

# Old Malden News



The Parish Magazine of  
St John the Baptist, Malden

**April 2024**

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# Old Malden News

**The Parish Magazine of  
St John the Baptist Parish Church Malden**  
Church Road, Worcester Park KT4 7RY

Please send any articles or other material to:  
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Copy date for the magazine is the 15th of the month and  
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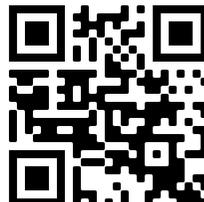
Details from the Bookings Secretary – Pat Sutton  
Tel: 020 8942 8321

# St John the Baptist Parish Church, Malden

## Directory

Vicar	The Revd Michael Roper gore_lodge@yahoo.co.uk	020 8337 8830
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Reader & Choir Director	Mrs Marilyn Burkett m.c.burkett@btinternet.com	020 8337 6017
Pastoral Asst	Mr Anthony Pullen tony@pullen.me.uk	020 8949 6784
Organist	Mr Barry Eaton	07968 031225
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PCC Secretary	Mrs Sally Pusey	020 8330 2817
PCC Treasurer	Mr Alastair Harris	020 8241 1087
Parish Administrator	Mrs Sally Pusey	020 8330 2817
Safeguarding Officers	Mrs Sally Pusey Ms Marie McGuire	020 8330 2817 07535 878107
Church Electoral Roll Officer	Mr Steve Clarke	020 8337 2392
Hall Bookings	Mrs Pat Sutton	020 8942 8321
Parish Website:	<a href="http://www.stjohnsoldmalden.org.uk">www.stjohnsoldmalden.org.uk</a>	
Parish Office:	<a href="mailto:administrator@stjohnsoldmalden.org.uk">administrator@stjohnsoldmalden.org.uk</a>	

To receive the Parish Mailing please scan the  
QR code with your smart phone camera



## Services for April



### **St John's is OPEN**

St John's is open for worship so please see the Parish Mailing for details Live Streaming of services will continue so you will be able to see services live via our YouTube Channel.

**Sunday 8am** - Said Eucharist

**Sunday 9.45am** - Sung Eucharist

**Wednesday 11am — Said Eucharist**

Coffee hosted by Mothers' Union after the first Wednesday service of the month.

Please make sure you are signed up to our mailing list to get up to date information regarding the services.

<http://eepurl.com/gNz4Tf> or scan the QR Code

## Vicar's Letter

When this edition of the OMN hits the stands, we will be celebrating the joy of Easter and the new life it offers us all. The cold, grey days of winter are behind us, the warmth of spring and summer await. In many ways this may reflect the spiritual renewal that Lent has offered, a chance to reconnect with God and walk that much more closely with Jesus who passed through the darkness into everlasting light. Like him we too can share in that light and bring others into it, to their joy and ours. So much lies ahead of us for the rest of the year. I'm sure the children of the parish will soon be counting off the days until the summer holidays, and then September will be upon us once again. We are, dare I say it, already beginning to plan Advent and Christmas! And so the cycle continues, marking off the Church's year of celebration, spiritual renewal, and prayer.

As the year progresses opportunities will arise to broaden our mission and outreach to our community. In March Donna Pariser, Co-ordinator of the different Bereavement Cafes supported by the Princess Alice Hospice paid a visit to our own Bereavement Café. She was very impressed by the way it worked and the impact it was having on those who have lost someone they love. Thanks to Donna there are new training sessions coming online for anyone who might like to join the team and become a trained listener. We would like to grow our volunteer base as our small team of six have been carrying this initiative since we began in the wake of the pandemic. We meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 2:00pm for an hour and a half. Training slots are usually over two days a week apart and are offered as a free service at and by Princess Alice Hospice.

Off the back of this success, I have wondered if there might be a need for a local support group for those caring for someone with Dementia. Liz and Tony Pullen have undertaken two training courses around Dementia and the issues it raises, so this could be something we offer to the community. I am aware that several people locally are living with Dementia and the need is here. The Leadership Team and I will explore the possibilities more fully and work with other local organisations to identify the need and whether St. John's has a role to play. As with Bereavement Café, it is the users themselves who actually support one another through their shared experience, wisdom, and encouragement. The facilitators enable this to happen by sharing our space, providing hospitality, and simply being a listening ear. If you know of a carer who needs this sort of support or you might be interested in being part of this project if it becomes reality, please contact me.

In other news, new life comes to St. John's as we prepare for our Annual Parish Meeting on May 19<sup>th</sup> after the 9:45am service. Our Restore Project, combining urgent structural repairs to our church building and building on our service to the community and care for creation, will officially launch at St. Johnstide at the end of June. Already new ideas of how to share the use of our building and churchyard for educational projects with our schools and the wider community are in the planning stages. These draw on our rich historical heritage and the work Chris Beales has done identifying and increasing the biodiversity in our churchyard. Three members of our Parochial Church Council (PCC) are stepping down after having served full terms creating three vacancies. We desperately need new members who are able to give time and energy supporting the Restore Project. Communication is a key factor as we reach out to our neighbours for support, as well as expertise to help our Grants Committee successfully achieve the grants we require in order to pay for this £400,000 project. Perhaps you have talents or insight that could help us save our crumbling Church Tower.

Joining the PCC may sound like a big ask, but we are working our way through a review as to how PCC works and overhauling our governance and committee structures to ensure our effectiveness and share the tasks and responsibilities at hand. I would especially like to encourage newer and/or younger members to consider joining us as we need your voice and perspective to shape St John's future. Feel free to speak to me or any other member of PCC to get the lowdown on what is involved and the commitment needed. Currently we meet monthly on the first Tuesday at 7:30pm, but that is likely to change once a Standing Committee has been formed, allowing us to meet every other month with Standing Committee meeting in between times.

I cannot emphasise enough how crucial wider support from the congregation and a fully engaged PCC are to the success or failure of the Restore Project! Without it our building will continue to deteriorate and may well become unsafe to use as crumbling bricks and mortar fall from the Tower. It will take all of us chipping in to enable our Church building to keep offering that safe space to encounter the living God and offer healing and hospitality to all in need! Let us trust God and use the gifts he has given us as we keep travelling together into that new life the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ makes possible.

With Every Blessing this Eastertide and Always,

*Michael*



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## Revision of the Electoral Roll

A formal notice of revision of the Electoral Roll will be placed in the Church on Sunday 24th March 2024. Preparation of the revised Roll will commence on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2024 and be completed by 20<sup>th</sup> April 2024. Those already on the Electoral Roll need do nothing.

Those wishing to be placed on the Electoral Roll should collect an application form from the porch or from Steven Clark and return it to Father Michael Roper by no later than 20<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

S. Clark – Electoral Roll Officer 07584513858

## Would you like to learn how to knit or crochet in 2024?

Perhaps you have not taken up any knitting or crochet for a while? Why not come along to our friendly group and see what you could create!



Maybe 'granny squares' or a large version which you can make into a blanket. Or maybe something for your grandchildren? A crochet bag maybe?

If so, you could come along to St John's Knitting & Crochet Group on the last Thursday afternoon of the month – next meeting on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April from 2pm-4pm.

You can also bring along your projects – tapestry/embroidery – a good opportunity to chat, drink tea and relax. Good for your 'mindfulness' time.

**Do join us!**

**Marilyn**

## The God of all Consolation

Mothering Sunday was joyfully celebrated at our 9.45 service on 10 March. Children delighted in collecting flowers and giving them to their mums. Cards were no doubt laboured over, with or without help, and perhaps a certain amount of prodding from dad. Children perhaps briefly reflected, if only subconsciously, that while their parents may often be mysterious, tedious, annoying and indeed sometimes a pain in the neck, on the whole they are glad to have them. And mums may also have reflected that all the sleepless nights, sore breasts, projectile vomiting, frustrations, anxieties, and, later on, those midnight phone calls – “Can you come and pick me up?” – may actually be worth it for the joy of bringing new life into the world, and nurturing and shaping young human beings into persons who will lead fulfilled, fulfilling and contented lives, and make a positive contribution to the wellbeing of their families, society and the wider world.

However, it must be said that this view of Mothering Sunday reflects a model of family life – a rather comfortable, middle-class one, it could be argued – which differs markedly from many people’s experience. Many mums struggle – with mental and physical health problems, addiction, abuse, insecure and substandard housing, and poverty. And that is just in this country: the suffering of mothers in Gaza, in Ukraine, in the famine-stricken parts of Africa, in the repressive environments of Afghanistan and Iran, is on another level entirely.

Our first reading (Exodus 2:1-10) takes us to the enslaved Hebrew community in Egypt, where their Egyptian overlords, fearful that their slave labourers are becoming too numerous and dangerous, have demanded that midwives kill male children, a command they heroically disobey. But nevertheless the mother of Moses cannot keep him hidden indefinitely, so she has to take the agonising step of setting him adrift on the river. Her feelings are not described, but it doesn’t take much effort of the imagination to realise what she would have been going through.

In the gospel reading (Luke 2:33-35), Simeon, while proclaiming the greatness of the child Jesus in his arms, nevertheless has a terrible warning for Mary: that his greatness will not be acknowledged by all, and Mary herself will suffer the consequences. Giving birth is painful; bringing up children can involve anxiety and emotional turmoil, and sometimes grief, as well as immense joy and satisfaction, well into their adulthood.

We need always to remind ourselves that the Church is not primarily for the comfortable, the conforming, the contented. It’s for the outcast, the suffering, the sinful, and the struggling. We need to be careful, while rightly celebrating

what we perceive to be “successful” family life, that we do not devalue those who don’t fit that mould. We need to insist that those who live alone, those who, either from choice or through misfortune, are childless, and those whose children have died or from whom they have for some reason become estranged, are also supported and valued and cared for in our community. They need to know that, as Paul points out in our Epistle (2 Corinthians 1:3-7), that God is there for *everyone* in affliction. Our community is called to deliver the consolation “abundant in Christ” (2 Cor. 1:5) and we are called to play our part in that, in whatever setting we find ourselves, whether it’s in formal ministry, organised activities, or, just as importantly, in those little unplanned encounters that church life often gifts us.

That should lead us to reconsider the fatherhood of God. Traditionally, it’s been father who tells his children to be strong, keep a stiff upper lip, who says, “Come on, pull yourself together”, and mother who takes the weeping child in her arms and soothes the tears away. Happily, in many families, those roles are no longer as segregated as they once were. And in this lovely passage from 2 Corinthians, Paul reminds us that God is Mother as well as Father, “the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation” (2 Cor. 1:3). She offers us not only courage, strength and purpose, but also peace, healing, and above all the love for all humanity, and all creation, manifested in Jesus.

On Mothering Sunday we are on the threshold of Passiontide. We remember the events of Jesus’s arrest, trial and crucifixion, and we remember that he goes to the cross in love, where in all the pain and agony, he mothers in, and gives birth to, a new creation, in which the eternal, unconditional embrace of God, our Father *and* our Mother, is freely available to all.

Chris Benson

# **Cercis siliquastrum or the Judas Tree**

## **Blossom**

Cercis siliquastrum has spectacular deep pink blossom from late March into April. Unlike many flowering trees, the blossom of Cercis siliquastrum can appear directly from any woody part of the tree such as the trunk or a branch and botanically this is known as 'Cauliflory'. The flowers appear on growth that is at least one year old. Flowers are pollinated by bees. Cercis siliquastrum is also a bit unusual in that the flowers appear before the leaves. The combination of these factors produces a wonderful spectacle with blossom all over the tree without any obstruction from the leaves.



## **Origin and Family**

The tree reaches a height of about 12m and is therefore considered medium sized. It originates from Southern Europe and Western Asia, and is associated with the Middle East including Israel, Palestine and Turkey. Despite its origins, it does well in cooler climates like the UK. Its flowers are pollinated by insects, and the seeds are set in pods; these pods can be frequently seen on the tree, sometimes lasting over winter. These pods help to identify it as a member of the Fabaceae family, the Pea Family, so this tree is related to peas and beans.

## Common Name

It is commonly called the Judas Tree, which is a reference to Judas Iscariot who betrays Jesus and who presumably feels so guilty and full of remorse that he chooses to commit suicide by hanging. Myth has it that he hung on one of these trees. Another explanation is that it was called the 'Tree of Judea' and that the name Judea has over time, been changed to Judas.

## Varieties

There are several named varieties, all with their special features, and these are available from garden centres and from the internet.

There are almost certainly some of these trees in Worcester Park but, as yet, I have not noticed one.

Keith Marshall      February 2024

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY!

27<sup>th</sup> April:- Murder Mystery Evening

22<sup>nd</sup> June: -The Maeldune Fair

21<sup>st</sup> September: -Jumble Sale

20<sup>th</sup> October: -Vintage Afternoon Tea

30<sup>th</sup> November -Christmas Fair

The Fundraising Team





## The Men's Thing

**Here are the programme of talks which will be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month in the Church extension.  
Tea, Coffee and biscuits etc will be available from 10.00am.**

**April 13th** - Ben Jackson will give a talk on “ British Fountain Pens and Manufacturers Between the Wars”

**May 11th** - ‘The work of ABCD Bethlehem in the West Bank’ by Alastair Harris

# MUSIC AT ST. JOHN'S

What a wonderful “concert” the Maeldune “Consort” gave us last month! With some fascinating history and beautiful music. And a great response to start fundraising for our Restore Project.

I still hope that amongst the congregation someone plays an instrument or knows someone else who does! Or if you have any suggestions or can volunteer with organizing a musical event - please contact me if you do. But meantime I am still following up some leads of my own, so I hope to have some news for you soon.

In April, of course, Barry Eaton is giving one of his regular organ recitals – Saturday the 20 th April at 7.30 pm, so make a note of that.

And any help with the organisation would be greatly appreciated ~ all volunteers welcome.

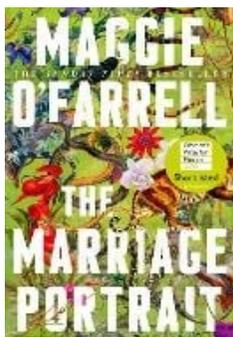
Bobby Child

07946 532 846 (or via the “C” cubby hole at Church)



# St John's Reading Group

## April 2024

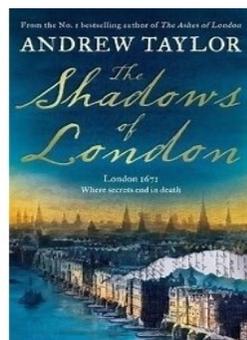


At our March meeting we discussed Maggie O'Farrell's 'The Marriage Portrait' – set in the Florentine court during the Renaissance. Although not a 'cheerful' read, we did agree that it was very well written and gave an excellent insight into Renaissance life – especially the plight of women. Lucrezia is fearful and suspicious of her husband, Alfonso d'Este who is the very rich Duke of Ferrara and she is convinced that he is going to murder her as she has not yet produced an

heir.

The novel is inspired by Robert Browning's poem, The Last Duchess and the sense of foreboding permeates the story. We gave it an average score of 7½/10.

For April, we shall be reading Andrew Taylor's 6<sup>th</sup> novel in his series set in the Restoration era – '**Shadows of London**'. We have enjoyed all of the novels in this series, so we look forward to this latest book. Set in 1671, rebuilding work after the Great Fire continues – until a body is found in the ruins of an old alms-house. The architect, Cat Hakesby has to stop her restoration work and James Marwood, a secretary in Whitehall is summoned to investigate. Historical crime – a popular genre in this group.



For May, we have selected the latest novel by Kate Morton, entitled '**Homecoming**'.

For June, we shall be reading '**The Raging Storm**' by Anne Cleeves.

I have just finished reading 'All the Broken Places' by John Boyne – taking further the story of very moving book and film of 'The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas'. It is the story of Gretel, the sister of Bruno and how she tries to deal with the guilt of her family and how she believes that her actions in encouraging her brother to go through the barbed wire and meet his friend. Since the end of the war, she has tried to hide her identity but when she has the chance to save a young boy, she may well be forced to reveal who she is. A very absorbing read.

The other book I have been reading was one I received for Christmas – 'A Village in the Third Reich' by Julia Boyd. This book has been so well researched and is the story set around Oberstdorf, a village set in the Bavarian Alps. It is a village where life has continued peacefully for hundreds of years, but all changes with the coming of the Nazi regime, and the impact it has on everyone's life. It is a time of mixed allegiances, betrayal, fear and great sorrow. Very thought provoking and well worth reading.

My next read? Well, I have a choice of three: Donna Leon's 'So Shall You Reap'. Robert Hardman's book on King Charles III, or maybe some indulgent reading of 'The Secret Garden' by Frances Hodgson Burnett – a book which brings back some lovely childhood memories.

Plenty to read then.... I hope you are enjoying your current book. Do let us know what you are reading!

Our next meeting will be on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April at 8.00pm in the Church Coffee Lounge.

*Marilyn*



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# Bereavement Café

Thank you to everyone who supported the Bereavement Cafe through the Co-op community Charity scheme! You raised over £1,100! The next meeting will be in the coffee lounge at St. John's on Tuesday 16th April 2:00- 3:30pm. We have been very fortunate to be trained and supported by Princess Alice Hospice, who will continue to work with us to provide this needed service for our community.



With things opening up again please help raise much-needed donations for St John's Old Malden - Repairs Fund when you plan ahead and arrange things to do! From booking staycations and getaways to tickets for concerts or other fun activities, remember to use #easyfundraising to raise FREE donations for us. Book now: <http://efraising.org/fx3w1QPP7u>

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