

St John's news

Easter 2010



*We all sing Alleluia and thank you!
Because Jesus our Lord is standing among us,
risen and alive.
Death could not hold him!
Death is defeated.
Sing Alleluia and Joy! Thank you, Lord of life, for defeating death!
Here we stand, ready to follow you into your new life!
Alleluia and thank you, Jesus Christ, our Lord*

retiring for a second time !

Dear Friends,

Anne and I have been serving St John's for the past eight years. We have celebrated really great high points; have tried to build community; support people in their needs; and have taken part in the important growth of St John's and its development. We have shared wonderful moments around the Lord's table Sunday by Sunday, festival by festival; and great moments of fellowship, belonging and community so often in our home and in our garden. Anne and I have loved seeing our house, and the Lord's house, full of warmth and love. We participated in the renovation and the great year of celebration, remembrance and thanksgiving for 100 years of St John's. We have seen the church grow and develop for which we give the Lord grateful thanks.

Now, after much prayer, we consider it would be appropriate to step back and retire, to allow a new priest to take St John's into its next exciting chapter. Bishop David will be here with us on Harvest Sunday September 19th, on behalf of the Diocese to say goodbye after nearly 27 years in Europe and 43 years, to the month, of ordained ministry. Anne and I very much hope that as many as possible will join us on that Sunday which will be our official farewell. After the service there will be a St John's family lunch, the last one organised by Anne. However our very final Sunday as priest at St John's will be Sunday 26th September when we would be delighted if you would come back to our home and garden where we have shared so many celebrations before. We are filled with great love for you all and gratitude to St John's for these years of communion and community.

Do make plans now to celebrate together

**Sunday 19th September Harvest Festival with Bishop David Hamid
Followed by Harvest Lunch in church.**

Sunday 26th September. Ben's last service.

Bring and share lunch in Ben and Anne's garden.



Meeting Des and Val Kearney

Following our practice of introducing new(ish) people of St John's, who may not yet be known by everyone of our widespread community we mention a couple who now split their time between here and Watlington, Oxfordshire. Both bring unique gifts and insight to our church. Des, now a member of the church council, comes from a Roman Catholic upbringing and has a wealth of experience as a Christian. He has a refreshing outlook of this church, its worship and its vocation to serve others in society. His faith helped encourage Val in the early years of their marriage, and through the cruel death of her son. With Des she found great help from the church and began to really pray. She grew spiritually and in commitment, she knew that she had to join Des at the communion table by being confirmed, but this is a dedicated couple, so moving on from confirmation and communion Val became church warden of their church in the UK. Val has been leading Bible study groups, here and in Watlington, and is looking forward to encouraging us all in a new venture of "The Coffee Exchange," a get together over coffee and cake on Tuesday morning in the church, to coincide with library. We are the richer for the presence of Val and Des with us.



Marie- Jo Migeot our librarian.



It is with sadness that we have to announce the death of Marie Jo Migeot. Marie Jo founded, and ran our church library for 40 years. Born in Paris of an English father and French mother, she came to live with her parents here in St Raphael after her husband's death in 1965. Her father Francis Gurrey was an active member of St John's. Shortly after her arrival, it was decided to partition a section of the church to serve refreshments, with bookshelves followed by donations of books the library was born with Marie Jo at the helm! The library of course moved to its new location in the vestry following the renovations in 2007, but the spirit of the library, as set up by Marie Jo, as a friendly, welcoming centre where people meet to talk English, come for help and advice and incidentally take out some books continues. She will be remembered for her elegance, good taste, discretion, dry sense of humour, a reflection of Anglo-French parentage and bilingual education, perfectly at home in the two cultures. The Tuesday before her death Freddie invited the three librarians home for a pancake party. She was in fine form and told him with a twinkle in her eye that she always drove better after a glass of Champagne. She will be missed by many, and especially those regulars at the library. We thank Freddie, Penny and Jaqueline for continuing what Marie-Jo started

Saying goodbye to Leonna McNamee

It was really sad for the church when Leonna left us to go back to the UK. Hers was a quiet faithful presence at worship on Sunday mornings, and as a most capable, acute, wise secretary of the church council. Her skills were abounding, as



was evident when she instigated, and led, the Alpha course, and its follow up A Life Worth Living, both of which made such an impact in the life of St John's. She is sorely missed. We thank Rob Ward for standing in as secretary.



Lent Group 2010 by Val Kearney

As we started the Lent Course, I thought The Gospel in the Willows could hardly be described as an arduous book. However this book has proved very thought provoking and more devotional than I at first imagined. We met on Tuesday mornings, discussed our favourite readings during the week. We chose one of the prayers that we felt was especially relevant to us as a group, and we went wherever our 'river meandered'. What did we learn? Was there a satisfactory ending? Yes and no. In brief, I think we learned to enjoy the journey. In faith, all our needs will be taken care of. Don't worry about the details, leave home comforts behind. (that's a hard one) We learned we all need saving. We are all capable of being Toad's, Moles, Rats and Otters. Salvation is wonderful and there for us all. It's awesome, beyond description. BUT, life isn't easy. There will be challenges, and temptations but also triumphs. If we yoke ourselves to Jesus, he will always be there to share our load, share his wisdom and encompass us with his love. Thanks for Ben for his patient analysis for comparing the wonderful messages contained within the Gospel in the Willows and the Bible. Then we enjoyed a soup lunch together and noted how many of Jesus' parables were told over a meal with new friends. I think these lovely Characters and the setting by the riverbank refreshed us on our journey through Lent and we have reached the end in gratitude for the gifts of life and eternal life that are offered to us all.

Coffee Exchange

This is a new initiative starting up in September, aimed at encouraging new people.

Your prayers are needed to support those involved in the planning, and that new people will be encouraged to come along.

The Coffee Exchange

Exchange views,
information, contacts, skills,
Or
just enjoy a regular get together
Children Welcome
This is your time!

Starting September 2010
1st & 3rd Tuesdays of each month



10.00-11.30

For more information please contact
Val Kearney at valkearney@aol.com

New Hymn Books

We are now using a new up to date version of our previous hymn book which allows to be able to sing some of the newer worship songs without infringing copyright laws.

Paella Party.

Margery's annual paella party in support of the self help foundation set up by her son Richard in the Philippines, will be held mid June. Phone Margery 0494451455 for exact date



Web Site

The church website is www.sjear.com don't forget to check it to find out about upcoming events that you can book in for before you come. Events, at the moment, are on the back page of the weekly pew sheet but we are planning a new look to the web site. Many thanks to Ian Valentine