



DIOCESE OF ST ALBANS

St Mary the Virgin Stevington

NEWSLETTER January/February/March 2015

SERVICES FOR FEBRUARY AND MARCH

Sunday 1st February 9.30am – Holy Communion

Sunday 8th February 9.30am – Holy Communion

Sunday 15th February 9.30am – Holy Communion

Sunday 22nd February 5.00pm – Evensong

Sunday 1st March 9.30am – Holy Communion

Sunday 8th March 9.30am – Holy Communion

Sunday 15th March 9.30am – Holy Communion

Sunday 22nd March 5.00pm – Evensong

Sunday 29th March 10.00am – “Together at 10” Holy Communion at Stevington

Where are we now?

Since writing the November- December Newsletter, the Church has been very active!

a) Canon Peter’s final **Festal Choral Evensong** on 23rd November was a sad but happy event, with the choir (including Peter, of course!) in fine voice. We sang his favourite hymns and a lovely simple anthem by Richard Lloyd entitled ‘View me, Lord’, which held special memories for him and Sara. We gave them an unusual present, which Peter had wanted for years – a top-of-the-range four piece toaster! I hope that they are enjoying it and thinking of Stevington every morning at breakfast!

b) We held a **joint meeting** with Turvey PCC on 24th November to decide what type of priest we would like to serve the two parishes. Fortunately we shared the view that despite the fine qualities of Canon Peter, his time was limited as a House-for-Duty Priest, and that we should seek a full-time stipendiary Vicar, hopefully a younger person with the time and energy to lead us into a period of growth, especially our young people.

c) We explained our thoughts and hopes at a **joint meeting** on 2nd December with the Bishop of Bedford, the Archdeacon and the Rural Dean, and were encouraged by their positive response. There are many vacancies in our Deanery at present, and across the country in general, so the job of finding the right man or woman will take time.

d) We now have the task of preparing a joint **Parish Profile** of the two villages and the type of person we seek, so that the interviewees have a picture of who we are and what are our aims and ambitions. We then place advertisements in the church press, and eventually hold interviews and then come to a decision!

e) **Life goes on** at St Mary’s, and we are indebted to our local retired priests for helping us to maintain our usual pattern of services, including Christmas. Please give us your continued support through this difficult time.

Robert Hart
Churchwarden

Additional Services with Turvey

The two PCC's are working together in the following additional services and events.

Ash Wednesday, 18th February

We are invited to a 7.30pm service with imposition of ashes at Turvey to be taken by Revd Jo Spray.

"The Passion", Thurs 26th, Fri 27th, Sat 28th March

Turvey Church will be presenting the second of the cycle of three Passion plays (the Crucifixion). Probable start time 7.30pm. Ticket details will be advertised later.

Maundy Thursday, 2nd April

This service, at 6.00pm at St Marys, will be the traditional Stations of the Cross with readings and hymns.

Good Friday, 3rd April

2.00pm-3.00pm Solemn Liturgy at Turvey with readings, hymns and prayers.

7.30pm Evening Service at Turvey with contemplative readings and appropriate choral pieces.

Easter Sunday, 5th April

Traditional Easter Day service at 10.00am at St Mary's, with choir and Easter Egg hunt for the children after service. Easter lilies in memory of loved ones will be available from Marina at £2.00 each.

Patronal Weekend

Advance notice of the Patronal Weekend on 30th and 31st May, with an Organ Recital to mark the Centenary of the instrument at 7.30pm on the Saturday by the acclaimed organist Paul Edwards. There will be a Festal Choral Evensong at 5.00pm, at which we are pleased that Canon Peter will preside.

Friends of St. Mary's

Our visit from AdHoc drama group for the Murder Mystery event was a wonderful success! It was so popular we had to create a waiting-list for tickets and on the evening everyone had such great fun trying to solve the clues to uncover the guilty party. They were served a scrummy three-course meal, with lots of thanks to Lawrence Kay. We raised a magnificent net figure of £788 (which was shared with AdHoc): with an additional £149 from the raffle our total profit was £543. It is hoped that these funds will enable the Friends to contribute towards the establishing of a Memorial Garden for cremated remains in St. Mary's Churchyard. Thank you to everyone who came to support us on the evening.

In December John and Gina Duffield organised a lovely Crafternoon for the children, who all went proudly home with stunning Christmas decorations that they had made themselves. I think it's fair to say that quite a number of Rolo's were consumed too!

Just before Christmas we had a really great turnout at The Cross for the carol singing by candle-light. The live band is getting better and better each year and we're really lucky to have their accompaniment. James Surtees is so kind to open up his garage so that the 'alchemists' (Peter Hart & Bob Poulter) have room to work their magic with the mulled wine. The singing was hearty

and well-rewarded with sausage rolls and mince pies. The collecting bucket did the rounds, people were generous and we even acquired a weeny Polish coin!

We were also extremely grateful recipients of a most generous donation of £808 from John following his successful guitar concerts in November. It is very kind of him to choose Friends of St. Mary's to receive this gift.

Happy New Year from all the Trustees – we look forward to seeing you at our fundraising events in 2015.

Chrissie Galley, Chairman

The Memorial Garden

It is disappointing that the Diocesan Advisory Committee are insisting on a full Faculty application for this project. The groundwork and planting will be carried out by Magnus Lennie and Ade Churchill, and a bench seat is being purchased with the assistance of a Ward Grant from the Borough Council. A meeting is being held with the Borough Arboricultural Officer to establish what work is required to the listed trees in the Churchyard generally. The Friends of St Mary's will be assisting with the financing of the project, which will be a beautiful feature – as and when the DAC will allow us to get on with the job!

Bob Westwood

Lent Lunches

It would be good to provide frugal lunches again as part of Lent giving & to benefit Christian Aid. This is dependent on sufficient volunteers willing to make soup & help on a Monday lunch time from March 2nd through to March 30th. If you are able please contact Mary on 01234 824779 & leave a message.

Butterfly House

A newsletter & thanks have been received for the Christmas gifts donated to children. These are on the notice board in the church room.

Travelling Crib

The crib visited more homes this year than last. It would be good if this year's hosts could introduce it to friends & neighbours as a means of getting acquainted & a source of "outreach" (for want of a better word).

BECHAR (Bedford Concern for the Homeless and Rootless) and BEDFORD FOODBANK

A massive 'THANK YOU' to everyone who has given so generously over the Christmas period to these appeals. The response from the people of Stevington has been just amazing! The collection boxes in St Mary's Church and Church Rooms were filled (and overfilled!) several times over and numerous trips have been made to deliver the goods. Needless to say everything has been very gratefully received and many of the disadvantaged in our wider community have directly benefitted from your generosity.

Items are still being donated so it is our intention that the Collection Boxes will remain for as long as giving continues. Items most required are listed on the boxes. For those not liking to miss a trick, why not buy food items from the Community Shop and support two places at once?!

To donate money: If you would like/prefer to make a donation of money either as a one-off payment or on a regular basis these are both most welcome and details of how to do this can be found online at the respective websites:

Bedford Foodbank: www.bedford.foodbank.org.uk
BECHAR: www.prebendcentre.org.uk/contribute/

Once again a huge 'Thank You' to you all.

Chrissie Fitch, St Mary's PCC

Flowers

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to flowers in the Church over the last year. If you would like to contribute and arrange some flowers, please sign the list to be found in the Church Rooms and the Church.

Church Cleaning

We all know how much we love housework but would you be and span? Our regular cleaner and existing volunteers do an amazing job but could really do with some extra help. If you can give a little time during one month of this year, please sign the list to be found in the Church Rooms. Thank You.

