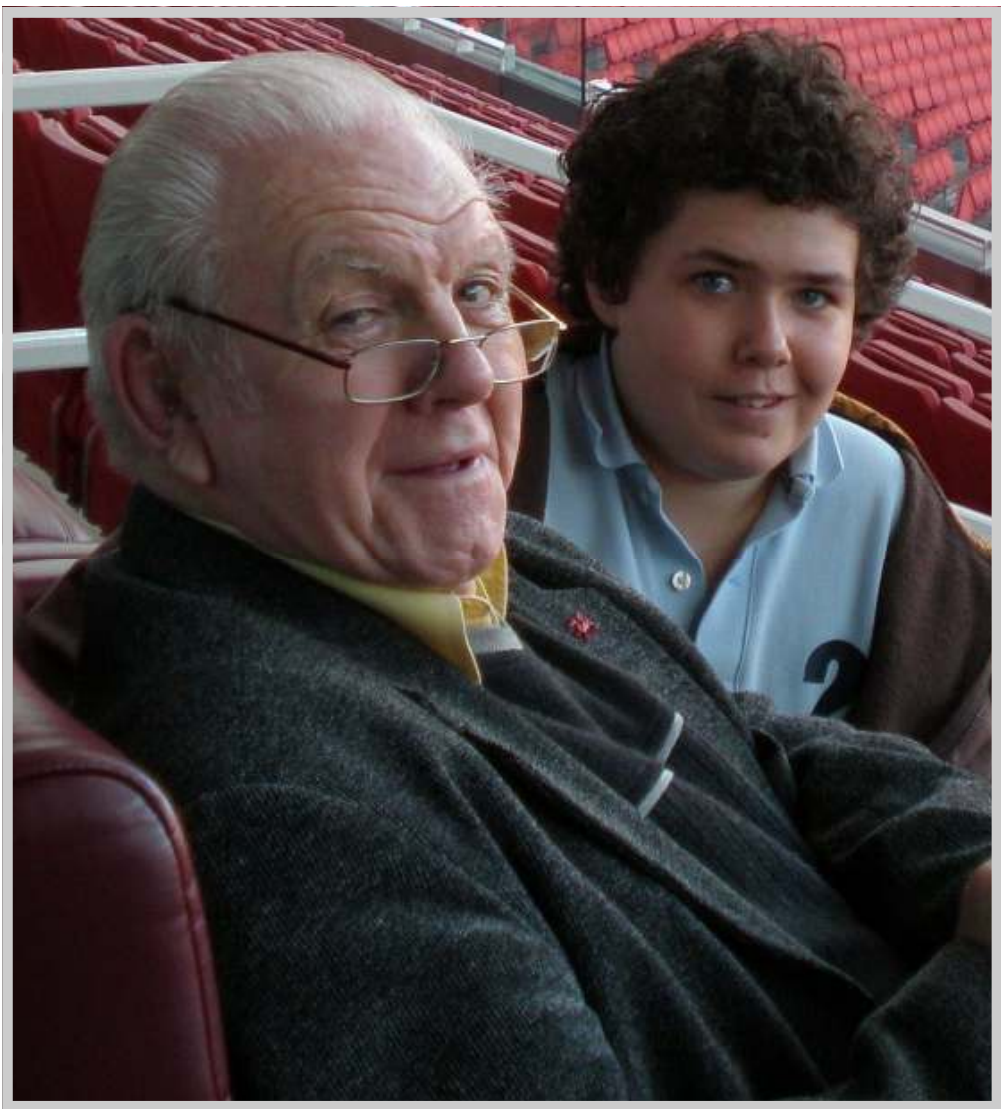
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**St Peter's Nativity Play**



←p12 Before the Butterfield restoration. St Peter's from the NE showing the old vestry



←p9

**Tony Roberts, with one of his grandchildren, Jack, at the Emirates Stadium (Arsenal's football ground) in 2008**

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An avid reader of the January *review* might have noticed that Townsman suggested that mild weather over the festive season was likely, and that the ice-skating rink at Ashridge House resembles a bowling green. How wrong could his weather forecast be? The actual Christmas and New Year weather is well described by **Christina Rossetti**'s carol:

*In the bleak midwinter  
Frosty wind made moan,  
Earth stood hard as iron,  
Water like a stone;  
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,  
Snow on snow,  
In the bleak mid-winter,  
Long ago.*

Superstitious mankind of all religions has, since the beginning of time, believed that our destiny is shaped by gods. Our forebears appealed with sacrifices, dances, and magic to idolised gods for intervention in such matters as fertility, drought, benign weather, and plagues. Even today mankind seeks protection from evil and adversity by such as lucky talismans, pilgrimages, and praying. Who would dare to say that mankind's fervent beliefs are superstitious?

What has this to do with the Ashridge

## HOW WRONG CAN YOU BE?

**Townsman** eats his words

skating rink and Townsman's weather forecast? Townsman has no truck with the supernatural. Tosh, bah! He does, however, secretly admit to perverse and mischievous influences and spirits around us. How else do we account for events such as sitting heavily on the spectacles lost on the settee; the washed out summer holiday in a parched destination; and the stationary traffic jam on the way to the airport.

Townsman therefore speculates that a mischievous influence, perhaps in cahoots with the spirit of the skating lake, read his article and, for fun, rubbished his expectation of mild weather. (What tosh, bah!) Townsman is humbled and, in the spirit of the age, offers apologies and learns lessons from his presumptuous forecasting. Nothing in life and nature is predictable; divine intervention happens when we help ourselves; and the teachings of Jesus offer certainty in a world of superstition, false promises and unsustainable expectations.

A happy New Year to you all, with good walks in green pastures.

PS Townsman has asked the Editor to include the picture of the skating rink below to propitiate its mischievous spirit by proving our continuing interest in its domain, created in 1870! ❖





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**Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February** 8:00pm  
*A Local Parish Scandal* Michael Soole, QC

**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February** 8:00pm  
*John Henry Newman* Monsignor Roderick Strange, Rector of Beda College, Rome

**Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February** 8:00pm  
*Geographical Globes* Bill Willett.

**Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March** 8:00pm *Stonehenge - Its Archaeology and Geology*  
Christopher Green



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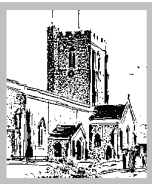
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## *review* Northchurch & Wigginton

### **Faith and Doubt**

**The Revd  
Jonathan  
Gordon writes**

Last month it was the time for the cat booster injections at the vets and with great difficulty I managed to get them both (at different times) into a basket and then we went along to the surgery.

The waiting rooms in vets are usually lively as the different pets find themselves in close proximity to a variety of other animals. I had a conversation with an owner of a giant rabbit and she told me his name was Bertrand. Unfortunately I did not have time to ask whether he had been named after the philosopher **Bertrand Russell**, as Tom was called in for his appointment.

Life seems to be full of coincidences and the evening before I had been reading a book which mentioned **Bertrand Russell** and his struggles with faith. Russell was an atheist and he was once asked what he would say if it turned out he was wrong and he found himself standing outside the Pearly Gates. He replied, "Why, I should say, 'God, you gave me insufficient evidence.'" The book, written by **Phillip Yancey**, was exploring the relationship between faith and doubt. He is very open about the struggles of faith in his own life and draws on the writings and anecdotes of other authors. He describes how many people struggle with doubt and how as a consequence faith has wavered. There might be many reasons for this, but he makes the point that *doubt always coexists with faith, for in the presence of certainty who needs faith at all.*

This seems a very good point. Doubt can be a real problem for those who have faith in God and those who experience it can struggle with a huge sense of guilt. It is possible that all of us at sometime have asked why certain things happen in the

world, and struggle with uncertainties and feel that there are always more questions than answers. The good news is that this type of debate was going on in the Bible. The book of Ecclesiastes is a good example of a writer looking at the world and struggling with his observations that it does not always make sense and can be unfair and arbitrary.

Faith would most likely be straightforward if God was self evident in the world and it was therefore easy to believe. However, even during the ministry of Jesus there were many who did not believe in him and his own followers found his words at times hard. What always strikes me is how Jesus never bullies people into believing and always seems to respect a person's freedom of choice. A person was free to decide whether to follow or turn against him. Faith in the Gospels is an invitation rather than a command. ❖

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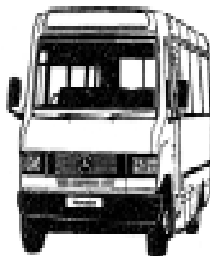


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On December 31<sup>st</sup> 2009, it was five years since Part P of the Building Regulations was introduced.

Early in 2005, I wrote an article explaining Part P and as it's now been in operation for five years, this is a good time to see if it's achieving the desired result. It was brought in as the government was convinced it would prevent eight additional deaths from all electrical causes in the home over a ten year period - at an extra cost of only £350,000,000. Now at the halfway stage, we have no data on how much it cost to introduce nor for the on-going costs to the construction industry. In addition, when the number of deaths directly attributable to domestic electrical installations rose in the first two years of implementation, the figures suddenly became unavailable, for some reason. So who knows whether Part P is achieving the desired result?

The strange thing is that everyone seems to have ignored the fact that carrying out electrical work safely has always been a requirement of the building regulations. It's just that in this age of not trusting anyone to do anything right, common sense has to be measured and inspected and mistakes cannot be allowed to happen. What a pity human beings are involved. They really shouldn't be allowed out on their own.

I had to spend five years doing work experience and training for not a lot of wages (called an apprenticeship), then a few years honing my *skills*, before eventually deciding to start out on my own. In those days, there were just two independent trade associations. One was for employers who had a turnover of at least £30,000 (I told you it was a long while ago!) and another that approved contracting firms - (I was enrolled with the latter). You needed to have been trading for at least a year and the idea

## IT COULDN'T HAPPEN COULD IT?

Norman Cutting considers

was that the inspector would look at a representative sample of your work each year. In those days we were expected to do everything from domestic work, to commercial and industrial (including hazardous installation).

How does this compare with today? There are now several assorted *registration bodies* - to encourage competition, however, as with all these wonder ideas, amalgamations are already taking place.

To be registered, you have to be a *legal entity* (not even breathing is required), you need a bit of paper to say you can pass an exam and you need to show at least a couple of installations to be inspected. Naturally, these can be something like adding a light to your aunty's bedroom and installing a socket in your uncle's shed. The other very important requirement is the ability to pay the registration fee (very important, this bit). You too could be a registered *electrician* with a logo on your invoice and the abilities of your average DIY person.

Out in the real world, this maybe why recorded deaths caused by faulty electrical installations in the home were on the rise, although not as high as from other causes such as falling from steps or ladders. The real problem is that just being *registered* is still not a guarantee that the person carrying out electrical work in the home is competent, which it would be reasonable to assume was the basic reason for adding specific domestic electrical works to the building regulations. Like I say, *legal entities* can have just one qualified supervisor who lets his mate's best friend loose on the unsuspecting public. No, you are right, it couldn't happen – could it? ❖



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# reviewnotes&notices

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## BERKHAMSTED JAZZ

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**Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup> February 2010** at 8:00pm in the Civic Centre. *Tony Jacobs Hot String Orchestra.*

Tickets Members £8, visitors £12, Students and Children half price available on the door.

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## BERKHAMSTED LOCAL HISTORY AND MUSEUM SOCIETY

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**Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> February 2010** at 8:00 pm at the Civic Centre. *The Architecture of St Peter's Church, Berkhamsted Christopher Green.* Visitors £2.50 at the door

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## BERKHAMSTED CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

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**Thursday, 11th February 2010** at 8:00pm in the Sessions Hall. *Red Kites in the Chilterns – Phil and Anne Farrer.* Visitors £2.

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## BERKHAMSTED AND DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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**Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2010** at 7:45pm at Newcroft, Mill Street. *Hertfordshire's 17th Century Tokens and what they show about the economy Robert Thompson.* Visitors £1.50 on the door.

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## BERKHAMSTED FILM SOCIETY

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**Monday and Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> February 2010** *The Reader*

**Monday and Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2010** *El Bano del Papa*

At Civic Centre at 8:00pm Visitors £5 at the door. For details of membership contact Membership Secretary 863155.

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## BERKHAMSTED ART SOCIETY

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**Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> February 2010** At Civic Centre at 8:00pm Demonstration. *A new medium – hot pressed paper and interactive acrylics – David Hyde*

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### St Peter's Church Choir

What does the choir have to offer boys and girls from the age of six upward

Free music tuition

New Friendships

Social events – All Good Fun

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Individual help

A chance to gain self-confidence. If you are interested, please come to St Peter's Church on any Tuesday at 5:15 pm or contact either **Adrian Davis** (875674) or **Jean Wild** (866859)

---

## OCCASIONAL TALKS

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Talks in an informal setting by members of St Peter's congregation. In any church congregation there are plenty of stories to be told. Usually we only hear preachers' stories, heavily abbreviated and secondary to some theological idea. Now there are several talks planned by members of the St Peter's congregation: *Working in cancer research; Church schools and Education; Working in Public Relations/Advertising.* Mark your diaries now for :

**Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2010** 8.00 pm in the Court House. **David Pearce** on *Bee-keeping*

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## THE NORTHCHURCH SOCIETY

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**Monday 22nd February 2010** at Northchurch Parish Room. *Was Northchurch once Berkhamsted? Ned Hunt.* Visitors £2



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## POWER, PASSION AND POETRY

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**Friday March 19<sup>th</sup> 2010** 7:00-9:00pm at All Saints' Church

An evening of classic and contemporary verse read in support of Christian Aid.

Poetry is *Truth carried alive into the heart by passion* (Wordsworth).

Seven-times published authors **Sue Hampton** and **Leslie Tate** will host an evening of *Power, Passion and Poetry*. With the help of selected performers, Sue and Leslie will read traditional and modern verse that gives the listener a real sense of *The spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings*. Leslie and Sue will also offer a brief as-you-go commentary, signposting what's at the heart of the poems you hear. Whatever you feel about poetry, this is an evening to enjoy which will leave you feeling fired up by our great tradition of poetic writing.

Poetry is *The real language of men in a state of vivid sensation* (Wordsworth)

Entry £4.00 - all of which goes to Christian Aid. Tickets in advance email: [suehampton@btinternet.com](mailto:suehampton@btinternet.com) Signed copies of Sue and Leslie's books will be available on the night.

Websites: <http://leslietate.com>

<http://suehamptonauthor.co.uk>

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## BERKHAMSTED WEA

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**Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> February 2010** 10:00am – 4:00pm in the Friends' Meeting House *Novels into Films* - **Stephen Wade-Jones** Tea and Coffee provided – bring own lunch. £12.50

**Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> February 2010** 12-2:30pm *Victorian Music Hall and popular songs* - **Stephen Barnard**. In the Friends' Meeting House £10. Contact **Hazel Ward** 875899. Bring own lunch.

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## THE OXFAM BUCKET

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At first glance it is just a plastic bucket but look more closely. The Oxfam bucket is special. Designed to stack one inside the other to maximize the use of expensive space on relief aircraft, the bucket can be fitted with a small tap for maximum efficiency and to meet the need in some cultures for washing under running water. The base of the bucket is smooth, unlike a typical design which ends in a sharp point – desperately uncomfortable when carrying heavy loads of water on the head.

The base is slightly raised so that it does not stand in the inevitable mud and wet surrounding water points and there are gaps in the base surround so that air can circulate underneath. Minor details perhaps but ones which make a big difference to the users.

In Ethiopia an Oxfam observer watched a woman standing over a small hole in the ground. Down the hole there were nine more women forming a human chain to a water source in an underground cave. When one team of ten left another took its place. Fetching water took all day every day and had done for eight months. A rock dam built by Oxfam nearby will hopefully fill when the rains come and save some of the back-breaking labour.

Three buckets cost just £8 from *Oxfam Unwrapped*. Why not give your Valentine a bucketful of love this month?

<http://oxfam.org.uk/unwrapped>

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## BERKHAMSTED MUSIC SOCIETY

---

**Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> February 2010** at St Peter's Church, at 8:00pm. London Concertante (string octet) Tchaichovsky: Souvenir de Florence. Mendelssohn: Octet. Visitors £12, Dacorum Card £10 U18 free.

## February

<b>SUN</b>	<i>St Peter's</i>	<b>8:00am Eucharist</b>
		<b>9:30am Sung Eucharist</b>
		<b>6:00pm Evensong</b>
	<i>All Saints'</i>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> 10:00am Eucharist</b>
		<b>14<sup>th</sup> 10:00am Morning Worship</b>
		<b>17<sup>th</sup> 10:00am Covenant service including Holy Communion</b>
		<b>21<sup>st</sup> 10:00am Holy Communion</b>
		<b>28<sup>th</sup> 10:00am Morning Worship</b>

All services at *St Peter's* unless otherwise indicated.

MP = Morning Prayer

EP = Evening Prayer

<b>MON</b>	<b>MP</b>	<b>9:00am</b>	<b>EP</b>	<b>5:00pm</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>	<b>6:00pm</b>
<b>TUE</b>	<b>MP</b>	<b>7:30am</b>	<b>EP</b>	<b>5:00pm</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>	<b>9:30am <i>All Saints'</i></b>
<b>WED</b>	<b>MP</b>	<b>7:30am</b>	<b>EP</b>	<b>5:00pm</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>	<b>8:00am</b>
<b>THU</b>	<b>MP</b>	<b>7:30am</b>	<b>EP</b>	<b>5:00pm</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>	<b>11:00am (<i>Fr Michael's day off</i>)</b>
<b>FRI</b>	<b>MP</b>	<b>7:30am</b>	<b>EP</b>	<b>5:00pm <i>both</i></b>	<b>Eucharist</b>	<b>9:15am</b>
<b>SAT</b>	<b>MP</b>	<b>9:30am</b>	<b>EP</b>	<b>5:00pm</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>	<b>10:00am</b>

**3<sup>rd</sup> Mon** **PASTORAL NETWORK 7:45pm** *The Court House*  
Contact Philippa Seldon (871534)

**Tue** **CHUCKLES PARENT & TODDLER GROUP: 10:00-11:30am** *All Saints' Church Hall*  
Song Time or short service as announced. Jenny Wells (870981)

**Tue** **ST PETER'S CHOIR Children 5:15 to 6:15pm** *St Peter's*  
Contact: Adrian Davis (875674) or Jean Wild (866859)

**1<sup>st</sup> Tue** **TUESDAY CLUB 7:45pm** *A lively women's group with guest speaker The Court House*  
Contact chairman Barbara McKenna (871159)

**3<sup>rd</sup> Tue** **MOTHERS' UNION: meets in members' houses at 8:00pm.**  
*Non-members always welcome.* Contact: Kathie Lally (863526)

**4<sup>th</sup> Tue** **MOTHERS' UNION PRAYER GROUP: 2:30pm** *17 Shaftesbury Court*  
Tell us if anyone needs our prayers. Contact: Jenny Wells (870981)

**Wed** **JULIAN MEETING: meets about twice a month** *at Jenny's 57 Meadow Rd*  
*All are very welcome at 11:30am as arranged* or at Ruth's *1 Montague Rd*  
Contact: Jenny Wells (870981) or Ruth Treves Brown (863268)

**Wed** **PATHFINDERS GAMES CLUB 7-8:30pm (yrs 5-8) Penny Nash (865217)** *The Court House*

**3<sup>rd</sup> Wed** **GRIEF AND LOSS SUPPORT Lunch at 12:30pm for those who have been bereaved.**  
Contact Sylvia Banks (871195)

**Thu** **HOME GROUP: 8:00pm on 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays.**

**Thu** **BELLRINGING: 8:00pm Helen Ruberry (890949)** *St Peter's*

**Fri** **LITTLE FISHES PARENT & TODDLER GROUP: 9:30-11:30am** *The Court House*  
Weekly meetings with a short service 1<sup>st</sup> Fri in St Peter's (10am)  
Tracy Robinson (863559)

**Fri** **ST PETER'S CHOIR: Children 7:00-8:30pm, Adults 7:30-8:30pm.** *St Peter's*  
Contact: Adrian Davis (875674) or Jean Wild (866859)

**3<sup>rd</sup> Sat** **ABC PRAYER BREAKFAST: 8:00am for breakfast & prayers.** *Various local churches*

Please see opposite for regular Sunday & weekday services at St Peter's and All Saints'

## February/March

### FEBRUARY

Mon	1	8:00pm	The Cowper Society Winter Talk 2 ..... <i>The Court House</i>
Tue	2	10:15am	Chuckles Toddlers' service <i>What a lot of fish ...All Saints'</i>
Fri	5	10:00am	Little Fishes Service ..... <i>St Peter's</i>
Tue	9	8:00pm	The Cowper Society Winter Talk 3 ..... <i>The Court House</i>
Fri	12	1:00pm	The Cowper Society presents: Lunchtime Recital – <b>Takami Weaver</b> piano..... <i>St Peter's</i>
Sat	13	8:00pm	The Cowper Soc. presents: Berkhamsted Music Society London Concertante Octet..... <i>St Peter's</i>
Sun	14	6:00pm	Choral Evensong ..... <i>St Peter's</i>
Wed	17	8:00pm	Ash Wednesday Sung Eucharist for the Beginning of Lent ..... <i>St Peter's</i>
Sat	20	8:00am	Association of Berkhamsted Churches Prayer Breakfast ..... <i>tba</i>
Mon	22	8:00pm	The Cowper Society Winter Talk 4 ..... <i>The Court House</i>
Tue	23	10:15am	Chuckles Toddlers' service <i>Jesus makes a little girl better</i> ..... <i>All Saints'</i>
Sat	27	7:30pm	The Cowper Society presents: Berkhamsted Choral Society <i>Fauré's Favourites</i> ..... <i>St Peter's</i>

### MARCH

Mon	1	8:00pm	Occasional Talks: <i>Bee-keeping</i> <b>David Pearce</b> ..... <i>The Court House</i>
Fri	5	10:00am	Little Fishes Service ..... <i>St Peter's</i>
Sat	6	7:30pm	The Cowper Society presents: Bridgewater Sinfonia..... <i>St Peter's</i>
Mon	8	8:00pm	The Cowper Society Winter Talk 5 ..... <i>The Court House</i>
Tue	9	10:15am	Chuckles Toddlers' service <i>Jesus and the children</i> ..... <i>All Saints'</i>
Sat	13	3:00pm	District Bellringing (until 8:00pm)..... <i>St Peter's</i>
Sun	14	9:30am	Mothering Sunday Sung Eucharist ..... <i>St Peter's</i>
		6:00pm	Choral Evensong ..... <i>St Peter's</i>
Sat	20	8:00am	Association of Berkhamsted Churches Prayer Breakfast ..... <i>tba</i>

### Funerals

5<sup>th</sup> January

Anthony John Youl Roberts

St Peter's Church (Chilterns Crematorium)

## YOUNG PEOPLE AT ST PETER'S AND ALL SAINTS'

### St Peter's

Sunday school and Pathfinders run from 9:30am to 10:30 in the Court House (next to the church in the High Street). Sunday School caters for 4 to 10 year olds, Pathfinders from 10 years upwards. Contact Helen Nicholls (873162) or Stephen Lally for Pathfinders (863526).

Crèche is available at 9:30am for under 3's. Parents are most welcome to use this facility in the Court House. Please contact Nicola Beadle (874538)

### All Saints'

The children and young people meet together on Sundays at 10:00 am as *Explorers*, in four age-groups: *Trekkers* 3-5 years, *Hikers* 5-8 years, *Climbers* 8-10 years and *Pathfinders* 11 years onward. Contacts: for Explorers - Vicky Drury (384794), for Pathfinders—Penny O'Neill (843422).

### Youth Groups

Pathfinders games club meets 7:00-8:30pm each Wednesday in the Court House. Contact Penny Nash (865217)

Donutz - for young people (10 years up) meeting in the Court House every third Sunday of the month after the 9:30am service. Contact Stephen Lally (863526) or Gill Malcolm (874993)



the Cowper Society presents

## FAURÉ FAVOURITES

*Including the Requiem*

Dyfed Wyn Evans *baritone* Mark Wardell *organ/piano* Graham Willi *conductor*

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Berkhamsted Choral Society and The Cowper Society are members of Berkhamsted Arts Trust  
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Berkhamsted Choral Society is affiliated to Making Music which represents and supports  
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# reviewcontacts

## General

**The Revd Dr Michael Bowie**, (Team Rector), The Rectory, Rectory Lane (864194)  
(day off Thursday)  
**The Revd John Pritchard** (Curate), 6 Sevens Close (870016) (day off Tuesday)  
**The Revd Prof. Luke Geoghegan** (NSM), 16 Gravel Path, (875970)  
**The Revd Canon Basil Jones** (Hon.Asst.Priest), 17 Lochnell Road (864485)  
**The Revd Canon Anthony Lathe** (Hon Asst Priest), 15a Kingsdale Road (863115)  
**The Revd John Russell** (Hon Asst Priest) 49 Tring Road, Aylesbury (01296 423022)  
**The Revd Penny Nash** (Youth Minister) The Vicarage, Potten End (865217)  
**Christina Billington** (Diocesan Lay Minister), 13 Ashridge Rise (385566)  
**Joan Cook** (Reader Emeritus), 6 Clunbury Court (866278)  
**John Malcolm** (Reader), Landswood, Shootersway (874993)  
**Jenny Wells** (Reader), 57 Meadow Road (870981)  
Parish Administration: **Jean Green**, The Parish Office, the Court House (878227)  
Stewardship Recorder: **Miles Nicholas**, 46 Fieldway (871598)  
Churchwardens: **David Pearce**, 15 Park View Road (878809)  
**Philippa Seldon**, 1 Fieldway (871534)  
**Michael Robinson**, 36 Trevelyan Way, (863559)  
**Jenny Wells**, 57 Meadow Road (870981)  
All Saints' Representatives: **Julian Dawson**, 62 St Edmunds (871614)  
Parochial Church Council: Secretary: **Rachel Below**, Hillcote, Doctors Commons Rd (862316)  
Treasurer:

Director of Music:

**Adrian Davis**

<http://stpetersberkhamsted.org.uk>

(875674)

Asst. Director of Music: **Jean Wild** (866859)

Organist:

**Jonathan Lee** (0794 1113232)

Weddings and Funerals,

Banns of Marriage and

Baptisms:

**Fr Michael Bowie** (864194)

Bellringers (St Peter's):

**Helen Ruberry** 22 Brook Street, Tring (890949)

<http://allsaintsberkhamsted.org.uk>

Choirmaster:

**Peter McMunn** (874894)

All Saints' is an Anglican / Methodist

Local Ecumenical Partnership.

## St Peter's

## All Saints'

### Personalities in the Parish



Answer next month

### Last month's Personality



Nicky Evans MBE at Dartmeet, Devon aged 19



**The *Christmas Tree Gang* moving the St Peter's tree for disposal**