

St Nicholas, Marston and St Thomas of Canterbury, Elsfield

MARSTON TIMES

January 2024 stnicholasmarston.org.uk Donations welcome

Gill Hale writes

In most languages, the words for 'goodbye' fall into two general meanings: 'until we meet again' (au revoir, zàijiàn, auf wiedersehen, arrivederci); or a



wish for God's blessing for the other person (adios, adieu, hoşçakalın, kwaheri). Goodbye itself comes from the original phrase 'God be with you'. Geoff

and I, as we leave to join Ali and family in West Yorkshire, would like to say that we hope for lots of future meetings and for God to bless all of you.

Marston is one of the warmest and most thriving communities we know. There are so many people who give their time to make it a welcoming and vibrant place to live. We will miss being welcomed at St Nicholas school and many clubs and community groups; we really appreciate the library volunteers, the community gardeners, the litter-pickers, the flower arrangers, the cooks and coffee makers, the eco-hub, our great local pubs and especially all our good neighbours. When I open the Marston Times, I am always impressed by how much is happening and by the number of people who freely give their time and talents to benefit all of us.

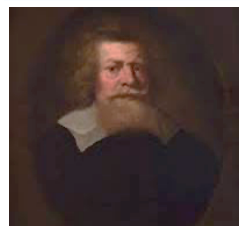
When I first lived here, after moving from a very built-up area, my initial



impressions of Marston were of the beauty of the countryside that surrounds it. We arrived in June and the fields down to the river were full of wildflowers; I remember how much my dad loved his first sight of them and how encouraged he was that such meadows still existed here.

Gradually I also became aware of the long history of Marston itself and of St Nicholas Church. It's the oldest church I have belonged to and I love the sense that 900 years of prayer and worship have filled it with peace and blessing.

That sense of God's presence was there even at the time of the Civil war, one of the most turbulent periods of Marston's history. I've read the sermon that William Dell preached to the parliamentary troops in June 1646, and it's full of hope and



encouragement for those hard soldiers. Dell (who later, in another parish, was sacked by the Anglican church for allowing John Bunyan to preach on Christmas day) preached on Isaiah 54: 11-15

reassuring these men that they would be like jewels in the city of God, with no place there for tyranny and terror. "So there is love and amity, peace and unity among them, because they are all taught of God," Dell said, and many people feel that love and unity still as they attend St Nicholas.

We have certainly appreciated this over the last 28 years: we have learned so much from people inside and outside our church and also from friends in the other churches of Marston. I can't name all of them here, or we would need several extra pages! Some of them may know how much we appreciate them; I'm sure many don't realise how much they are valued or how much influence they have. We will miss all of them and all the friendly greetings that make up everyday life here in Marston, but we are very much looking forward to seeing more of our family, especially our grandchildren.

It is not so very far to Leeds from Oxford, and we hope to visit you all quite often, but in the meantime, we have to say as the Swedes do: 'hej sa longe' – so long for now!

Gill and Geoff Hale



BENEFICE OF MARSTON & ELSFIELD



**Welcome to St Nicholas
and St Thomas.**

Further details can be found on our
website - stnicholasmarston.org.uk
Or call the office on 01865 580354.

On Wednesdays at 9:30am we have Holy
Communion & Thursdays at 5pm
Evening Prayer at St Nicholas Church.

Sunday 7th EPIPHANY

10am - **Community Celebration Service with Holy Communion** *with Jr choirs/choir & Worship band* at St Nicholas Church. Live Streamed.
Shared Lunch to follow after the service at 12noon.

6pm - BCP Evensong at St Nicholas Church

Sunday 14th - Epiphany 2

8am BCP Communion Service at St Nicholas Church

10am Holy Communion Service at St Nicholas Church *with Energy** (Sunday School).
Live Streamed.

Sunday 21st - Epiphany 3

8am BCP Communion Service at St Nicholas Church.

10am SAID Morning Prayer at St Nicholas Church

10am Matins at St Thomas Church in Elsfield

10am Messy Church in the Hall.

6pm Churches Together CTMN - venue *Rivers of Life* in Northway - on Sutton Road

Sunday 28th - Epiphany 4

8am BCP Communion Service at St Nicholas Church

10am Holy Communion Service at St Nicholas Church *with Energy* (Sunday School).
Live Streamed.

* **Contact Helen for information about Energy** - familyminister@stnicholasmarston.org.uk



A Church For Everyone
St Nicholas Church is part of the
Inclusive Church Network

Vicar: Skye Denno 01865 202988
Administrator: Debbie Bailey 01865 580354
Churchwardens Judith Piggott 01865 764693

Jan Lawrie 01865 250862
James Plunkett 07507 885169
Justine McCool 07426 463119

What to quote in January?

New Year Snow by Frances Horowitz

For three days we waited,
a bowl of dull quartz for sky.
At night the valley dreamed of snow,
lost Christmas angels with dark-white wings
flailing the hills.
I dreamed a poem, perfect
as the first five-pointed flake,
that melted at dawn:
a Janus-time
to peer back at guttering dark days,
trajectories of the spent year.
And then snow fell.
Within an hour, a world immaculate
as January's new-hung page.
We breathe the radiant air like men new-born.
The children rush before us.
As in a dream of snow
we track through crystal fields
to the green horizon
and the sun's reflected rose.

Nature notes: What to see and hear in January?

It might be winter but spring is not far off and signs of new growth are visible. Look for hazel catkins (sometimes called lambs' tails) in hedgerows. Birds start to re-establish their breeding territory, including great tits with their distinctive two-note *teacher*



teacher call. It's the Big Garden Birdwatch (26-28 January), the world's largest garden wildlife survey, whether you're a complete beginner or experienced birder. You count the birds you see in your garden, from your balcony or in your local park for one hour and let the RSPB know what you saw. For more information visit <https://www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/big-garden-birdwatch>

What to cook in January - New Year snacks

Smoked salmon wheels

Ingredients

- 1 pack ready to roll puff pastry
- 1 pack smoked salmon trimmings
- 1 pack cream cheese with herbs eg Boursin

Method

Preheat oven to 200C/Gas 6)

Unroll the pastry and spread over the cream cheese. Evenly scatter over the smoked salmon. Tightly roll the pastry along the long side and slice into 12 equal pieces. Place on two lined baking trays. Bake in a



preheated oven (200C/180C fan/gas 6.) for 20-25 mins until puffed up and golden brown. Leave to cool on a wire rack. You can freeze them once constructed and before you cook them, in which case bake for an extra 5 minutes.

Bereavement Support Group

The Bereavement Support Group is scheduled to meet on 19 January from 10-11.15am. If you are interested in attending this group, please contact Eileen on 01865 725423 or eileen.palayiwa@yahoo.com

WI

Marston Women's Institute meets every second Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm in St Nicholas' Church Hall, Elsfield Road, Old Marston. Our next meeting will be on Tue 9 January. Do come along as our guest for an initial visit. Tea, cakes and a raffle afterwards!

Coffee Pot

Our Christmas Coffee Pot will meet in the Church Hall on Mon 15 January from 10.30am to 12 noon. All those who have been bereaved and anyone who would like to meet more people are welcome to join us and enjoy company and light refreshments. Please contact Eileen Palayiwa on 01865 725423 or via eileen.palayiwa@yahoo.com for details.

Lunch Club

Lunch club will be on Friday 26 January. Ring Debbie on 580354 to book your place.



SUNDAY 7TH JANUARY 2024 10AM

ALL TOGETHER EPIPHANY

HOLY COMMUNION

CELEBRATING THE GIFTS

WE BRING

Within this service we will pray for Gill and Geoff Hale as they move to Garforth. There will be Cake & Bubbly after the service, and you can join us for our community shared Lunch at 12noon in the hall. For more info contact Debbie 01865 580354 - administrator@stnicholasmarston.org.uk





Loaves & Fishes

MARSTON COMMUNITY LARDER

Along with a few essential items there will be **fresh produce** (bread & veg, fruit etc) from Oxford Food Hub. Any left will be moved into the SESI refill area

 Sharing surplus, reducing waste

 Marston Community Larder is supported by Old Marston Charity Trust

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THE GIVING GARAGE

Marston Eco Hub - OX3 0PR

OPEN EVERY SATURDAY

Pick up or drop off **FREE** plant pots, vases, mugs, wellies and other garden/household items, and **BORROW** garden equipment (rakes & spades, ladders, strimmers, wheelbarrows, lawn mowers, leaf blowers, bike rack etc).

Further details email Skye: joskso@yahoo.co.uk or call 01865 202988

HOLY GROUND

Gatherings to mark the CELTIC YEAR

Prayers and Reflections are from David Cole's book 'The Celtic Year'




DATES FOR 2023/24. Always starting at 6:30pm

- 21st of September 2023 - Autumn Equinox
- 31st of October 2023 - Winter Season
- 20th of December 2023 - Winter Solstice
- 1st of February 2024 - Spring Season
- 21st of March 2024 - Spring Equinox
- 30th of April 2024 - Summer Season
- 20th of June 2024 - Summer Solstice
- 1st of August 2024 - Autumn Season

Meet around a fire pit outside Marston Eco Hub OX3 0PR
Bring something to share, a chair and a blanket if it's cold.
ALL ARE WELCOME

PAUSE...



FOR THOUGHT

St. Nicholas Marston

Program for 2024

Sunday's **Pause for Thought** at St Nicholas Church

Sunday Feb 25th at 6pm
What is in a Name: Knowledge and Naming of Birds
Rev Prof. Andy Gosler.

Sunday April 28th at 6pm
Dyslexia and other Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs)
Recognising Problems and Finding Solutions
Dr Ginny Stacey (Ross).

Sunday June 23rd at 6pm
Landscape and Belonging
Dr Peter Williams

Sunday October 27th at 6pm
Second Chapter Baking
Catherine Paxton

Sunday November 24th at 6pm
Wellington, Solider, Statesman & Snob
Colonel Nicholas Lipscombe

Starting at 6pm, 40 mins presentation, time for Q&A, with refreshments to conclude. All Welcome!



Marston Forest Gardeners and Marston Community Gardeners booked a stall at the Green Fair (also representing Marston Eco Group, the Coop Co-op and Northway Kitchen) on 25 November and invited other growing groups and eco groups from Oxford neighbourhoods to join us. It was a positive and supportive day, with people talking about and sharing our love for all types of 'growing' in Oxford. One of the highlights was meeting Caroline Lucas, Green MP for Brighton and Hove.

WASSAIL PARTY

Marston Community Garden
and Marston Forest Garden



Meet at the main gates
Court Farm Allotment, Boults Lane, Old Marston

2 - 3.30pm
Sunday 14 January 2024

Singing, procession and Morris dancing
to wassail our fruit trees

Bring toast (burnt!), cider/apple juice,
Things to bang & make a noise ...

Everyone welcome!



St. Nicholas
Marston

NEW HOMEGROUP

Starts: Friday 3rd November
Time: 7pm - 8:30pm
venue: Marston Vicarage (OX3 0PR)

Future dates on Fridays:
3rd & 17th Nov
1st & 15th Dec
5th & 19th Jan

CONTACT: REVD SKYE 01865 202988
OR vicar@stnicholasmarston.org.uk

Elsfield Wine Tasting Evening (and inter-village competition)



Anticipating the end of "dry January" 2024,
you are invited to an evening of fine wines,
fun facts and quizzical questions.

Individuals and teams are welcome to
test their taste buds, tannins and terroirs.

Light snacks will be provided.

Prizes for the best noses

Date: Saturday 3rd February 2024
Venue: Elsfield Village Room
Start: 6.30pm

Tickets: £15 per head
payable in advance.

Please contact:
James Plunket – 07507 885169
james.p@socialinvestgroup.com

Peter McCool – 01865 358578
petermccool@hotmail.com



St. Nicholas
Marston



Messy Church at St Nicholas, Marston
Spring 2024

Sunday 21st January
Sunday 18th February
Sunday 17th March
Sunday 21st April

10 - 11.30am, Church Hall, Elsfield Road

Crafts, Bible Stories, Singing,
Prayer, Breakfast

All ages welcome
(children need to bring an adult with them)



Bellringers' report

A swathe of ringing has taken place over the winter months with us trying our hand at some new methods to provide variation to our standard fare. The quarter peal at the start of November for example included 'St Chrysostom', 'Olympic', and 'Scorpio'. There have been opportunities to ring with others at other towers including Wigginton, Swalcliffe, Tadmerton and Sunningwell. In some locations a catch-up afterwards with fellow ringers for a warming drink and cake in local eateries was much appreciated. Ringing is more than pulling a rope. There's a good social aspect to it too.

November concluded with a visit to Wolvercote, where we saw St Peter's new camera system enabling ringers and visitors to observe the bells in action. This is a true feat of engineering, especially as they are a ground floor ring, so have further for cables to reach than we would at Marston.

The handbells have been out several times. We performed at Ramsden for their Christmas Market, where more than 60 stalls were gathered. We took centre stage on Christmas Eve for St Nicholas' candlelit service and we taught the Pulse youth group how to play: they also rang the tower bells. Several were naturals and showed exceptional promise, so we hope they will consider joining the ringers in 2024.

For the first time since 2018, we were able to ring a quarter peal on Christmas Day prior to morning service at Old Marston: one of only a dozen or so rung across the country on the day. We rang 16 method variations, including some festive St Stephens, St Wenceslas and of course, St Nicholas.

We look forward to continuing to ring throughout 2024. Many outings are already being planned and if you would like to join our band, you would be more than welcome. Do get in touch: rpeach87@gmail.com

Roy

The Swan Community Choir

We meet to sing for fun on
Thursday evenings,
8pm - 9pm in the school hall.



Dates for 2024 (tbc):

11th Jan - 8th Feb & 22nd Feb. - 21st Mar.

Everyone is welcome! Drop in when you can!

All songs learnt by ear, no need to read music; join us when you can for simple and relaxing music-making.

Since this photo was taken last summer we have grown to 20 singers and not just upper voices!

We ask £3 per session for swancomm funds:

<https://app.classlist.com/events/#/events/view/1024990640>

Old Marston Parish Council report for December

At the December PC meeting planning applications from 32B Oxford Road, 28 Cavendish Drive and 68 Elms Drive, met with no objections from the council. The City Council has informed the PC that the application from 2 Mortimer Drive has been refused.

Some residents from St Nicholas Mobile Home Park spoke to the PC about the development at Marston Paddock in Butts Lane. There are complaints about mud on roads, damage to property, pavements being blocked by large vehicles and residents being prevented from entering and exiting the park. The clerk is writing to the County council, OCC and developers to make them aware.

The PC looked at the Oxford City Council's Local Plan 2040. It was felt the green belt is hardly mentioned, let alone its protection. There is not enough attention being given to brownfield sites. A draft response is being drawn up.

The results of the *Community Needs* survey were reviewed. The number of responses was disappointing. However, it was the first time the parish council had done something like this for many years. The results will be looked at in more detail and further, more specific, surveys done in the future.

St Nicholas Church is experiencing issues with vehicles parking around the front of the church, which causes difficulties when services such as funerals are taking place. The PC agreed that it will fund the purchase of specific cones to be used around the Elsfeld Road church frontage during services. The PC is investigating issues with vehicles parking around the cemetery entrance, (at the entrance to the village) which causes issues for services and maintenance vehicles.

The next meeting will be on Monday 8 January at 7pm in Mortimer Hall.

The clerk, Tim Cann, can be contacted by phone (203139) Mon to Wed from 9am until 1pm.

Otherwise a message can be left or emailed via: clerk@oldmarston-pc.gov.uk

For information and agendas go to www.oldmarston-pc.gov.uk, Facebook or Twitter. A complete record of minutes of all Parish Council meetings can be found on its website: <https://www.oldmarston-pc.gov.uk/>

Christmas is going....

and many hands make light work, so please come along to St Nicholas from **10am next Saturday 6 January** to help us dismantle 17 holly-decked chandeliers, several window ledge arrangements, countless beautiful decorations and pack them away for next year. The person who actually finds the partridge in the pear tree gets to take both home.

Parish Organisations

Allotments Associations

Court Place Farm, Boults Lane. Chair: Jane Wilson
membership@cpf-allotments.org.uk

Sunday mornings 8.30 am – 11.00 am.....07530 068977
Mill Lane Chairman: Dr. M. Unkovskaya07771 702548
Treasurer Dana Vlad07919 493580
Secretary Christine Mitchell07789 991051

Baby and Toddler Club Weds 9.30-11.30 term time in Parish Hall
Gill Hale, 64 Arlington Drive01865 248260

Bellringers:

Practice Friday 7.30pm Learners welcome
Hugh Deam, Tower Captain01865 247574
Roy Peach, Secretary.....07788 746157

Choirs and Musicians at St Nicholas

Junior Choir, SATB Choir, Music Group
Practices at various times.
Neil Barker.....musicdirector@stnicholasmarston.org.uk

Coffee Pot

Coffee morning, monthly, Monday
Eileen Palayiwa, 27 Ouseley Close01865 725423

Rainbow, Brownie, Guide and Ranger Units

Evenings throughout the week. Adult volunteers as well as girls welcomed!
District Commissioner, Lesley Dentry,07765 418067

Leisure:

OXSRAD Sports and Leisure Centre,
Court Place Farm, Marsh Lane.01865 741336

Library (next to Mortimer Hall) opening hours

Tuesday 2-5pm; 5.30-7pm
Thursday 2-5pm; 5.30-7pm
Friday 10-12noon; 2-5pm
Saturday 9.30-12.30pm01865 726823

Hedena Health Medical Centre.01865 597023

Marston Community Gardening

Alistair Morris01865 724081
Kate Robinson01865 766620

Marston Saints Football Club

Andy Winchester (Treasurer)..... www.msfc.org.uk

Mortimer Hall (Village Hall)

Chris Crane, 2 Raymund Road01865 727995

Oxford City Council (Marston Representatives)

Mary Clarkson, 8 Dunstan Road, Oxford OX3 9BY01865 751493
Alistair Morris, 55 Arlington Drive, Oxford OX3 OSJ.....07804 847285

Oxfordshire County Council (Marston Representative)

Mark Lygo07765 665 726

Oxford Preservation Trust, Marston Area

Lucy Hughes, Cross Farm.01865 244570

Parentline

Confidential helpline for parents01865 726600

Parish Council

Parish Clerk: Tim Cann, 8 Nicholas Avenue01865 203139
(Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday 9.00 am – 1.00 pm)

Chairman: Duncan Hatfield07706 998224

Pre-school at Mortimer Hall

open 9 sessions a week.....07818 236348

Royal British Legion Club Hall:

Steward01865 243991

Schools

Friends of St Nicholas School.....01865 242838

Scouts — 43rd Oxford (St. Nicholas) Scout Group, Boults Lane

Group Scout Leader, Tim Greaves..... tim.greaves@keble.oxon.org

Beaver Scout Leader, Sue Springett01865 251515

Cub Scout Leader, Matthew Kennedy.....matthew.kennedy500@gmail.com

Scouts Leader, Linda Phillips07804 925705

St. Nicholas Church Hall and Committee Room

Debbie Bailey, Parish Office.....01865 580354

Women's Institute

Meetings at 7.30 second Tue of each month - new members welcome!

President, Judy Youngjudithyoung732@gmail.com

Secretary, Jennie Burrow.....jennie.burrow@gmail.com

Trade Directory

Architectural services for Planning Permissions/ Building Regulations

Digby Architectural: 4 Broughton Close07979 756918

Bakery: a weekly collection service. Contact baker@painedmain.co.uk

Bathroom installation, plumber, glazier, tiler

Roger G Turner.....07914 925757

Building/Builders Services

Colin Simpson: High Class painting, decorating and coving etc:

10 Dent's Close OX3 ONP01865 742842

Trevor Dines: No job too small - plumbing, complete bathrooms
from fitting a door to building an extension. Free estimates.

8, Raymund Road01865 452851, 07889 263140

Daniel Kelly: Painting and decorating services:07917 607949

Cleaning Carpets & Upholstery

Grimebusters: Quality carpet, rug & upholstery cleaning at competitive
rates. Free estimates01865 726983

Complementary Medicine

Oxford Therapies: pain relief, stress, management & more

www.oxford-therapies.com.....07913 503257

Oxford Reflexology: relaxation, stress-relief and rebalance

www.oxfordreflexology.co.uk.....07726 312719

Holistic Therapies with Dr Paola Bisicchia: Massage, Reiki, 07722 474735

Chakra Reading, Life Coaching email: info@yourawakeningpath.com

Dog grooming in your own home by Tania (NVQ level 3)

20 Harlow Way, Oxford OX3 OQS.....07877 183281

Electricians

Brian Turner: Registered NICEIC domestic installer01865 728729

All work guaranteed 33, Salford Road07538 382683

.....brian.r.turner@ntlworld.com

Craig Holloway Electrical Ltd:07868 706392

.....enquiries@craigholloway.co.uk

Elderly wellbeing

Foot Clinic

Oxfordshire Foot Clinic: We provide fast & efficient foot treatments,
including nail cutting and corn/callus removal. We visit you at home.

Appointments07742 964282

Funeral Directors

C S Boswell Independent funeral services.....01865 553737

Homewood Funerals (Family-owned and managed)

14 Cherwell Drive, Marston OX3 4LY01865 570000

Garden & small machinery service/repair.....taylorandannyuk@yahoo.co.uk

Danny Taylor, 5 Ouseley Close, Marston OX3 OJS.....07796 573319

Hair and Beauty

Fiona's Hair Salon:

Salford Road, Old Marston OX3 ORX01865 241632

Home decluttering & organising: Marie Kondo certified.....07877 183281

Monumental Mason

Reeves Memorials: New memorials, removal for burials, added
inscriptions & renovations.

147A Magdalen Rd, Oxford. OX4 1RL.....01865 251231

Plumbing, Heating & Gas

Lemarsh Building Services – plumbing and heating

22 Marsh Lane.....01865 761896, 07484 274331

S. J. Moore: Installation and servicing for all gas appliances.

Gas Safe Reg. 146337.

76, Arlington Drive.01865 724037, 07970 470176

Andrew Job Plumbing & Heating Ltd:

Gas Safe Registered Engineer 125206 ..01865 761896, 07710 390980

Tree Surgery, Fruit Tree Pruning

R. Timms: 80 Oxford Road.....01865 244608

Window Cleaning - MRF Window Cleaning Services

Mick Fry: 37, Green Hill Oxford OX4 7UD. Fully insured member of the

Federation of Master Window Cleaners ..01865 777889, 07887 515168

**Copy deadline for March's (print) issue is
Thursday 15 February**