

Lunches for Charities in Wilshere Hall at 1pm

February lunch raised £130 For Battersea Dogs and Cats Home.

Thursday 7th March for Herts and Essex (Ware) Samaritans

If something's troubling you, get in touch:

Telephone our branch:

01920 464 099 (local call charges apply)

National telephone:

116 123 (this number is free to call)

Usual hours open to receive callers at the door:

9:30am - 10:00pm

1 Cross Street Ware Hertfordshire SG12 7AH

Facilities for visitors with disabilities:

Our centre provides full wheelchair access and disabled toilet facilities.



SAMARITANS
HERTS & ESSEX

Thursday 4th April is still available for someone to host

If Would you like to host the Lunch in April for your favourite charity?

Please contact the Vicarage on 01920 870115 for more details.

Memory Café at Willowthorpe

**A FREE Event held on the first Tuesday of each month
2.30pm - 4pm.**



**At Willowthorpe, High Street,
Stanstead Abbots, SG12 8AS**

**This is aimed at people who live with Dementia, as well as their
families and carers.**

A chance to meet others in the same position in a relaxed environment.

St James Church Grass Cutting Fund



Many thanks once again to all the loyal people that continue to support this very worthy cause. Please keep giving so that the grass can be kept cut around the lovely St James church; and so people can walk with ease and comfort to tend their loved ones' graves, and of course visit the church itself.

If you feel able to contribute please do not hesitate to contact me, your support would be very much appreciated. As usual the cheques need to be made payable to 'St James burial ground'.

Mrs Sue Atkins (01920 870145)

Mad Chatters

This is a 'drop in' with no commitment, so folk can come and meet new friends. We just chat. It may also be that some within the group decide to go to the theatre together or whatever. So be it. Someone said it's for church folk –yes, the Vicar is often there, but it is for absolutely anyone in the 3 villages. You are very welcome to join us on the last Monday of each month at 7.30pm in the Red Lion restaurant.

We next meet on **25th March**



FairTrade Fortnight 2019

Fairtrade Fortnight 2019 runs until 10th March. Fairtrade Fortnight is an action-packed highlight of the year, when campaigners, businesses, schools and places of worship show their support for the farmers and workers who grow our food in developing countries.

Please consider joining in any events taking place locally in support of this campaign for fairness. For details on events and more information, check out their website at www.fairtrade.org.uk

Evergreen Club of the Three Villages

MARCH 2019

Our 59th Birthday party at The Goat at Hertford Heath was very pleasant indeed.

PLANNED OUTINGS FOR THE EVERGREENS

(subject to change, of course, and weather!)

Thriplow & Scotsdales - March 25th

Church Farm Arleley & Cream tea - June 10th

Jordans' Mill - Gardens and tea.-24th June

Min Grey's 100th birthday bash - 1st July

Garden Parties (members only) 15th July, 29th July, 12th August and 9th September

21st October - special outing to Westcliffe to Mickie Driver's tribute show to Anne Shelton.

More details to follow, and more outings???

Rosemary Imroth

Come along and join in with the Evergreen Club?

Do come and join us on a Monday afternoons from 2-4pm, at Stanstead Abbots Parish Hall, Roydon Road.

Let me know if you'd like to come, Rosemary Imroth, 01920 424140.

And if you would like to be collected, phone Ann Hardy, 01920 870526 A nice tea and good company costs £1 each time you come

'Death Café'

When I was asked to organise this I said 'What is that?!!!' It turns out to be very fashionable in London and various other cities! (There are 1,622 in UK and more than 7,000 around the world) Apparently people want to talk about aspects of death as it's not a topic of usual conversation nowadays. The Death Café movement says 'Our objective is *'to increase awareness of death with a view to helping people make the most of their (finite) lives.'*' It is a discussion Café, not a counselling session



So we are starting one in the Village Café on **March 28th at 6.30pm – 8.00pm**, and every 4th Thursday as long as it proves helpful. Then we will start one for folk more able to come in the afternoon on **9th May at 2.30pm – 4.00pm**, also in the Café
Tea and coffee available, and free cake!

If you want to have an opportunity to discuss things about death, dying, funerals etc then just drop in during that time. There will be cards with discussion starters on each table to help the conversation get going (yes, they even produce 'Grave Talk' cards!)

There will not be a speaker each time (though we may organise eg a talk about wills by a solicitor if that is asked for) but there will usually be a (retired) palliative care nurse, someone who has supported her husband as he died and can also talk about bereavement, and myself to answer any questions as best we can.

Just drop in any time and we'll see how it goes. *Anne (Revd)*

St John's Quiz Evening

with Fish / Chicken / Vegetarian & Chip supper



Friday 8th March,
at the Parish Hall in Great Amwell
7.00pm for a prompt 7.30pm start



Tickets: £12 per person – any profit to go to St. John's Church.

Tables of 6/8. Bring your own drinks and glasses.

Tickets available from Bryan & Julia Brace (01992 447845) or Richard & Margaret Mellor (01920 460474).

Stanstead Abbotts Local History Society

There are lots of TV programmes dedicated to the buying and selling of antiques - but none come close in entertainment value to Tim Turner of Sworders Antiques! Tim was at his expressive and knowledgeable best when he spoke at our well-attended February meeting.

After a colourful talk about the rise of the tea trade in the 18th century with its accompanying social etiquettes and crockery we had a cheese and wine break. This allowed Tim to survey and value the object d'art brought along by the audience. In giving his evaluations of the memorabilia etc. he made us aware, again, of how fashion plays a big part in the antiques world. Currently big, brown, heavy early 20th century furniture is out - and 1960's furniture is in! Provenance or a gripping story behind a memento can also decide whether it's a collectable or not.

Now for something entirely different - Harlow! Planning and building commenced over 70 years ago, in 1947. So, not such a New Town now! But it pioneered many innovative developments - such as the very first, modern, pedestrianised area, Broad Walk. (below, together with Harlow Market).

With its planned expansion to the north, Harlow will become a very close neighbour to Stanstead



Abbots indeed! Come and hear **David Devine's** very apposite talk on the past and the present of our nearest, big town (pop. 90,000) on **Friday March 8th at 7.30pm in the Parish Hall, Roydon Road, Stanstead Abbotts.** And, as always, check our website: www.salhs.org.uk.
Bob Hunt (Chair and PR)

Great Amwell Parish Hall

The Annual General Meeting of the Hall Management Committee will take place on March 13th at the Hall at 8pm. Residents of Great Amwell with St. Margaret's Ecclesiastical Parish are welcome to attend.

JUST FRIENDS

We meet each week of the month on a cycle at different venues: **Week 1 Thursday Afternoon Tea - NEW VENUE** - at the Village Cafe, High Street, Stanstead Abbots, SG12 8AS at 2.30pm, (7th March)

Week 2 Wednesday Coffee Morning at the Parish Centre, Sacred Heart, Ware at 10.30am, (13th March).

Week 3 Tuesday Lunch at the Beefeater in Ware at 12.30pm (19th March) to book a place contact Mary.

Week 4 Wednesday Coffee in Van Hages at 11am, (27th March). We sometimes have outings and visits to the cinema, theatre etc. For more information contact Judy Heilpern Brown 01920 871743 or Mary Hallett 01920 870527.

Don't forget anyone of any age who is widowed or divorced or separated is welcome at any of our meetings.

STANSTEAD ABBOTTS PARISH HALL TABLE TENNIS CLUB



If you are interested in trying something different, please consider table tennis! Our club meets twice a week at the Parish Hall in Roydon Road (next to St Andrew's School) and is open to all adults.

Friday afternoons from 2 pm to 3.30 pm is our well established session - which started under the auspices of EHDC's Forever Active initiative, encouraging over 50's to be more active. Thursday evenings from 7.30 pm is our club night for the local league - yes, we have a team which has been playing this season, and it would be great if some more experienced players would join us!

All abilities are welcome, at both sessions, and all equipment is provided. The cost is £3 per session, and your first session is free! Please wear suitable shoes and a dark top. For further information please call 07588 016148 or email saphffc@yahoo.com.

LIVE MUSIC SESSION AT THE RED LION

Monday 25th March 8.30pm - 11:00 p.m.

Musicians welcome (and audience!)

Enquiries: Leah Pybus 07895 655757

1st Stanstead Abbotts & St Margaret's Scout Group



With half-term fast approaching, our girls and boys have already been taking part in a wide variety of activities.

Our Jaguar and Panther Cub Packs both took part in this year's Ware and District Swimming Gala over at Fanshaw Swimming Pool in Ware. After many heats and races of all types and for various age categories, everyone had enjoyed a great evening swimming and cheering each other along. Out of the 13 teams taking part, our Panther Cubs came in 11th place and our Jaguar Cubs in 9th place. A great effort by all the girls and boys.



A team of four Scouts took part in this year's Ware and District 'Free from' themed cooking competition, cooking a three course meal for four from scratch. Their breaded mozzarella with an Asian slaw, egg fried rice with toasted cashews and fruit spring rolls all went down a storm with the judges.

Jaguar Pack showed their artistic flair by first playing games to guess each other's favourite characters from a book or story then making some gruesome characters of their own and moulding their characters in clay with excellent results.



The Scouts have been taking part in a series of Astronautics Activity Badge themed evenings, which will lead up to the launching of the rockets they will have all made. One activity involved the very scientific identification of "Martian" (chocolate) rock samples, whilst others involved a variety of fun activities to

help the Scouts learn about space, satellites, the climates and terrains of Mars, the Earth and the moon and life on the International Space Station.



After learning some fire lighting skills and stuffing some pitta breads, our Forest Beavers certainly thought these stuffed pizzas were worth the wait.

To find out more and how to join or volunteer, please visit

StansteadAbbottsScouts.org.uk

Fiona McKenzie-Smith

The Meadow and Village High Street

Please come and join us on

Saturday March 2nd between 10am-12noon

To help repair the dead hedge in the Meadow and clear up the rubbish in our High Street.

Everyone interested in the Meadow and keeping our village clean is welcome.

Any queries please email:

ginitrower@btinternet.com or juliadavies890@btinternet.com



Dementia-Friendly Film Screenings

New for this year, Hertford Theatre are holding special monthly Film Screenings designed for those living with dementia and memory loss and their friends, families and carers, however, anyone is welcome to attend, especially those who may benefit from a more relaxed environment at the cinema.

There will be no adverts or trailers and the lighting will be slightly raised throughout the screening. Ticket price is £5 with one carer free, who will be responsible for the people they accompany to the film, it also includes a free pre-film cup of tea or coffee and biscuits.

The 1.30pm screenings coming up are:

20th March Sabrina

24th April Breakfast at Tiffany's

22nd May The Dam Busters

19th June Cat on a Hot Tin Roof

Bookings in advance can be done online at www.hertfordtheatre.com or by calling the box office on 01992 531500.

Food Bank Collection

We collect for the local Food Bank in Hertford. They would like dry foods of all sorts, long-life liquids, and tinned foods – they help people who are sent by Social Services, CAB etc, when they cannot afford to feed their family until the next cheque comes in. At the moment they particularly need special Christmas food treats and toiletries. Please put your contributions in the box in the Co-op or in the churches, and we will then take the contents to Hertford.



Thank you for your support, people are being really generous. Please keep it coming as help is still needed in these particularly trying financial times.



Stanstead Abbots
St Margarets

Neighbourhood Planning Group

The Neighbourhood Planning Group have been analysing the large number of questionnaires returned by Parishioners (537 with good coverage across all postcodes) – a huge thank you to those who responded. Below are some of the results and there will be further information soon. When we get to the next consultation we will have to consider what the East Herts District Plan will allow us to do, where the Environment Agency will give permission for building and which sites are available.

83% of people think we need more affordable or starter homes. The majority think it is most important that those be houses to buy 83%, rent 49%

People would prefer that new developments be located in

Brownfield land 79% - infill
existing built up area 56%

Only 4% people are in favour of building on greenbelt land



[More information is available that we had no room to print]

What next?

- Call for sites / Business survey / schools survey / working towards whether what people want is possible / working out how to manage conflicts (ie small developments usually mean that a developer does not have to provide affordable homes!
- Come along to the **Stanstead Abbots Parish meeting on May 9th 7.15 for 7.45pm** in Stanstead Abbots Parish Hall for a chance to put questions to your Councillors and Neighbourhood Planning Group members. We hope to have representatives from the Police and others to be confirmed.

www.stansteadabbotsneighbourhoodplan.uk

Amwell Society

We held our annual quiz on the 25th January this year; therefore it had to be a Scottish theme, entitled “Burns Buffoonery”. Six teams assembled for the contest and each was named after a Scottish town or city.

Round one was Scottish history, then came pictures of well known (mostly) places in Scotland to recognise, some associated with recent literature. After this came pictures of famous people, from Fleming to Ferguson, Bell to Connolly.

There followed a delicious meal, preceded by a dramatic rendering of the address to the haggis by Dan Pollard – our “local” Scotsman, and a taster of whisky for us all. Of course haggis, tatties and neeps were included in the meal, beautifully cooked, and lots of lovely desserts came too.

The music round followed, which our team at least found very hard, then a list of Scottish vocabulary to translate; fortunately we were given the options and only had to match them. Most teams did well – it was noted how many words there seemed to be for miserable, dour and dreich!

For the final round, devised and equipped by Peter Troughton, each team had to make and model a sporran out of various bits of paper and furry material, staples and needles being provided.. Each team was then given points by the others to establish the winner. Team Nairn came up with a very elegant example and got the accolade for this round.

However, Frank Brown our scorer, kept us in suspense as to the final result, and in a very close finish Melrose pipped Edinburgh to gain the Society cup.

A fun evening was had thanks to meticulous preparation by William and Christine Brown and their helpers. Thanks too to all the sporting participants.

Our next meeting will be on Friday March 29th. Details will be announced later.

Diana Matthews

Card making classes

Card-making classes are in the Wilshere Hall, on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month from 1.00-4.00pm; £3 per session. All materials are provided and whatever you create is yours to take home with you. Come and give it a try.

For further information please contact Janet Dance on 01920 871262.



STANSTEAD ABBOTTS CEILIDH SOCIETY

At the Parish Hall, Roydon Road, Stanstead Abbots

On Sunday 17th March,

Doors open 7.00pm for 7.30pm

BARN DANCE with GIFFORD BROOKES

All tickets £7 in advance (£9 on the door)

Phone 01920 877588 or 01920 870558, for
Tickets and enquiries.

Also available from www.ticketsource.co.uk



Soft drinks and snacks available - bring your own alcohol

BRINGING LIVE MUSIC TO STANSTEAD ABBOTTS

EVANS DANCING IS COMING SOON

TO STANSTEAD ABBOTTS PARISH HALL



Ballroom and Latin dance classes and 1-1 lessons available.

Beginners and experienced dancers welcome.

Mon and Thurs Mornings in Stanstead Abbots - private lessons, Beginner couples lessons & single Latin line dance lessons.

Mon and Wed evenings in Harlow - private lessons and group lessons.

Call Cheryl for details 07779297940 www.evansdancing.co.uk

Stanstead Abbots Online

www.stanstead-abbotts-online.co.uk

The best online resource for the village of Stanstead Abbots, with news and wide-ranging information on the amenities, events, activities and businesses within the village.

Regularly updated. Take a look and add it to your favourites!

Great Amwell Parish Council News

February 2019

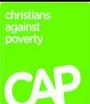
The Parish Council continues to meet on the second Thursday of each month in the Parish Hall, Hillside Lane at 8.00 pm (except August when there is no meeting).

The business considered varies from the monthly planning applications and highways issues of concern to ad hoc matters such as the likely **Music Festival** event to be held on "Bridgeman's Field". No formal application for a relevant licence has yet been submitted to East Herts Council for this event. When it is, then the Parish Council will be formally consulted. If, as a local resident, you have any concerns about the festival, for example in relation to noise nuisance, anti-social behaviour; litter; on-street parking; traffic congestion then please contact the parish council (greatamwellpc@virginmedia.com) to make your views known. You may also wish to contact the District Council directly (<https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/contactusform>).

The Parish Council recently set its **precept** for the 2019/20 financial year. Its element of a household's council tax bill is small when compared the sums levied by the County and District Councils and Police Commissioner. It is, nevertheless, an important element as its focus is on local activities. Next year's budget includes provision for grants to various community bodies (e.g. the Evergreen Club and Stanstead St Margarets Recreation Ground Trust). The largest area of spending will be on litter picking activities. There has been a significant rise in its budget in order to address the increasing problem of litter pollution throughout the parish.

The District Council latest **District Plan** (containing its planning policy framework) was recently introduced. The Parish largely remains protected by green belt policies but limited infill development is permitted in defined areas. Notwithstanding the Plan's provisions, there will still be attempts for speculative development that seeks to push the boundaries of the approved policies. The Parish Council will continue to make formal representations objecting to development proposals that it feels breach the District Plan.

Jeff Hughes



For help with debt –
CAP (Christians Against Poverty)
0800 328 0006 (free call)

Campaign to Protect Rural England Hertfordshire Awards 2019

For those caring about their Community and/or the Environment. Our Annual Awards Scheme is now open and we are inviting everyone within Hertfordshire to think about the people or groups who help improve life in their community and/or enhance the environment in



Hertfordshire and nominate them for an award.

We want to recognise those who work so hard to protect, promote and enhance towns or villages and/or the surrounding countryside to make them better places to live, work, go to school or enjoy for today and tomorrow. Those could be; charities, informal groups, events, businesses and individuals of all ages.

"It is great to see individuals and groups receiving recognition for their work and contribution to the community" Cllr Jeff Jones.



River Stort Training, practical skills in action
Environment nomination 2017

There is a lot happening across Hertfordshire and we would love you to nominate, or to spread the word about the awards. We are happy to receive self-nominations.

For more information contact gill@cpreherts.org.uk To make a nomination just download a form from our website www.cpreherts.org.uk/awards and return it to us **by 31st May 2019**.

Our judges review the nominations during the summer and the Awards are presented at an evening event in October.

Previous nominations have included village halls, histories, village greens, gardens and playgrounds. We have received nominations for forests, chalk streams, local nature reserves, health walks and woodland restoration.

Also, riverfly monitoring, a bird box trail, an eco-house and various "friends of" groups, a community car scheme, community choirs, festivals, community orchards and a lambing weekend.

As well as nominations for businesses and individuals of all ages, who make a difference in their community.

Someone or something in every community deserves to be recognised

From the Vicar Revd Anne Donaldson



March is Lent. That season in the year when Christians are encouraged to look at our lives and see how well we are walking with Jesus.

That may seem a strange way to put it. Shouldn't I have said 'how well am I keeping the 10 commandments or something? I could have done, but what matters most of all in Christianity is our relationship with Jesus. If we really know Him and love Him then we will want to do His will – including the 10 commandments!

I would hazard a guess that your relationships require conversation! If you love someone you want to talk with them, to spend time with them. It's the same with Jesus. I want to chat with Him and spend time with Him. Amazingly, He wants to chat with me and spend time with me too!

And it's the same for you too – He wants to chat together and to spend time with you. Because He loves - you even if you don't want to acknowledge Him.

So how do you chat with Him? That's what prayer is – simply chatting with Jesus in the same way that you would chat to a dearest friend. It takes no special words, just as chatting to your friend doesn't – just speak out your heart to Him. It feels a bit odd at first as we cannot see Him, but He really is present with you – He has promised to be, and our experience is that He is with us.

Does it take that precious commodity – time? Not necessarily. I can chat with Him just as well as I cycle around as I can while on my knees. And I can pray while listening to someone, turning what I am hearing into prayer and seeking His guidance. But I also find it important to carve out time to pray. I can talk to Him as I do something else, but chatting involves listening too, and I need to give Him space to get through to me. I guess it's a bit like any other relationship: there's chatting as washing up or whatever, but there is also 'quality time' together.

So this Lent maybe take time to think about your relationships with other humans, and your relationship with Jesus. Both are so vital to our emotional and spiritual health. Hard as it is to 'make time' it will be time well spent

I wish you a good Lent!

Anne

Church News

Transport to Church. If you would like a lift to church please phone one of the Churchwardens (see back cover of this magazine).

From Local Church Registers

We offer our condolences to the families and friends of

John Marlow	Danemead, Hoddesdon	1st February (Woollensbrook)
Len Parker	Roydon Road	13th February (St Andrew's)
Dianne Coote	Old Laundry, Hunsdon	15th February (Woollensbrook)

St Andrew's church is praying for:-

St Andrew's School	- week beginning 3rd March
Pre-school groups	- week beginning 10th March
The Maltings and local work places	- week beginning 17th March
High Street shops, surgeries etc.	- week beginning 24th March
Willowthorpe and all local carers	- week beginning 31st March



St Margaret's Parish Church

is open throughout the year

every Saturday morning for coffee / tea and cakes,

10.30am – 12.noon Please pop in.

The Folly Community

As part of these villages, the community on The Folly are trying some new initiatives including prayers each week for different roads in the community on the dates below:

6th March	Scott Avenue	13th March	Gilpins Gallop
20th March	Folly View	27th March	Emmas Crescent

Daytime Study Group

There is a Study group which meets on alternate Friday mornings 9.30am to 10.30am in the Vicarage, 25 Hoddesdon Rd (children still welcome to come and play). (please check the diary pages on the website www.3churches.net). **Currently reading Philipians**

Calling blokes of Stanstead Abbotts.

(sorry ladies, your time will come)

Fancy a Full English Breakfast served with ketchup and a large helping of attitude? Then you are very welcome to join us on the **2nd Saturday of each month at St Andrew's Church, Wilshere Hall 8:30am - 10:00am.**

Cereal, tea, coffee, juice, eggs, bacon, beans (etc.) and your chance to put the world to rights. No previous experience necessary - just a big appetite and a sprinkling of opinion if you want.

If you would like to have a serious munch, challenging debate on Christian issues, and the chance to meet other locals, book your place (so we can make sure you really do get stuffed) by phoning the Vicarage on 01920 870115 by midday on the Wednesday before the 2nd Saturday.



MEN'S BREAKFAST

We next get together on 9th March 2019

Lent

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on 6th March, and is the 40 days (not counting Sundays) preparing to celebrate Easter. Jesus spent 40 days 'on retreat' in the wilderness preparing for His ministry. Lent is an opportunity for us to carve out some time to stand back and look at our lives: are they the way we would like them to be?

Even if you are not Christian this is still well worth the effort. We so often get caught up in the busyness of our lives and just go with the demands – but is that what we want? What about our life/work balance (some would say like/work/spirituality balance)? What about the time we spend with family? With friends? What about our care of our physical, mental and spiritual health?

I commend Lent to you – I find it really helpful

Anne

St James church website

Please take a look at the website of our local historic church at
www.stjamesoldchurch.org.uk

Not only does it give information on its history, its care by The Churches Conservation Trust, but also details of upcoming events, including those of the five services held there each year.

Both the church itself and its website are well worth a visit!

Mothering Sunday

Sunday March 31st

Flowers for the Mums in all our services.

Great Amwell - 9.30am: Family Service

Stanstead Abbots - 10.15am: Celebration for all ages together

Stanstead St Margarets – 11.00am: Family Service



EVERYONE IS VERY WELCOME TO ALL OUR SERVICES

Do you like singing?



Then the Celebration service at St Andrew's church (in the Wilshere Hall) on the 1st Sunday every month at 10.15am may be your scene! We sing lots of songs old and new, listen to the Bible, and pray. There are craft tables for the children alongside the congregation and crèche toys in the foyer. The service is then followed by refreshments.

Service Theme for March is: Mothering Sunday!

Regular evening Home Group

Elizabeth Goldsmith (01920 422065) hosts the **Home Group** on alternate Tuesdays at 7.30pm in

the Wilshere Hall. Anyone is welcome to join the group at

anytime. (Please check the diary pages on the website for actual dates).



Have you been bereaved?

(whether by death, divorce or separation)

There is now a drop in support group called 'Just Friends' meeting here. They meet in the Village Café in the High Street on the 1st Thursday of every month 2.30pm – 4.00pm. Tea and coffee are available, and free cake!

One lady told me "The Village Café – now the venue for afternoon tea – proved to be a welcoming and comfortable location for our meeting". Do join them and meet folk going through something similar

St. John the Baptist - Vestry Refurbishment

The vestry refurbishment work started on, 18th February. It is planned to be completed on Friday, 22nd March i.e. it will take five weeks. Essentially, we are separating the toilet from the kitchen to comply with modern hygiene requirements. It is the contractor's plan to keep on the heating and the electricity and the contractor will provide a 'Portaloos' whilst the toilet is out of action. However, there will be no water for a few weeks and we shall have to improvise with tea and coffee arrangements. Otherwise, we intend to carry on in the church as normal. Should the vestry works turn out to be more difficult than envisaged, as the vestry is just pre-Victorian having been built in 1836, we shall join the 10.30am Sunday service at St. Margaret's. But hopefully, we shall be able to keep St John's open for Sunday worship. There will be no Sunday school in March.

Most of the contents of the vestry is on the front pews, as the vestry is out of bounds, except as an emergency exit.

How are we paying for it? As your acting treasurer, you hear me plead poverty, but fortunately we have a generous legacy from the late Revd. Margaret Beazley, left specifically for the purpose of vestry refurbishment. Margaret was always aghast at the unsanitary conditions!

It is our intention, when the work is finished, to put up a plaque to commemorate Margaret and her generosity and once we know the costs, I shall be asking for donations towards obtaining an engraved plaque.

Richard Mellor

News from the



A one day event, made possible by money raised by National Lottery players, will be held in Potton, Bedfordshire, in July 2019 to draw people from churches and communities across Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. They will learn about how best to **care for their churchyards** to benefit wildlife and local communities at the same time bearing in mind the needs of bereaved families and visitors to graves.

Churchyards are often the only unimproved grassland within a parish and are recognised for their rich and diverse natural heritage, from species-rich old grassland, to veteran and ancient yew trees and lichen covered stonework. The animals associated with these ancient sites, which are usually the oldest enclosed piece of land in a parish, are of equal importance to the plant life and dependent on it – bees, butterflies and other insects, amphibians and reptiles, small mammals and birds, including

some species which are now endangered. Correct management is essential for their survival.

The next **Lambeth Conference** will take place in Canterbury in the summer of 2020 – this is a ‘once-every-10 years or so’ meeting of all the bishops and their spouses from across the Anglican Communion. It is a unique opportunity in the life of the Church in England to get to meet and know the leaders of other Anglican Church right across the world.

So, before they gather in Canterbury, St Albans Diocese is inviting, hopefully, 22 or 23 bishops and their spouses to spend a week with us. The programme will provide a wonderful, even ‘once in a life time’, opportunity to get to know these leaders and their spouses. To do this we need to set up several Task Groups to ensure we plan well and include as many people as possible. For these we will need:

- **Transport** – from arrival airport to diocese and oversight of internal transport requirements.
- **Research on dioceses of visiting bishops** – including diocesan interests and personal ministry passions
- **Social Media Watch** – what are these bishops saying and can we share some of these thoughts.
- **Over-view of the programme** – Diocesan events
- **Over-view of the programme** – Deanery/Archdeaconry events
- **Planning group to plan the events** – Study Day and Reflection Day
- **Coordinating accommodation** for the Bishops and spouses
- **Finance** of the whole programme
- **Co-ordination between Deaneries** and the overall programme
- **Concern for the spouses** and their place in the programme