



Cobham & Luddesdowne News

January 2024

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PARISH of COBHAM & LUDDESDOWNE with DODE

Priest-in-Charge – The Rev'd Canon Alyson Davie

For Funeral enquiries please contact Alyson Phone no. 01474-812068
email:- alyson@stjohnsmeopham.co.uk

(Rest Day: Friday)

Associate Priest – The Rev'd Pam Davies

For Wedding, Baptism and all other enquiries please contact Pam
The Vicarage, Battle Street, Cobham, Kent. DA12 3DB

Phone no 01474-394515 email:- rev.pamdavies@sky.com (NB new number)

(Current work days are Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday)

Pastoral assistant

Janet Weaver, 36 Highview, Vigo Village, DA13 0RR (01732) 823936

Church Office Phone no. 01474 813495

Church Officers of St. Mary Magdalene, Cobham

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Hilary Savage

Churchwarden

Hilary Savage

(01634) 723027

PCC Secretary

Ron Chamberlain

(01474) 814250

Treasurer

Jeffrey Julie-Rusz

07946 249021

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SUBMISSIONS Cobham and Luddesdowne News is a community magazine produced by and for the residents of Cobham, Sole Street and Luddesdowne.

Please send material for inclusion by the 15th of the month preceding publication to editorialcln@gmail.com

Cover photograph Adrian Whiteing (the lane between Battle street and the sports field)

Printed by Wested Logistics Limited 01474 361615
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January
2024

Happy New Year! Let's hope that 2024 is a peaceful and successful year for everyone.

After all of the exciting events leading up to Christmas there is still plenty to look forward to in the coming months; coffee mornings, music concerts and film shows to name a few!

I hope that the magazine brings a small measure of positivity during these dark days of winter, sharing local news, ideas and a reminder of the active, encouraging and supportive community we live in.

With all good wishes for 2024—Tina

COBHAM YOUTH CLUB

Friday 19th January
Friday 2nd February
Friday 16th February
Friday 1st March
Friday 15th March



Sessions run from 7.30pm to 9.30pm at the Meadow Rooms, The Street, Cobham, DA12 3BZ.

The youth club is intended for young people from Year 6 to Year 9.

Cobham Parish Council Meeting dates

8pm on 9th January at the Meadow Rooms
7.30pm on 6th February at the St Mary's Church Rooms
8pm on 5th March at the Meadow Rooms

7.30pm on 9th April at St Mary's Church Rooms. *Annual Parish Assembly*
8pm on 23rd April at the Meadow Rooms
8pm on 21st May at the Meadow Rooms - *Annual Parish Meeting*
8pm on 2nd July at the Meadow Rooms
8pm on 3rd September at the Meadow Rooms
8pm on 1st October at the Meadow Rooms
8pm on 5th November at the Meadow Rooms
8pm on 3rd December at the Meadow Rooms



A letter from the Rev'd Pam Davies

Dear friends

It seems no time at all since Christmas - all that busyness and celebration. I would like to say a big thank you to all those who helped to make Christmas so enjoyable, those who contributed in so many ways to the way our churches looked and the smooth running of events. We should be aware that some people do a lot which is unseen by others, I have had many positive comments about the various services and other events.

The church now moves from Christmas to Epiphany. Not a lot of people outside the church will know that word—maybe some people within the church aren't too sure what it is. According to the gospel of Matthew's account by the time the wise men arrived, room had been found for Mary and her baby in a house and they had vacated the temporary shelter of the stable. It is because of this time gap, in the church's year that there is still first the season of Christmas when we focus on the birth of Jesus and then on the 6th of January, we start the season of Epiphany when we remember the visit of the wise men, (the magi). These men were outsiders, probably from Persia, but they too had been guided by God to seek and worship this child.

This showed Jesus is for everyone, for the whole world - that's the point of the story. So everybody has a right to hear about him. A friend of mine calls Epiphany the "festival of evangelism" I like the poster which says "wise men sought for Jesus. Wise men seek him still today".

In Christ's day the wise men from the east were successful in their search because of the guidance which the star provided. It led them to the very spot where Christ was to be found. How are men and women who seek for Christ today, going to find him? They too need somebody to guide them. Jesus said "I am the light of the world" but if they are to find Jesus they need somehow to be pointed in the right direction.

The age of traditional churchgoing in this country is rapidly decreasing and the same goes for any serious teaching of Christianity in schools. This came home to me when I watched University Challenge. Eight bright young people from Oxford and Cambridge universities showed outstanding knowledge on a wide range of subjects, yet were completely flawed by Bible knowledge questions which I believe 40 years ago could have been answered by a typical 10 year old in a church school or Sunday school.

This is where those of us who profess to have found Christ come into the equation. It is our task to direct others to the One whom we have found, for others in turn to discover Him for themselves. We are, as it were, the modern-day equivalent of the star that led the wise men to Christ. That is what we mean by evangelism. It is simply sharing with others the good things which we ourselves have found.

Cont'd on page 5

I myself don't know anyone who's been converted to Christ without another person being involved and I believe that exceptions to this are very rare. The people we listen to on serious and personal subjects are the people we know. In relation to Christianity, there must be someone for whom that person is you! To some, of course, it's me. I must do my share, but I can't do yours.

What does God keep us here on earth for? Why doesn't he take us to heaven right away? What is it that we can do for God here that we shall be able to do much better in heaven? Not worship. Not practical service. Not prayer. Not Bible study. Only evangelism! Wouldn't it be ironic if it was the one thing we were neglecting?

As we start the New Year why not start coming to our services you might be surprised to find they will help you see the 'light' just as the wise men did following the star. May I wish you all a very happy new year.

Blessings Pam

THE FRIENDS OF COBHAM CHURCH PRESENT

A heart warming evening with film, fish and chips

... and vineyards

Saturday 24th February, 6pm-10pm

The Meadow Rooms, Cobham

'a good year'

(R.Scott, 2006, Based on the novel by

Peter Mayle)

Tickets £20 per person to include Fish and Chips from
'A Better Plaice'

Excellent wines, beers and soft drinks available to
purchase from our bar

Tickets available (cash only please) at
Cobham Community Stores from Monday 15 January
Further information from Kate Hyde (0794 101 8897)
& Mary Palmer (01474 816788)

This is a fundraising event from
The Friends of Cobham Church
Registered Charity Number 280467

Why you might want to eat 8 strawberries a day

Strawberries are better for you than you probably know. They provide 100 per cent of the recommended daily vitamin C amount in a single cup serving, and they also contain heart-healthy nutrients such as folate, potassium, fibre, phytosterols and polyphenols.

A recent study has found that eating about eight of them a day for three months can improve your mood, help your memory, and lower any symptoms of depression. The study was carried out at the University of Cincinnati's Academic Health Centre.



LUDESLOW SOCIETY EVENTS

at Luddesdown Village Hall, Luddesdown Road, Kent, DA13 0XE

New Year's Day Walk – meet at 11am in hall carpark

Free Event. Mulled wine on arrival. Dogs welcome.

On return walkers are invited to stay for lunch (a donation towards food costs would be appreciated).

Follow us on Facebook & Instagram for all the latest events.

Luddesdown & District Rights of Way Group.

We are a small friendly group that usually walks from The Cock Inn, Henley Street, Luddesdown, Gravesend DA13 0XB, at 11am on Wednesdays. We walk at a gentle pace for some 90 minutes in beautiful countryside. Occasionally we lead weekend walks.

With four Socials a year in Luddesdown Village Hall and a twice yearly Newsletter, we would be delighted if you joined us for a walk or two. Becoming a member costs £7 per person a year.

Please contact Walks Co-ordinator Janet Ferguson, preferably by email janetferguson@hotmail.fr . Or Chairman Gerry Minister on 01474 813 376.

Sole Street WI

The members of Sole Street WI send you all very best wishes for a healthy, happy New Year.



Many of you who supported our Christmas Extravaganza will recollect the festive vibe in St Mary's Church Room that morning when the glittering craft stalls inspired eager Christmas shopping. Our guest table for Meopham WI was also very successful.

The December meeting was our traditional in-house Christmas lunch. Our President asked members to give consideration to the four proposed resolutions for next year's NFWI national campaign. All the resolutions were genuinely difficult to single out, we wanted to campaign for all of them. However the most support was decided as Dental Health Matters.

After our New Year celebration lunch out on 11th, the main meeting in the St Mary's Church Room for January is on Tuesday 23rd. It has become our custom to change this to a daytime event at 2pm to avoid having to travel in the dark in severe weather conditions. Some members drive here from Higham, Gravesend, Cobham and Northfleet. Same timing for the February 27th meeting when we will be hearing from Michael Bunn on subject "From The Medway To The Mediterranean".

Weekly walks continue every Tuesday at 9.30 am but start from Sole Street instead of Jeskyns.

New members will always receive a warm welcome - we are a small very friendly WI. For further information on all our activities please get in touch with our President, Yvonne tel 01474 813455.

Molly Isaacs

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THE TUESDAY POP-IN

Meetings are held at the Leather Bottle on the second Tuesday of the month from 10.30 till 12 noon; all are welcome to join us for a relaxed chat and coffee.

Next pop-in Tuesday

CONTACT: MARY PALMER - 01474 816788



The first Church Room Coffee Morning of 2024 will be 10.30– 12noon on Thursday 11th January in support of The Alzheimer's Society in memory of Mike Diddams.

Diary of events in St Mary's Church Room Sole Street

DAY	Event	Date	Contact
Monday	Monday Club for the retired	Every week 2–4 pm	Brian Williams 814049
Tuesday	U3A Choir Singing Group	1 st and 3 rd in the month 9.45-11.45. am	Sheryl Diddams 813476
Tuesday	WI	4 th in the month 7.30–10.00 pm	Yvonne Martin 813455
Wednesday	Midweek Worship	Every week 9.00–10.45am	Ron Chamberlain 814250
Thursday	LFG Coffee Morning	2 nd in the month 10.30 - 12.00	Su Rowe 814560
Friday	U3A Sign Language	2 nd in the month 2.00-3.30pm	Roy Lingham 815908



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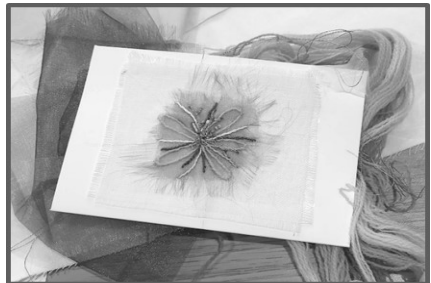
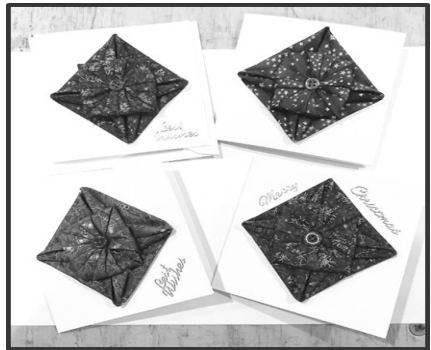
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16 Mill Street | Maidstone | Kent | ME15 6XT | 01622 689700

North Kent Embroiderers



Hello Everyone,

Our November meeting was 'Four Corners'. The groups were led by our own members, Sue, Veronica and Louise (thank you to them all). We could choose from 'slow stitching', 'Fandango Squares' and sewing with organza. Some members chose to work on their own pieces (this was the fourth group). It was lovely to see the results at the end of the afternoon. We came away with new skills to try out at home.

Our postcard challenge was 'Fireworks'. You can see that we all had similar ideas for that one, with some very sparkly pieces being swapped with other members.

If you would like to join our group or would just like to find out a bit more about us then please pay us a visit - look at our web-site <https://northkentembroiderers.co.uk/>

or email us at: info@northkentembroiderers.co.uk

or contact our Chairman, Eileen on 01474 324734



Happy stitching, Karen

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The Parishes of Meopham with Nurstead and Cobham with Luddesdowne & Dode

Teaching programme for Autumn Winter 2023/2024

During the autumn and winter of 2023/2024, we shall be exploring Paul's letter to the Romans, with the help of the Bible Society's Romans Course. This will be made up of ten sessions, each of which will consist of a video presentation of a section of Romans by the New Testament scholar Andrew Ollerton. It will run at the St John's Centre on Tuesday afternoons from 2.00-3.15pm, and by Zoom on Tuesday evenings from 7.45-9.00pm.

Course programme

January

30 Devotion – Romans 12

February

6 Community – Romans 13-14 20

Mission – Romans 15-16



If you have queries or would like further details, please contact Martin Davie at mbarratt.davie@btinternet.com

MEOPHAM LIBRARY WRITING GROUP

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

The next meeting of the Meopham Library Writing Group is at **10am** on **4th January 2024**. The following meetings are on 1st February and 7th March. Each month there is a writing theme such as “Winter” or “Timekeepers” so everyone can write a poem, article or a short story no longer than 1,000 words. There is also a writing challenge, where every member of the group chooses a word, then everyone tries to write a paragraph including all these words, keeping the sentences as short as possible. Creative writing is a very enjoyable activity and it can help people facing challenging situations or bereavement. It is also good to record family memories for future generations. You are very welcome to join the group if you are interested in writing short stories, poetry, family memories or articles about hobbies or local history. Beginners as well as more experienced writers are all invited to join the group. For more information, please ring 01474 813379 or just turn up at Meopham Library on the 4th.

BELL RINGING by Peter Hartley

2023 and in November we rang a Quarter Peal of Grandsire Doubles for Phoebe Edwards who was born earlier in the year. Her Father, Stuart, once again very ably conducted the band of ringers. Named methods are particular patterns of changing orders of bells and the conductor makes calls at exact moments to extend the pattern of changes.

If ringing is ordained, life is often random. A recent letter reminded me of a Royal Household colleague. For years, among his duties, he had counted the Maundy silver pennies into the leather purses and arranged them on the alms dishes for the annual Royal Maundy Service. I took over his duties and in succession for decades we served our own constant and quietly remarkable Queen.

Looking backwards student days at Sheffield Polytechnic were great fun. After graduation two good friends went on to have lovely families but too short lives. I telephone their widows every Christmas.

The Hon. Albemarle ('Alby') Bowes-Lyon died in the autumn. I was a clerk in the banking house of Messrs. Coutts & Co. (all was completely different then). Dressed in regulation stiff white linen collar, waistcoat and frock-coat I sat perched on my high stool at my Victorian sloping desk and had to explain to 'Alby' the entries I was making in various ledgers. Now banking is transformed. 'Alby' became a Director and this bank clerk went on to become a student and then a royal servant.

Bells follow their exact courses. People are buffeted by 'the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune' and sped on their way by turns of good luck.

May we, all of us, the young and the old, the youthful and the elderly, all be dusted with a little good fortune in 2024.

Happy New Year.



Gardening for a Wilder Kent – The Dormouse



If you see a dormouse in your garden you should feel very lucky.

Hazel dormice have golden-brown fur and large black eyes and, distinctively, they are the only small British mammal with a furry tail so you won't confuse them with any other sort of mouse. They spend almost all of their time in the branches of trees during the summer, rarely coming down to the ground. They have sometimes been found asleep in old bird nests but they weave their own nests from strips of honeysuckle bark or a similar plant, surrounded by a layer of green leaves. When conditions are cold or wet, or if food is scarce, dormice curl up into a ball and go into a state similar to hibernation for a short time (called torpor) in order to save energy. Between October and May dormice hibernate in nests beneath the leaf litter on the forest floor or in the base of hedgerows.

When they have babies the average litter size is four and these are typically born in July or August but litters may be born as early as late May or early June. Young dormice are weaned after about one month but may remain with the mother as juveniles before they become independent and disperse. They must reach a weight of between 15-18g to survive the winter hibernation. Dormice are successional feeders and require a range of foods to allow them to feed while they are active. In spring they will feed on the flowers of oak, hawthorn, sycamore and willow and as the season progresses move onto later flowering shrubs such as honeysuckle and bramble. During the summer they take advantage of caterpillars, aphids and wasp galls and then they fatten up for hibernation on fruits and berries such as blackberries and hazelnuts.

Across its range dormice prefer the successional stage of woody vegetation; this is the new growth that arises after woodland management such as coppicing, ride widening, and thinning or glade creation. Dormice live at low densities, even in ideal habitat and are not generally predated. They will however be eaten by owls, weasels, grey squirrels and cats while they are active and they can be eaten by badgers and wild boar when they are hibernating at ground level. It is likely however that the greatest threat to an individual dormice is winter survival.

Dormice are slow breeders and poor dispersers and generally live in older woodlands with a well-developed understory often linked by old hedgerows. In the majority of woodlands in Britain the management required to maintain a well-developed understory has ceased, making them less suitable for dormice. Inappropriate management of hedgerows, or their removal, has meant that woods that have lost their dormice will not be repopulated. The future effect of climate change on dormice is unknown.

The UK population is unknown but there has been a long term decline in both number and range; recently there is an indication that the decline is slowing and as part of an ongoing dormouse reintroduction programme the current range is slowly being extended. The current dormouse range is Southern England and South Wales and along the English/Welsh border.

**Cobham, Luddesdowne
and Sole Street Churches.**

Church Services during January



Sunday 7th January

10:30am Holy Communion, Cobham Church

Sunday 14th January

10:30am Holy Communion (BCP), Luddesdowne

Sunday 21st January

10:30am Holy Communion, Cobham Church

***4:00pm All Age Service, Cobham**

Sunday 28th January

10:30am Holy Communion, Luddesdowne

Midweek services in Sole Street

9:30am 10th January - Holy Communion,

in Sole Street Church Room

17th, 24th and 31st Informal Morning Prayer

For venue please contact Pam

on 01474 394515 for details.

***All services will take place,
depending on the snow and icy weather.***

St John's Meopham with St Mildred's Nurstead Church
Services during January 2024



Wednesday 3rd January 10am Holy Communion in St John's Centre

Sunday 7th January 9.45am All Age Worship at St John's
11.30am Holy Communion at St Mildred's

Wednesday 10th January 10am Holy Communion in St John's Centre

Sunday 14th January 9.45am Parish Communion at St John's
11.30am Mattins at St Mildred's

Wednesday 17th January 10am Holy Communion in St John's Centre

Sunday 21st January 9.45am Morning Worship at St John's

Wednesday 24th January NO 10am Holy Communion in St John's Centre

Sunday 28th January 9.45am Family Communion at St John's
11.30am Family Service at St Mildred's

Wednesday 31st January 10am Holy Communion in St John's Centre

Cobham's Register



Burial of Ashes

Doreen May HOOD was born on the 28th May 1937 and died on the 16th April 2022 aged 84 years old. On the 4th November 2023 Doreen's ashes were buried in her parent's grave, Arthur and Annie HOOD, in Cobham's churchyard. The service was conducted by Lesley GOULD, Licensed Reader from St Mary's Gravesend.

The family present were Doreen's Sister-in-law Ruth HOOD, Great Nieces Emma, Kelly and Joanne, Great Great Niece Amelia and Cousin Jacqueline.

Baptism

Joseph James JULIE-RUSZ was baptised on the 26th November 2023. We welcome Joseph into the Church family.

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Cobham
Gardeners'
Society

Meetings & Shows at the Meadow Room in Dickensian Cobham, Kent
SatNav DA123BZ Registered Charity No 228007

Wednesday 14th February 2024 - 7pm Raised Beds & No Dig Gardening

Alison Marsden looks at raised beds & no dig gardening. Nature grows plants without digging so why do gardeners seem to be obsessed with turning over the soil? A look at the good and the bad that happens when we dig and why just stopping is not the whole answer for a productive garden. Plus the benefits and practicalities of gardening in raised beds

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The hectic Christmas season is
Of service constantly –
There can't be better reason
To welcome January!

The Curate and the Vicar
A busy schedule keep,
As they rush, ever quicker -
They don't get that much sleep.
And overworked Churchwardens
And their sides persons team -
Sure don't get time for boredom,
And only seldom scream!

So, when the season's over,
The crib has been put by,
The drapes to green changed over,
They breathe a heartfelt sigh!
They laugh and smile with pleasure,
And sing a merry rhyme,
But short-lived is their leisure –
For soon comes Easter time!

By Nigel Beeton



1ST SOUTH STREET BOYS BRIGADE & GIRLS COMPANY

The Company meets every Friday evening during term time 6pm-7.30pm at South Street Baptist Church, Wrotham Road, Meopham, DA13 0QJ, next to Hope Hill Scout Camp. Boys and girls aged 5-18 years old are invited. The first meeting in the New Year is on Fri 12th Jan and there are games, art and craft, nature and science activities. The weekly subscription is only £2. Summer camps are held at the Honey Hill Boys Brigade Campsite in Maidstone. Kayaking, canoeing and stand-up paddle boarding take place at the Water Activities Centre in Tonbridge. **SONG TIME** meets every Monday morning 9.45am-11am during term time for families with babies and children under five. There are lots of different toys,. Admission is £1 for a family. The new term begins on Monday 8th January at 9.45am. The **FAMILY GAMES AFTERNOON** for all ages is on Sat 20th Jan 2pm-4pm and admission is free. There will be table tennis, indoor archery, pool, board games such as Scrabble or draughts as well as refreshments with cake and biscuits.

SOUTH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH Sunday services are at 10.45am until midday. There is a Family Service and BBGA Church Parade on Sun 28th Jan. For information please ring 01474 815039 or 813379, or visit www.southstreetbaptist.org.uk HAPPY NEW YEAR.



January - Often the Coldest Month

January might be the middle of winter but as the days lengthen the garden starts to grow. Now is a great time to plan for the coming gardening year and to order seeds and plants. Enjoy the fresh air, on dry sunny days, and check your winter protection, stakes, ties and supports are still working after any severe weather. Also put out food for birds and leave some garden areas uncut, a little longer, to provide shelter for wildlife in your garden.

RHS - Top 10 jobs this month

- Recycle your Christmas tree by shredding it for mulch
- Clean pots and greenhouses ready for spring
- Dig over any vacant plots that have not been dug already
- Disperse worm casts in lawns
- Inspect stored tubers of Dahlia, Begonia and Canna for rots or drying out
- Prune apple and pear trees
- Start forcing rhubarb
- Plan your vegetable crop rotations for the coming season
- Keep putting out food and water for hungry birds
- Make a polythene shelter for outdoor peaches and nectarines, to protect against peach leaf curl

SEE ALSO PAGE 32 FOR CGS' 2024 EVENTS

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One family's history with Cobham Church

Andrew Clarke, a resident of Cobham Village, has provided an article based on notes written by Rev Douglas Thackray, which charts the family's history with Cobham Church. He writes....

Jenny's father Douglas wrote some notes on a recent visit here, for possible inclusion in the Church magazine. It was the first I had heard that he and my mother-in-law Sibylle had been here doing brass rubbing, in 1963. I would love to find their names in the Church visitor's book if we still have it. Then, twenty five years later, Jenny herself worked in the brass rubbing centre in the crypt at St Martins in the Fields, where she too encountered John de Cobham, not knowing that she would eventually make her home here where his original brass resides.

Here are Douglas's reflections:-

1963

My then new girlfriend Sibylle invited me to do brass rubbing at Cobham Church. With no further ado, we appeared with our long rolls of greaseproof paper and black wax crayons. We crouched down under the sombre aura of Lord and Lady de Cobham

2001

Forward roll the cameras to 2001. Now Douglas with daughter Jenny on his arm enters the Church. The bell is ringing and the organ playing, as we walk down the aisle of a packed church and the bride is given to the bridegroom Andrew who was waiting.

2004

Fast forward to the baptism of Abigail - and Stephanie in 2006 - and later the Christmas market attendances in the Church and Meadow Room which is such a focus for community involvement.

It is a changing world we live in since Covid. New parameters begin to be established in many spheres, from sports, to choirs, orchestras and other activities which have all suffered from altered interest and attendance. However we as a family are thankful for the joys we have celebrated together in this Church and having contributed a little to its centuries long story. In this brief family history, Cobham Church has been a focal point; the thread that has accompanied our maturing, giving us the landmarks which seen in retrospect gives us a sense of cohesion and meaning to our lives. This may well be the moment, as the longer shadows of autumn appear, to remember the blessings bestowed the joys we have shared together and thank God for the wonders of His Spirit that lives in the Cobham church.

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Our last meeting of the year on the sixth of December was, as usual, our Festive Tea, where everyone lets their hair down, tries to laugh at the Christmas cracker jokes, wondering what grinch removed all those funny little plasticky things like hopping frogs, supposedly in order to save the planet, shares their stories about Christmases past and discusses their plans for the one looming up on us all later in the month.

We were entertained this year by a wonderful group of fresh-faced children from Cobham Primary School. What a delight they were, and a real credit to their school, music teachers and to their families. They started with a selection of songs that they had learned for Remembrance Day. When we had all put our hankies away after joining in a few of them, they treated us to a selection of Christmas songs. In their last song, they even incorporated British Sign Language, which impressed us all. At the end, one of our members who belongs to a number of choral societies, commented on the fact that they sang without using song sheets, something, she said, that she and her fellow singers would never be able to do. The children received a resounding and well-earned round of applause and even a few shouts of 'more' and were each presented with a small 'goody bag' as they left.

Then we all tucked in to an amazing selection of food, provided by our members; at the same time, trying to wrack our brains to solve the questions in the two quizzes. (Well done to those who managed to turn 'Angels Pink Bits' into 'Pigs in Blankets' in the anagram quiz)!

Because of the large number of raffle prizes it took some time for the lucky winners to collect their goodies but there was just enough time afterwards for Kaye Wren, who helps to run our Craft Group, to update us on progress with our new banner, which will incorporate some technically demanding and intricate embroidery work.

The 'Knit and Natter' group ladies have produced Christmas decorations for Cobham village and a further consignment of blankets, premature baby cardigans and twiddle muffs has been delivered to Darent Valley hospital by Kevin Holmes.

Our next meeting, at 2 p.m. on Wednesday 3rd January 2024 will start with an illustrated talk by local historian Christoph Bull, with the intriguing title 'The Griffin, the Horse and the Harp'. We understand that it will be about the Darnley family and its associations with Cobham. Christoph has delivered a number of fascinating talks to us in the past and is an entertaining and erudite speaker. If you would like to come along to hear Christoph's talk, we welcome visitors, who are charged just £2, which includes tea and cake.

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**Cobham Gardeners announce their 2024
Programme of Events & Shows**

Cobham Gardeners' Society in early December held their annual AGM and Christmas Get Together which was well attended. After the formal business of the AGM, Liz Jardine, Chairman of Cobham Gardeners, presented 2023 award winners with their trophies, members then enjoyed a festive catch-up with fellow members with Christmas nibbles and a drink. In addition, Liz announced the launch of their programme of Expert Speaker Talks & Shows for 2024, which are as follows:

Wednesday 14th February – talk Alison Marsden – Raised Beds & No Dig Gardening

Wednesday 13th March – talk John Hughes – Preparing For The Show

Saturday 13th April – Spring Show

Wednesday 8th May – talk Caroline Halfpenny – Water In The Garden

Wednesday 22nd May – coach trip to RHS Wisley

Saturday 8th June – Summer Show

Saturday 14th September – Autumn Show

Wednesday 9th October – talk Steve Edney – The Long Border

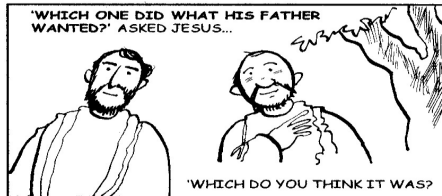
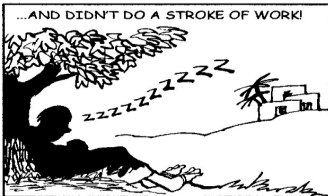
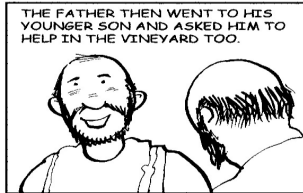
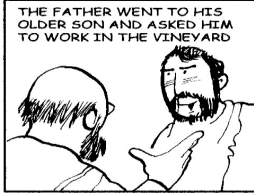
Wednesday 11th December – AGM & Christmas Get Together

Non-members are welcome at the talks and pay £3

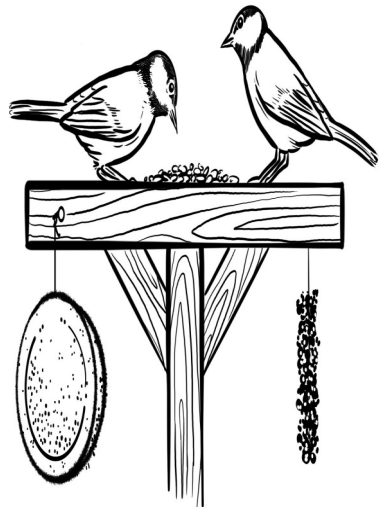
Gardeners' events get started with a talk on Wednesday 14th February at 7pm entitled "Raised Beds & No Dig Gardening" by Alison Marsden. Alison looks at raised beds & no dig gardening. Nature grows plants without digging so why do gardeners seem to be obsessed with turning over the soil? A look at the good and the bad that happens when we dig and why just stopping is not the whole answer for a productive garden. Plus, the benefits and practicalities of gardening in raised beds.

Entry is free to members and non-members are welcome and pay only £3. You can buy Membership of Cobham Gardeners at any time ... and get savings at local garden centres straight away to help with all those garden jobs. You can apply for membership via the Gardeners' e-mail, cobhams@hotmail.co.uk. Membership is a modest £10 for the year – money you more than get back from free entry into all Gardeners' expert speaker talks and savings quality plants at local garden centres.

The tale of the Two Sons

Hello - I hope you had a fantastic Christmas. We now have a new year to look ahead to and I, for one, am looking forward to it! Not only am I on a successful weight loss programme (I've lost 1.5kgs) I am also getting better at not being too nervous or over excited with other dogs and I now love seeing other doggy friends including the cutest little puppy! Whatever the New Year brings let's remember it is always good to take time for others, show kindness and remember to give everyone a tickle on the head....oh you know what I mean!



Paddy

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Wordsearch – Wise Men and St Paul meet Jesus

The Wise Men and St Paul were both on trips when they first encountered Jesus, but how different those trips were! The Wise Men, whom we remember on Epiphany (6th Jan) were seeking the One for whom the Star shone, and came to Bethlehem to worship him. St Paul, whose conversion we remember this month (26th Jan), was on his way to Damascus, seeking to kill those who worshipped Jesus. When the Wise Men encountered the Baby Jesus, they worshipped Him and gave Him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. When St Paul, the proud, fanatical Pharisee, encountered Jesus, he fell blinded on the road, and then worshipped Him by giving Him the rest of his life. St Paul endured years of suffering and hardships in his work as the great apostle to the Gentiles. His mighty faith in Christ has kindled similar belief in many hundreds of millions of people down the centuries.

Wise Men Trips Paul Encounter Jesus Different Epiphany Star
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