# **Old Malden News**



## The Parish Magazine of St John the Baptist, Malden

**April 2023** 

50p

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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: St John the Baptist Parish Office 020 8330 2817 administrator@stjohnsoldmalden.org.uk

Advertising and Distribution: Janet Flemming 020 8640 9377 Janet.flemming I 5@gmail.com

Copy date for the magazine is the 15th of the month and please only send submissions in Microsoft Word.

## **ST JOHN'S HALL**

411 Malden Road Worcester Park, KT4 7NY

Large and small halls available for hire with kitchen facilities For parties, receptions, meetings etc Reasonable Rates - Recently Redecorated

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 The Revd Milly Broome m.broome@hotmail.co.uk	020 8337 8830
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Reader & Choir Director	Mrs Marilyn Burkett m.c.burkett@btinternet.com	020 8337 6017
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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	www.stichnsoldmalden.org.uk	

Parish Website: Parish Office: www.stjohnsoldmalden.org.uk administrator@stjohnsoldmalden.org.uk

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

The midday Eucharist on Wednesdays has been moved to 11am to cater for the Mothers' Union which on the 1st Wednesday of the month will have a coffee morning at 10am followed by the Eucharist at 11am.

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

As we gather momentum on our journey through Lent and enter into the drama of Holy Week, we are instantly faced with the suffering Christ as we are reminded of all the pain and rejection that Jesus experienced at the hands of the mob and the might of Rome. Holy Week is hard work, it is an emotional rollercoaster beginning with the acclamation of Jesus as he enters Jerusalem in triumph, riding a humble donkey and fulfilling the ancient prophecy of the king returning to this holy city to take up his throne. Little wonder that the crowds gathered to celebrate the Passover go wild at the sight, the prospect that God has finally sent them a deliverer to free his Chosen people from Roman occupation. But oh so guickly this goodwill evaporates as the vested interests of the Temple, the Pharisees, and Rome collude to remove this threat to the status guo. Jesus must have been lifted and affirmed by the enthusiasm of the crowd, possibly even daring to hope against hope that he might be able to get us to listen and believe and avoid the Cross. A flicker of possibility replaced by his knowledge of our human nature, the thirst for power and the ends people we go to in order to keep it. Jesus was under no illusions, but as any human being would, he dared to hope if only for an instant. From then on it is as if a lift has plummeted in free fall culminating in his arrest, trial, and brutal crucifixion. No wonder many skip Holy Week and the painful reminder of the true cost of our salvation. I am sure we will see a full Church on Palm Sunday and then again on Easter Day, but in between all will be quiet and muted as people choose to do other things with their time. It is unfortunate to miss the drama because it holds the key to addressing the most daunting question of human life- why suffering and evil exists in our world?

The question of evil and suffering have been for many the nail in the coffin for any belief in God at all. Millions discarded faith in the aftermath of the suffering inflicted by human beings on one another during the Second World War, the Holocaust in particular has shaped faith and empowered atheism among Jews and Christians alike. The question of suffering hangs in the air, a great "Why?" waits to be answered. We too can ask ourselves. It may be that we toddle along through life quite happily coming to Church and believing in God, until something bad happens to us or someone we love. I have seen more people give up on God because of a personal tragedy, a serious illness, accident, or loss; than ever in answer to a natural disaster the other side of the globe. It's when something happens to us, when we try to do the right thing only to suffer ourselves. Perhaps it's human nature, but we need someone to blame, someone to take the fall, and the best thing about God is that he doesn't answer back.

God has said all he has left to say, he's had the last word in the life and death of Jesus, Immanuel, God with us. In the drama of Holy Week God experiences first-hand the depth of rejection, pain, and dereliction that is part of our human experience. God is not far away safely tucked up in his heaven, but rather hanging on the Cross as we do our worst. The evil and suffering we inflict on one another is now heaped upon our loving Creator and Redeemer. He did not slip quietly into the crowds and fade away into obscurity as he could well have done. Instead Jesus accepted the Cross and death because there was no other way possible to demonstrate God's solidarity with his creation, with us, so we could finally understand that he is with us in our suffering, with us in our pain. He isn't here to cause it or play with our lives like chess pieces on a cosmic board, he takes it all upon himself and shares the burden we thought we alone carried. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer waited for his execution in a Nazi concentration camp he wrote "only the suffering God can help", underlining the importance of Jesus' suffering in our relationship to God. It is our embracing our suffering God that enables us to bring hope to the suffering around us in the wider world. By following Jesus' example we can walk alongside others in their suffering and work to redeem it, to bring healing, justice, and new life to those who long for it. The Resurrection marked a turning of the tide as early Christians spread the news and sought a new way of living and being that transformed communities and society. Let us walk closer to Jesus this Holy Week and bask in his glory this Easter so that we too can be empowered to live life it all its abundance anew and share it with all. Alleluia, He is Risen! Happy Easter!

Michael

#### **Revision of the Electoral Role**

A formal notice of revision of the Electoral Roll will be placed in the Church on Sunday 26th March 2023. Preparation of the revised Roll will commence on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 and be completed by 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2023. 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 23rd April 2023.

S. Clark – Electoral Roll Officer 0208 337 2392



**St John's Knitting & Crochet Group** will be meeting on the last Thursday afternoon of the month (27<sup>th</sup> April) in the Church Coffee Lounge.

Bring your knitting or crochet and enjoy a cup of tea (or two) with cake and biscuits.

Marílyn



# Vintage Afternoon Tea Sunday 23rd April

Join us at 3.30pm with tea served at 4pm

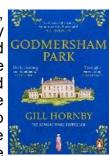
411 Malden Road Tickets £10 per person



## St John's Reading Group April 2023



Have you looked at a £10 note recently? If you have, then you will recognise a rather beautiful grand Regency house – that's **Godmersham Park**. Last month we read Gill Hornby's novel with the same title – revisiting the world of Jane Austen. It was a lovely, gentle read and enjoyed by most in the group. A good  $8\frac{1}{2}$  out of 10. We had great sympathy for the main character, Anne Sharp who, as an illegitimate young woman, was obliged to be a governess to the young Fanny Austen, a niece of Jane



Austen. Her social standing meant that she was neither 'above' nor 'below' stairs and her future always seemed precarious. The friendship between Jane and Anne seemed very natural. Humorous at times, we had a glimpse into Regency life – and the advent of the new 'bathing machines' seemed very daring. Money, or rather the lack of it, was crucial to one's position in society and one can only imagine the plight of the many unmarried young women. Maybe as a result of the Revolutionary Wars culminating with Waterloo, there was a dearth of eligible young men!

As the April date falls on Maundy Thursday, the 'April' date has been moved back a week to 30<sup>th</sup> March – so two meetings in the same month! The book selected for 30<sup>th</sup> March is Elie Shafak's novel, **'The Island of Missing Trees'.** This novel has its origins in a divided Cyprus in 1974 and then continues decades later in London. It is described as 'A rich, magical new book on



belonging and identity, love and trauma, nature and renewal'. Another book to enjoy! You will gain even more insight, if you read Keith's article on trees in this magazine. Our choice for May is Maggie O'Farrell's novel, **'Instructions for a Heatwave'** set in those heady days of 1976 when drought and hosepipe bans were the talk of the day. When Robert Riordan goes out to buy a newspaper, there is great consternation when he does not return.



The family is in turmoil - what is the

explanation? What does his wife know about his disappearance? It promises to be a memorable read.

the top sellers list is **Two Storm Wood**' by Philip Gray. This is a rather unsettling novel, set in the aftermath of WWI when a young woman goes to the battlefields of France to search for the remains of her fiancé, reported missing. What she discovers is an atrocity that took place in Two Storm Wood 0 but who were the real perpetrators? With a surprising twist at the end of the novel, we learn how brutal that war really was. I found it to be an interesting and absorbing read although perhaps not for the faint-hearted!



Our next Reading Group meeting will be on **Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023** (our April meeting) and then **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May** at 8.00pm in the Church Coffee Lounge

Marílyn

## Breaking news about our Bee Orchids

Close to the tall pine tree near the church extension entrance, two new orchids have appeared, 50 metres from our orchid sites in front of the church's west door. From thousands of wind-blown seeds over 17 years, these are the first seedlings found so far away. Here they found a network of fungal mycorrhiza under the grass ready with the nutriments orchids need to germinate and grow. Neither plant may flower this year, but they have contributed sugars to this symbiotic partnership with the fungi so a new colony is established.

By weeding orchid sites on hands and knees, many tiny seedlings have now be discovered and protected. On March 15th our total count of Bee Orchids was 47, including plants of all sizes. These are spread over twelve old sites (including one discovered in October) and the two, just found. In the photo below, to protect an orchid that appeared outside its ring, more mesh had to be added. Growing leaves should soon conceal the winter slug damage shown here. Bare soil should expose the culprits. Vine weevils may be cutting those smaller notches. Their recommended biological control is to water-in microscopic nematode worms.



Orchid seed is dispersed by the wind. Not by parachutes like a dandelion's but in a square sail of fibre like a microscopic teabag, too small to see or to photograph. From this grows a single cotyledon, like a blade of grass - equally hard to see and to protect.

The possibility that orchids could spread underground, vegetatively, can not yet be ruled out. These mycorrhiza in the soil are now believed to carry messages between the trees in forests. New feats are attributed to them almost every year. Improbable as air transport by fairy teabags may seem, it must be more likely than door-to-door delivery of orchid genetic material down the capillary tubes of the mycorrhizal underground. But we were once sure that 'the sky's the limit'. We may yet discover that soil has more possibilities than sky.

Wouldn't orchid conservation be easier here in this corner of the churchyard than it is now, under the dark yew trees at the west of the church, crowded by gravestones? At last, conservation would be in sight of every passer-by and of the church extension windows.

Look at the patch of new seedlings at the base of this same pine tree. Are those seedlings genuine local primroses or cowslips? If they thrive like this in this corner of the churchyard's well-cut lawn, isn't that too good a hint to overlook?

Sweet-scented lady's bedstraw grows on graves nearby. This

probably tells us where lime is in the soil. A spring once crossed the graveyard diagonally here. To separate clean water from the muddy boots of everyone in Malden who came to collect it, masonry was needed - and lime. And if a cross ever stood near this spring, before any church was built, and dedicated to the Baptiser and to a new start in life, what would have been brought in on a cart for it but stone and lime?

**Chris Beales** 



## Cat Chat

Melinda Darling, thank you so much for your lovely letter! I don't get out in this cold and wet, so it is so nice to hear from someone else in the neighbourhood. Christmas Dinner was a special treat this year, tuna TWICE in one day! At first I thought Cook had been at the Christmas brandy for the pudding, but then I remembered it was actually Christmas Day. Doctor says I should only have fish once a day, so it's usually chicken for breakfast and I really don't like poultry to be honest. Now salmon would be just the thing. We used to have it morning, noon, and night when I was a wee kitten in Mayfair. Unfortunately, my staff have been banging on about making economies due to this financial crisis thing, "belt tightening" they said and turning the heating way down. I have my cosy heated blanket and I made it crystal clear that if they touched it they'd be out on their ear for sure. So I may not have my salmon, but at least I'm curled up napping in the warm. I simply can't wait for the warm weather and to sunbathe on the patio again.

I do hope all is well with you and that your staff haven't played about with your household arrangements. I find humans can be so inconsiderate sometimes and don't really understand us felines. They can get so stressed about things and don't appreciate the simple wisdom of having a nice nap to put things into perspective. The only thing that stresses me these days is Mr. Fox trespassing in my garden in the small hours making such a racket one can hardly sleep a wink. The Police have been informed and I've even written to Sir Ed Davey, but so far nothing has happened. Mr. Fox has made such a mess of my new flowerbed that something will have to be done. I do hope you aren't troubled by these young scamps. Do take care and thank you for writing.

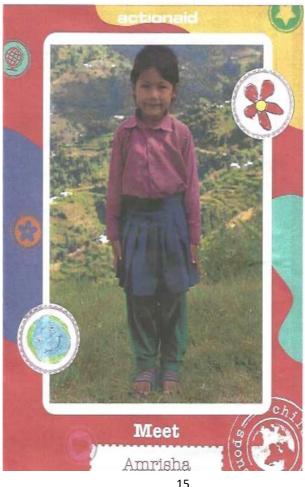
Yours sincerely,



#### **MEET AMRISHA**

Due to the difficult situation in Afghanistan, sadly we are no longer able to sponsor Mara though she remains in our prayers, (as does Junior who seems to have disappeared). Action Aid are keeping a presence in Afghanistan but are unable to sponsor any children.

However through Action Aid, the Fairtrade stall now sponsors a child in Nepal, her name is Amrisha, age 6. She goes to school, but many children do not complete their education due to poverty. Her family have a small plot of land where they grow rice and maize. Lack of water is a big problem. Children from Children's Ministry will be writing and sending pictures to Amrisha, as well as 'exploring' Nepal.



## ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, OLD MALDEN

ORGAN RECITAL given by Barry Eaton

Saturday 22nd April 2023 at 7.30pm Includes works by Clerambault, J S Bach, Jongen & Reger Admission by Programme £10.00 Includes light refreshments

## **Explore Europe 2023**

February 2023

Dear All,

Thank you so much for buying one of my Explore Europe quiz sheets and for supporting me with my fundraising for my European adventure this summer.

The quiz has been really successful, with more people doing it than I could have imagined! I hope you all had fun working out the answers! The quiz raised a wapping (!) £427.74 including some generous donations. Thank you!

Thank you to all my family and friends who have helped me by selling quizzes for me too.

The quizzes have been marked and the scores are in! Congratulations to **Claire Harding**, who scored 100% with 43/43.

I will pin a copy of the answers up in the coffee lounge.

Stella Baguley



#### How Do Trees Communicate.

During the month of March the St John's Book Club is reading "The Island of Missing Trees" by Elif Shafak. In this book, a fig tree is able to communicate by talking. Some of us talk to our plants and many of us spend time with them, and this is helpful. By spending time with plants, observing them and noticing things like whether their leaves are drooping, the colour of their leaves, and any dieback, we can understand how plants are getting on.

Returning to the book, the author has the fig tree chatting in English! This is all in the author's imagination and, after all, it is a novel. There is, however, a body of research that shows trees do communicate with other trees in their own species and, in some cases, with other tree species. How is this possible?

The majority of trees and plants have a symbiotic relationship with mycorrhizal fungi - these fungi join with the tree roots. This is a fairly recent discovery. The fungi deliver water and nutrients to the trees whilst the tree shares the food it creates through its leaves with the fungi, so they both rely on and need each other. The mycorrhizal fungi create a network of connections in the soil and this has been nicknamed the "Wood Wide Web". This web somehow, can transmit information - an example is that, if one tree in a group is affected by a pest or disease, this information can be transferred to other trees in the wood. In response, the other trees can, prior to an attack, produce chemicals to counter a potential attack that they may suffer. Quite how this happens is unknown and is the subject of further research.

Keith Marshall

#### WHY EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE A WILL

Following on from last month's article on the importance of writing a will, the Church of England has partnered with Farewill, the UK's favourite will writer, to offer a **free** online will writing service which you can do from the comfort of your home in less than 30 minutes.

This is one way of making the process of writing a will easier and keeping it updated.

A will is the only way to make sure your wishes are carried out after your death, giving you peace of mind that you can continue to support the family, friends and charities you love.

Here is the link <a href="https://farewill.com/cofe">https://farewill.com/cofe</a>

For more information on leaving a legacy to St John's you can speak in confidence to our Legacy Officer David Owen.

Please contact David via the Parish Office on 0208 330 2817 or administrator@stjohnsoldmalden.org.uk

#### A Jordanian Journey - Part 1 - The biblical sites

A long held wish to visit Petra in Jordan came to fruition in February of this year at the third attempt (more about Petra in a later episode). With a late afternoon flight and Jordan 3 hours ahead of GMT it was midnight by the time we landed in Amman. After immigration it was a 75 minute coach journey to our Dead Sea Resort hotel. Thus, a late start to touring that day was welcome and gave plenty of opportunity to explore the hotel grounds, set in beautiful gardens full of shrubs in full bloom and dropping down to the shore, 1300ft. below sea level - the lowest place on earth.

The week was blessed with fine weather, often warm by day but very chilly overnight. The first days' touring began with a drive up Mt. Nebo with panoramic views across the Dead Sea to Israel. At the top is a church which stands on what is believed to be the site of Moses' burial. It is three churches in one - Christian, Orthodox and Moslem. This is a good example of Jordan as a haven of peace in the Middle East - its immediate neighbours being Israel, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Iraq. A prominent road sign pointed to these destinations and also the Haj Road to Mecca. The floor of this church is covered with mosaics and there are hollowed out tombs from different periods beneath the floor.

From Mt. Nebo we headed for Madaba, firstly to St. George'sChurch where is to be found the largest mosaic map of the Holy Land, but strangely aligned east to west instead of north to south. Then on to the ruined church of the Virgin Mary - again a tripartite building. The church was built on top of an earlier mansion belonging to a well-to-do family with a Roman temple beneath that now serves as a crypt. The walls and floor are again covered with mosaics and this is continued in the adjoining archaeological park. The church is unusual in having a circular nave. A return down the road from Mt. Nebo was brightened by the sun reflecting on a dome across the Dead Sea. Our guide informed us that this was the El Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. Another relaxed start the next day saw us heading along the road back to Amman before diverting away to the alleged site of Christ's baptism at Bethany. A lengthy walk led down to the River Jordan - not very wide at this point. On the Israeli side there were groups with their priests, some of whom were undergoing baptism by complete immersion. Then, a brief visit to the church built on the site which was covered inside with beautiful murals. Finally to Amman, our home for the next two nights, and a visit to the Museum of Jordan with artefacts from the earliest Stone Age to the present day. Time only permitted viewing as far as the Nabataeans, which will become relevant when we reach Petra.

Next month - The Romans.

Barry Eaton.



#### There are boxes on the church porch bench for

your donations to the Foodbank.

Foodbanks are now vital to so many people

and our support is really important.

Please donate if you are able.

500g bags of rice pot noodles Instant mash ( packets are better) Tinned potatoes Tinned spaghetti Tinned meat ( including chicken, ham , beef) Small bottles of squash small pasta sauce Tinned vegetables Small packets of biscuits Extras including : ketchup, mayo, pickle, small bottles of oil, mayonnaise, pickled beetroot. Shampoo shower gel Toilet rolls



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 18th 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: <u>http://efraising.org/fx3w1QPP7u</u>

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