

year. It could be quite a small area around one or two gravestones or a larger plot. The Adopter could do the work themselves or invite friends or family to do it on their behalf. It's not intended that the plot should be improved by any planting or placing of other memorials or plaques, simply a way of helping maintain the churchyard.

If you are interested in adopting a plot or finding out more please contact Stella Smith on 8977 9352.

Stella Smith

Church Mice

In about 1980, and in response to some requests from parents of young children, the then Vicar, Raymond Carter, sent a personal letter to all families on the parish roll, inviting them to attend a monthly mid-week communion service (Pram Eucharist) in church on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 2.30pm. He gently explained it would be "a simple straightforward communion service lasting 25/30 minutes", he wouldn't be perturbed by "the odd scream or screech" and those adults who "had not been confirmed or who did not know or had forgotten what it is all about were as welcome as the rest".

The services proved very popular – albeit noisy – and within a few months it was decided to meet up on the other three Wednesday afternoons for a cup of tea together. The Hall was booked, a committee was set up and the name Church Mice was chosen. My earliest dated copy of committee minutes are for 1982, so we can safely say that discussions on who should make the tea/setup/put away/be keyholder etc are at least thirty years old.

The Church Mice weekly playgroup and the monthly Pram Eucharist continued for some years and provided a wonderful way of making friends and feeling part of the worshipping community in this parish during what can sometimes be a rather isolated, pre-school, period of family life.

Since its incarnation some thirty years ago it still continues and this month sees the renamed St Mary's Church Mice Sing & Storytime open its doors weekly on a Thursday at 9.45am in the Mina Hogan Room at the Parish Hall. If you are looking for something fun to do with your pre-schoolers, please do join them.

Susan Jacobs

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NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2012



StMARYwithStALBAN PARISH CHURCH of TEDDINGTON

Vicar's Viewpoint

In a time when statistics are generally being used to report yet more gloomy news of the economy, it's good to be able to give you some upbeat figures on church attendance in 2011. (I won't speculate on whether the two are related!)

On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day over 1400 people came to one of our services

Our average Sunday School attendance grew from 40 to 50 per week, with over 160 children on the register

We conducted 64 baptisms and 16 weddings

This is all very encouraging. But numbers aren't everything. Helping people to deepen their faith is just as important. That's why we're keen to invite people back, and it's why this month we have a couple of reunion events.

On **February 11th** we're inviting the families of those who've been baptised in 2011 to come to a 'Young Children's Guide to the Church' at 2pm, followed by tea and playtime in the parish hall. Members of the Parish Visiting Team, who visit every baptism family before each service, will be joining the clergy and mini-Sunday School team in hosting this event.

On **February 12th** we're inviting wedding couples from the previous two years to join us for a special service of Choral Evensong, for the Feast of St Valentine, at 6.30pm. This will be a regular Book of Common Prayer Evensong, but with hymns and anthems that are popular at weddings as well as thanksgiving prayers for marriage. The guest

preacher will be the Rector of Chelsea, the Reverend Prebendary Brian Leathard. All are welcome to join us, and to stay for a glass of fizz after the service.

After these two celebrations we'll be inviting people to deepen their faith as they enter into the holy season of Lent.

Firstly, on **Shrove Tuesday, February 21st**, we're having a **Pancake Day Supper Talk at 7.30pm**. The speaker will be Canon Julian Reindorp and his theme is 'The Prophet Amos and the need for social action'. Julian is always erudite, entertaining and provocative, not unlike the prophet himself. So don't miss this stimulating event. Book places via the parish office.

Then on **Ash Wednesday, February 22nd**, we'll have services at both 9.30am and 7.30pm that will include the imposition of ashes as well as holy communion. The evening service will be a sung service with choir anthem and sermon.

I hope that over the month there's something for everyone and that we continue to be a beacon of good news in these difficult times.

With best wishes

Joe Moffatt



Ellery Hall Christmas Lunch 2011, full article page two

Sunday School Nativity 2011

Sunday 18th December saw the Family Communion service moved to the Parish Hall to allow the Sunday School children to treat us to a traditional Nativity play.



The Three Kings: Henry Tasker, Theo Maroussas and Jacob Cooper

The main parts were taken by the younger members, with the older ones narrating or providing invaluable backstage support. Despite only having a single, short rehearsal the previous day all the children remembered their entrances, exits and positions brilliantly.



The only slight move away from tradition was Mary and Joseph's decision to travel separately to Bethlehem and we were all relieved to see them reunited on arrival at the inn! The play finished with the children singing *Away in a Manger* beautifully.

Many thanks to Nessie Whittingham for organizing and to all the other parents who committed their time to make it such an enjoyable performance.

Helen Cooper

Festival of Nine Lessons and Carol Service

On the evening of Sunday 18th December the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols was held at St Mary with St Alban's. The church was filled to capacity as music filled the air. Having the orchestra was a pleasure for all in attendance, the choir sang beautifully and Amy Hughes' solo performance of *Once in Royal David City* was a real highlight.

After the service everyone was treated to warm mulled wine and mince pies which perfectly ended such a pleasant evening.

Thank you to the readers, choir and orchestra for all your hard work.

Sally Rideout

Elleray Hall Christmas Lunch

On Christmas Day, volunteers from the Churches Together in Teddington and beyond came together to help provide a Christmas lunch for 47 guests who would otherwise have been alone at Christmas. The day, hosted at Elleray Hall in Teddington, was a huge success. The guests were welcomed by the Mayor, with tea and coffee, and three registered 'pat dogs' were brought in to socialise with everyone. A wonderful kitchen staff led by Julie Jones served a traditional Christmas lunch of turkey with all the trimmings, followed by Christmas pudding. Whilst the volunteers mounted a clear up operation, the guests were entertained by the Shaw family singing carols, and Angus Cunningham playing the piano. Finally, everyone settled down to watch the Queen's speech. The guests were all given a 'goodie' bag containing leftovers from Boxing Day, and a gift of a scarf, made and donated by Marianne Bushby. Huge thanks go to all the volunteers who worked hard to make the day a success.

Emily D'Silva

Parish Registers

Funerals – *We remember with thanksgiving the lives of:*

7th December: Jeremy Delahay, aged 38
14th December – Kate Atkins, 60
30th December – Barbara Osborne, 87
10th January – George Slee, 75

PARISH VACANCY

We have a vacancy for a part-time Parish Hall Caretaker

If you are interested, please

contact Debbie on

8943 2262 or email

parishhall@stmarywithstalban.org

Churchyard Adopt-a-Plot Scheme

A big thank you goes to all those volunteers who came along on a very hot 2nd October to help tidy the churchyard. We cleared the encroaching brambles, cut back the hazel saplings, got rid of the bonfire heap and did lots of general tidying up.

It has been suggested that in order to help maintain the churchyard on a more regular basis people might like to adopt or sponsor a plot to look after. They would maintain and help conserve a particular area throughout the

Diary for February

<i>SERVICES</i>	–	<i>Sundays:</i>	<i>Holy Communion (Prayer Book) at 8.00am</i> <i>Family Communion and Sunday School at 9.45am</i>
		<i>Wednesdays:</i>	<i>Holy Communion at 9.30am</i>
		<i>Monday-Friday:</i>	<i>Morning Prayer at 9.00am, Evening Prayer at 5pm</i>
Wednesday 1 st		First Wed Club - Topic:	<i>Celebrating the 350th anniversary of the Book of Common Prayer (1662), Mina Hogan Room, 12.30pm</i>
Thursday 2 nd		Candlemas – Holy Communion, 7pm	Silent Prayer, 8.30pm followed by Compline, 9pm
Sunday 5 th		Education Sunday	
Tuesday 7 th		PCC Meeting, 7.45pm	
Thursday 9 th		Parish Pub Lunch, The Anglers, 12.30pm	Exploring the Christian Faith, Parish Hall, 8pm
Saturday 11 th		Young Children's Guide to the Church for Baptism Families, 2-4.30pm	
Sunday 12 th		2nd Sunday before Lent	Baptisms 12 noon Choral Evensong with thanksgiving for marriage, 6.30pm Youth Group in Hall, 6.30-8pm
Tuesday 14 th		Plain & Pearl Knitting, Mina Hogan Room, 7.30-9.30pm	
Sunday 19 th		Next Sunday before Lent	Baptisms 12 noon
Tuesday 21 st		Shrove Tuesday	Tea Club, Mina Hogan Room, 2.30-4.30pm Pancake Day Supper Talk, Parish Hall, 7.30pm
Wednesday 22 nd		Ash Wednesday	Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes, 9.30am Sung Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes, 7.30pm
Sunday 26 th		1st Sunday of Lent	Baptisms 12 noon
Tuesday 28 th		Plain & Pearl Craft, Parish Hall, 7.30-9.30pm	
Wednesday 29 th		Lent Discussion Group, Mina Hogan Room, 10.30-12noon	
<u>And looking ahead</u>			
Wednesdays in March		Lent Discussion Group, <i>Old Testament Stories</i> , Mina Hogan Room, 10.30-12noon	