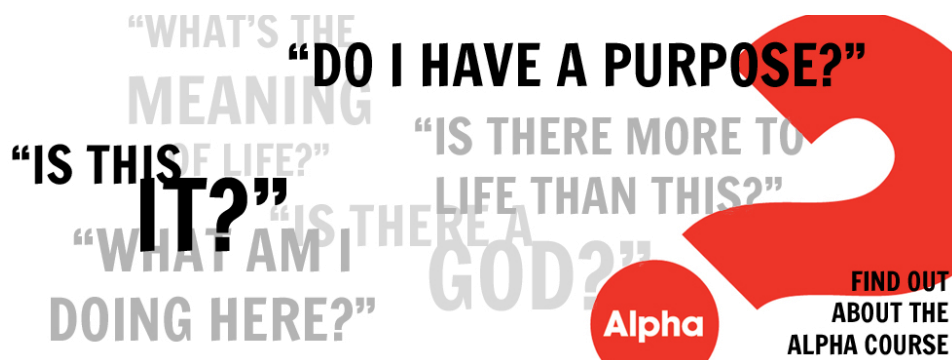


RIDGEWAY BROADSHEET

April 2016



Join us for Alpha
Thursdays, 7.30-9.15pm
Harwell RBL Poppy Rooms

Starts 14th April with a no-commitment
taster session then six further sessions
No charge, includes supper

See inside or alpha.org for more info



Rector of Harwell and Chilton Revd Dr Jonathan Mobey
The Rectory | Church Lane | Harwell | OX11 0EZ
01235 799376 | rector@harwellandchiltonchurches.org.uk

Associate Minister Revd Pam Rolls
01235 834475 | pamrolls@tiscali.co.uk
Children & Families Worker Mr Peter Shields
07467 038734 | Peter@machparish.co.uk

Church Administrator & PA to the Rector Mrs Vicky Johnston
Harwell Church Office | Mon/Tue/Thu/Fri 9.30-2.30 | 01235 834256
office@harwellandchiltonchurches.org.uk

ALPHA MALE



Crown in Chilton. The food was delicious! Thank you Shea.

Here are some reasons given for why people attended the course:

Been on a bit of a rollercoaster; no direction.

Was suggested by a family member and thought it would be an interesting experience.

I first heard about Alpha Courses 10 years ago and have wanted to attend. This course was right time and right place for me.

So what did people think about the course?

I enjoyed being taken out of day-to-day life to think about faith and other concepts which I otherwise struggle to find time for.

Enjoyed meeting new people and getting to know them. And I've got an improved understanding of what it means to be a Christian.

Good discussions, challenges, good company and food

I enjoyed thinking about things in a calm, clear way, things that are different to the usual.

Some of the topics covered through the course were: Is there more to life than this? How can I have faith? How does God guide us? Who is Jesus? What about the Church?



If you'd like to attend our next Alpha course, being run in Harwell from the 14th April, please contact Vicky on 834256 to book your place.

An Informed Decision

Chocolate brownie or sticky toffee pudding? Say 'I will' or 'No thanks'? Cash in your pension pot or leave it untouched? Life is full of decisions, and every day is a succession of options and choices, some relatively insignificant, others potentially life-changing. But we can only make a good decision when we have the facts.

We would never agree to major surgery without good reason – a diagnosis, an explanation of what is involved, and any associated risks. For important decisions, it is essential that we make a choice that is informed.

So how are you going to vote in the EU Referendum? Should we stay or should we go? Do you feel you know enough about the pros and cons to decide? This is an important decision, arguably more so even than a General Election. Fully informed or not, every British adult will get to express their choice on 23rd June, and a momentous decision will be made.

There is another once-in-a-lifetime issue, potentially far more important, that we each need to decide about. What I am thinking about has significance not just for decades or even centuries, but for eternity. Jesus put the issue before his disciples 2000 years ago: "Who do you say that I am?" And this is something that we each need to decide for ourselves. The Christian faith claims that everything hangs on our personal response to that leading question. But how do we make an informed choice?

For a start we should look at what the Bible says; it contains eye-witness accounts of the life, death and – alleged – resurrection of Jesus, and of those who first believed that Jesus rose from the dead. St Luke is concerned that his readers consider the evidence and make an

informed decision about Jesus. Right at the beginning of his contribution to the Bible he says,

"Since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I... decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught." (Luke 1:3-4)



The Bible must be our starting point. But alongside the Bible we should look at the evidence of history. We should also look at whether the Christian claims hang together and fit with what we know of the world, or whether other religions or worldviews make more sense. We should look critically at the difference that genuine adherence to the Christian faith makes in societies and in individuals. Does prayer make a difference? Does God heal today? Without investigating these sorts of things, we cannot make an informed decision.

The Alpha Course provides an opportunity to explore these crucial questions in a friendly, interactive setting. Alpha has been run in 169 countries and attended by over 22 million people who have wanted to make an informed decision about matters of eternal significance. We will be hosting Alpha at the Harwell Village Club (RBL) in April and May. For help with making an informed decision about an issue far more important even than the EU Referendum, why not commit over seven Thursday evenings to just 12 hours of stimulating conversation, good company and delicious food? (All for free). You may even get a choice of desserts!

<http://hcchurches.org/alpha>

Revd Dr Jonathan Mobey
Rector of Harwell and Chilton



Fledgelings is our baby and toddler group. We meet on Monday mornings at St Matthew's Church Hall and on Wednesday mornings at Chilton Field Community Room from 9.30-11.30am. There are refreshments available, lots of toys and a short 'see and know' session where we sing and then have a craft activity. No charge.



Homegroups meet at various different times in homes around the village. They are a great place to get to know others in the church, and grow in your faith as you study the bible and pray with others. Jean Barton is our homegroup co-ordinator and can help you find a group to join.



All Saints' Women's Group meet monthly in All Saints' on the 2nd Tuesday of each month to hear from a speaker on a variety of topics. The group also arranges a monthly charity market stall at the Rose and Crown, an annual quiz night, and annual plant sale. Contact Judy Goodall.



World Mission Group helps our churches to look outwards to the needs of the wider world and partner with others engaged in God's mission, through Mission Partners such as The Leprosy Mission, the Sharlands, Christine Perkins, John Abu Bakker, Barnabas Fund, Mission Aviation Fellowship, CPAS, BRF and Church Army.



Music is a big part of church life. There is a choir at All Saints' who practise on Wednesday evenings, and a celebration choir at St Matthew's who sing for special occasions. We have an orchestra that plays in St Matthew's twice a month, a harp and strings group, a brass group, organists, pianists, and a worship band.



Bell-ringing practice takes place on Thursday evenings at St Matthew's, and on Monday evenings at All Saints by arrangement. Our bells are rung each Sunday morning before our main services (9.30am in Chilton and 11.00am in Harwell) and for weddings and some funerals. New members are welcome.



Science and Faith A group meet fortnightly on Thursday evenings in St Matthew's lounge to explore the relationship between science and faith. Has the Big Bang pushed God out of the universe? Is evolution compatible with religious faith? Are humans more than biological machines? Is cloning ethical? See website for info.



Men's and others groups Various activities are arranged for men throughout the year, including meals, the 'Alpha Male' Course, film marathons and cinema trips. We have regular working parties in All Saints' Churchyard and for other projects. We also run regular 'CAP Money' courses that help anyone to get to grips with their finances.



Evergreens are a group for those of retirement age, who meet each month in St Matthew's Church Hall on the 3rd Thursday of the month. Various speakers come and talk to the group, and activities are arranged during the year such as coffee mornings, a shopping trip and an annual Christmas meal. Contact Gill Gay.



GenerationGold is a church service which is held quarterly, mainly for those of retirement age, but everyone is welcome. It is a short service followed by tea and cake and they are held alternately at All Saints' and St Matthew's. Contact Pam Rolls.

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

Baptisms & Thanksgivings

"Welcome to the Lord's family"

Sarah Barrett

Aria Amy Pickett Bianchini

Funerals

"He who believes in Me will live"

Andrew Oldland

ANNUAL MEETINGS

All Saints' Chilton have their Annual Meeting on Sunday 17th April after the 9.30am service. The St Matthew's Harwell meeting is on Sunday 24th April after the 11am service. As well as electing Churchwardens and Members to the Church Councils, this is an opportunity to ask questions about and discuss any aspect of church life. We will also be publicly thanking all those who serve in our churches; those who lead groups, visit, clean, make coffee, read, pray, teach, play instruments, arrange flowers, deliver the Broadsheet, support financially, ring bells, look after our buildings, serve as Church Wardens and PCC members, and much more. Thank you team!

POPPY APPEAL

Could you be the Poppy Appeal Organiser for the annual house to house and business collections in October - November and order wreaths for our village commemorations? Contact branch@harwellrbl.co.uk.

GARAGE SALE

Please contact Carol Pigott if you are interested in having a garage sale on Saturday 7th May in Chilton. Tel: 834408

ALPHA

Join us in the Harwell Poppy Tearooms on Thursday evenings from 14th April to explore the Christian faith. We plan to use the new Alpha videos which feature Gemma Hunt and Toby Flint. We'll meet for 7 weeks, and each meeting will start with a free meal! This is a great opportunity to explore Christianity and to get to know others in the process. Take a look at www.alpha.org for more information and contact Vicky in the Church Office to book a place. **WARNING:** This could change your life!



DAY OF PRAYER

Fit for the Future – St Matthews Harwell

A Day of Prayer around the 'Fit for the Future' consultation and the use of the Church building is to take place on Saturday 16th April in St Matthew's Harwell. Come and set aside some time for reflection and prayer on our church's vision for the future and what changes we need to make to achieve this. The Church will a focus for prayer throughout the day from 9am – 4pm. The Day of Prayer will take the form of a series of prayer stations looking at Welcome, Worship, Inspired by the Spirit and Hospitality and Community Engagement. Tea and coffee provided. Just drop in!

CHARITY MARKET STALL

This will be held on Saturday 9th April in the Rose and Crown car park Chilton between 9am and 12noon and will be for the benefit of our local **Wallingford & District Stroke Club**. At the February market £330 was raised for **Young Dementia UK**.



Home Produce and small White Elephant items are always welcome. Thank you all for your amazing support. Contact Judy Goodall on 834503 for more info.

GRAND CHARITY QUIZ NIGHT

A Cryptic Quiz Sheet to raise funds for Christian Aid will be out on Saturday 9th April and available from the Charity Market, Daphne Boddy in Harwell, Atomic Hair on Curie Avenue, The Rose and Crown Chilton, Audrey Slater at 9 Latton Close and Judy Goodall at 43 Crafts End, on 834503 or atthegoodalls43@tiscali.co.uk.

HARWELL GARDENERS CLUB

Harwell Village Hall, Monday 4th April 7.30pm. Coton Manor Garden, Past, Present & Future with Carol Tait
Competition: Seasonal Veg. Tel 821615.

ALL SAINTS' WOMEN'S GROUP

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 12th April at 7:45 pm in All Saints' Church, Chilton. The Speaker will be Hilary Moore who will talk about being a Street Pastor in Wantage. Visitors are always welcome.

GRAND PLANT SALE & COFFEE MORNING

This will be held on Saturday 14th May from 10 am to 12 noon at Chilton Village Hall and is organised by All Saints Women's Group to benefit Christian Aid. It provides a great opportunity to buy bedding plants, perennials, small shrubs, herbs and vegetable plants. Children from the Gardening Club at Chilton School will have a stall and there will also be a well-stocked second-hand book stall and a cake and home produce stall.



We would welcome any contributions of plants, books or cakes.

Please join us on the morning of the 14th May to stock up your garden, browse over books or chat over a cup of coffee.

GODSPELL

Harwell Players
present



Godspell

Saturday 9th April 2.30pm & 7.30pm
St Matthew's Church, Harwell
Tickets £10 Adults, £5 under 16
Available from Bob's Butchers, Harwell
Proceeds to Village Hall Re-development

INTERVIEW WITH SARAH BARRETT

What prompted your move to Chilton?

We moved to Chilton in December 2013. We got a really good feel for the village when we were looking around this area. We didn't move far but wanted to be a bit further south and have an easier drive for Tom to get to work. We also hoped that being in a village and with the new development we would meet other families, as at the time we had one year old Henry. It just felt like the right place to move to really.



What prompted you to do an

Alpha Course? I had been thinking about doing an Alpha course on and off for a few years but just never really got around to it. I was brought up in a non religious family and had only started attending church when I met Tom so didn't even really feel like I understood even the basics, although I had always felt that there was more to life and would have probably described myself as a Christian.

A few years ago Tom and I had a really difficult time and ended up having to stay in the John Radcliffe hospital for a while. I spent some time in the chapel there where I found such peace and comfort which really surprised me. Prayer started to come very naturally which it never had before and I suppose that was where I started to think I needed to learn more. We moved to Chilton a year or so later. We went to church in Chilton and met some really lovely people and it felt like the right time to just find out more about Christianity.

Jonathan Mobey told me about an Alpha Course that the church was running and it was brilliant. The group of people there were really supportive and understanding and so knowledgeable, but not at all

intimidating which was so important. It made it so accessible and I never felt stupid even asking some really basic questions. At the same time as doing the Alpha course I also attended a bible study session held after the Fledgelings group where again I learned so much. The Alpha Course and the bible study group made Christianity relevant to how I want to live my life and not just something that happened 2000 years ago. I am very grateful for both of these groups of people.

What prompted you to be baptised

earlier this year? Having talked to Tom, friends and Jonathan, I took the decision to be baptised. I wanted to make a commitment to my faith as a Christian. I wanted to be baptised at All Saints' as the congregation has been so warm and welcoming and helpful and I wanted to commit myself in front of those people who had helped me so much. Helen and Esther agreed to be my sponsors and it felt so lovely to have them standing with me as I said the words. It was a really joyful and emotional service.

Why do an Alpha Course? I would say to anyone who wants to learn more about Christianity to try the Alpha Course. It gives such a good grounding in a really clear way and you'll meet a wonderful group of people at all different stages in their faith who can help. If you have questions, try and get them answered and not just keep wondering about it or putting it off. I'd also say to try church! You'll meet a lovely group of people who will really welcome you. All Saints' Church and Chilton are very special places.

See www.alpha.org for more information.

Please send items to Vicky by the 2nd Wednesday of the month
01235 834256 office@harwellandchiltonchurches.org.uk

www.harwellandchiltonchurches.org.uk