

Life News @ St Mary's

St Mary's Eaton Socon Newsletter - February 2023

Verse for 2022/2023 - Psalm 127 v1

Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain.

Unless the Lord watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain.

Update on St Neots Foodbank

As you may know, we re-opened distribution centres in summer 2022. Although they had been closed during the pandemic, the foodbank was very busy, delivering parcels instead of them being December, 325 special Christmas hampers were given to needy families.

Our centre re-opened in October 2022 with a great team of 18 volunteers, half of whom worship at St Mary's. Each week we give out about 4 crates of food. We are now joined by a trained debt counsellor from MAST (Money Advice St Neots) who is most helpful to our visitors. We also offer vouchers for fresh fruit, vegetables and eggs redeemable at Waitrose, and help with gas/electricity if required.

The warehouse is always short of long-life milk & orange juice, timed tomatoes and tinned meat.

You can donate at most supermarkets and also via the new "unit" at the front of church (near the music vestry).

Many thanks for your support and prayers.



World Mission News

We would like to remind everyone to keep an eye on the World Mission notice board where you will see latest copies of our partner's newsletters and related events. Our next Mission Sunday is on 5th March when Allen & Litsa McClymont of OMF will be visiting.

A Word from the Vicar

What are you like at being part of a family? Because all families are made up of 'Unique Unrepeatable Miracles', there is a need to learn how to grow together, so we can bring out the best in each other.

As I shared last month, the church is also a family that needs to learn to work together. The Apostle Paul uses the picture of a body, where although it's made up of many different parts, it moves together and cares for each part.

As a church, we are the body of Christ and all of us are called to play our part without exception. There are no pensions in the Church – instead we are called to serve in different ways according to the season of life we find ourselves in.

As a wonderful Theologian once said *The Church family can only be the community God desires if every member and every gift are valued*. So what are you waiting for? What are you going to contribute to the life of the community?

With every Blessing, Tim

M-Team (Maintenance) News

The M-Team are still very active & meet on the 3rd Monday morning of each month, undertaking various maintenance tasks around the church buildings. Sometime tasks come up which need addressing sooner so someone may be asked to attend to it before the next meeting. So what have we been up to over the past year?

- Put up & take down Christmas tree & decorations
- Keeping drains and gutters clear of debris
- Assisted with relocating the external "Narnia" light
- Cleaning upper internal areas of church to keep cobwebs to a minimum
- Fitted new curtain rails in the hall
- Care of water heaters and vacuum cleaners

We are always keen to welcome new "members" so if you are practically minded and would like to join in, we have tasks for all abilities. Do please email the office at office@eatonsocon.org and we'll be in touch.

Lunch Club

When: Last Thursday of the month

Where: Eaton Socon, Church Hall

Time: 12pm - 2pm

Cost: £4 per person

Two course meal, including tea and coffee.
Newspapers, Conversation, Board Games etc
Concludes with a reflection/prayer.

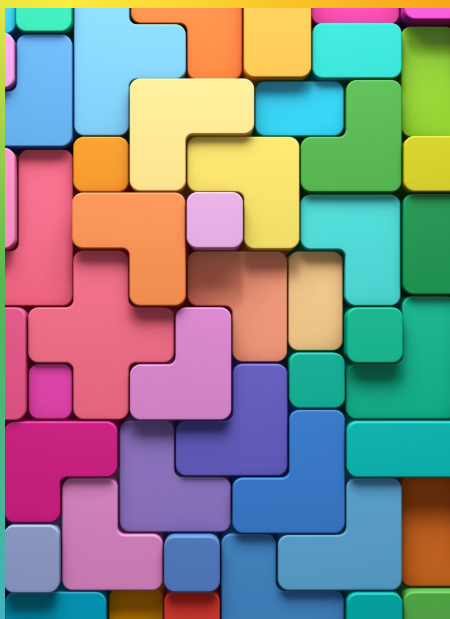
To book your ticket(s) please contact the church office:
(01480) 352154 or email office@eatonsocon.org



Serving our Community

We are planning to resume a monthly midweek service in two of our local Residential Care Homes, The Hillings and Nelson Lodge.

If any member of the congregation would like to assist in this ministry, please contact David Ferris, via the church office, on office@eatonsocon.org



Youth Café



Once or twice a month on Monday afternoon, 3.30pm - 5.00pm, could you:

- . Provide a warm welcome
- . Play cards and chat
- . Help with craft activities
- . Make drinks, toasties, snacks
- . Wash up, tidy up

Chat with Julia Chapman or contact her on jprape@gmail.com for more details

Creation Care

Would you like to "Adopt a Flower Bed" in the churchyard, three available? The idea is that individuals, couples or even organisations agree to look after one of the flower beds in the churchyard for a year, tending it as they would a bed in their own garden. If liked, much of the work can be done during the monthly Monday morning working parties. Contact creationcare@eatonsocon.org



Eco Church – we've reached silver!

Eco Church is a scheme, run by A Rocha UK, that encourages us to be more aware and careful of God's creation in all our Church life.

We're delighted that St Mary's has been awarded the Silver Award. Since receiving the Bronze Award in May 2021, we have worked steadily in each of the five sections of the Eco Church survey, 101 questions in all:

- Worship & Teaching (10 questions)
- Buildings (33)
- Land (our Churchyard) (16)
- Community & Global Involvement (27)
- Lifestyle (that's each of us!) (15)

We had to score at least 50% in each category. We actually scored at the Gold level, over 75%, in 'Worship & Teaching', and 'Land'.

There are now over 5000 churches registered from different denominations. 2000 have achieved the bronze award, 500 silver and 30 the prestigious gold award. Locally, we're now one of five churches in our own St Albans Diocese at the silver level.

Many thanks to Vicar Tim and the PCC for their support in making the improvements to get to this level, to the Creation Care Group and to all those who've contributed. More details at ecochurch.arocha.org.uk

A Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

with Rev'd Timothy Robb

8 - 17 April 2024

10 days based in Jerusalem and Galilee

Tel: 01480 212219 or email

vicar@eatonsocon.org for more information



Fusion, Reactors and the Youth Cafe

This month we will be launching our new Youth Cafe. Launch date is 20th February and I want to say a big thank you to the interest that has been shown so far and to all the volunteers who have willingly come forward. Whilst things are moving along nicely we are still in need of:

- Initial financial donations to pay for food and craft materials
- Three or four more volunteers to help in the kitchen once or twice a month
- A blender and paper straws for milkshakes
- Someone to go food shopping for each session once or twice a month
- Packs of playing cards, Uno, Scrabble, Dobble, Chess etc.

Fusion have a busy term ahead with visits from our Curate and Anita from Global Care to tell them about her recent visit to Kenya. A visit to the Bell Tower is also on the agenda to have a lesson and hopefully get them involved! After the success of the Christmas Disco last December, which hosted 50 of our youth from St Neots, there is another planned for March. Please can you start praying that all plans go smoothly as we hope to host more young people this time.

Reactors have settled into the New Year and are looking forward to another summer at New Day. We hope to start a discipleship course once a month around food and fellowship and look forward to seeing some new youth leaders emerge taking up the cross of Jesus and following in His footsteps. Five of our youth are already stepping out and helping with the youth cafe.

There are exciting plans ahead to form a regular youth band!



St Mary's is now a Fairtrade Church.

As part of our commitment to environmental care and justice for others, St Mary's is now registered as a Fairtrade Church.

We have agreed to:

- Use Fairtrade products whenever possible
- Integrate Fairtrade into the life of our church



Our Fairtrade champion is Audrey Hedges, who will be displaying and selling a range of Fairtrade goods on Sunday 27th February, which is the start of "Fairtrade Fortnight". More details at fairtrade.org.uk

CRAFT GROUP



Tuesdays @ 10.00am

Come and join the Craft Group who enjoy making different craft items.

No experience required!

Refreshments provided. All welcome!

For more details, please contact
Jane Gogarty: 01480 217433



Wednesday Welcome

**You are invited to join us
on Wednesdays 3 - 4pm
at St Mary's Church Hall, Eaton Socon.**

**An hour of friendship, tea, cake, quizzes,
guest speakers, celebrating birthdays and
special occasions.**

For details, contact Mike Gilham
Mob: 07899 856 636

All Welcome!

CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY

MONDAY

Café on the Green - 10am

Creation Care Working Party - 9.30am (6th)

M (Maintenance) Team - 9.30am (20th)

TUESDAY

Morning Prayer - 9am

Craft Group - 10am

WEDNESDAY

Holy Communion - 9am

Little Stars - 10am

Wednesday Welcome - 3pm

Bell Ringing practice - 7.30pm

THURSDAY

Prayer Meeting - 9am

Thursday Lunch Club - 12noon (23rd)

FRIDAY

Food bank 10am - 12noon

Fusion 7.30pm



How can we support the Ministry at St Mary's?

The best way is by
using the
Parish Giving Scheme
Alternatively, Gift Aid
envelopes are available
in church.

For more details please
contact our Treasurer,
Roy Notley on
01234 589308 or
finance@eatonsocon.org

SUNDAYS IN FEBRUARY

12th - 6.15pm - Evening Praise and Worship

19th - 2.00pm - HIVE Group

26th - 6.15pm - Sharing Life through Learning



PASTORAL CARE TEAM

Please contact us if you need help or support:

07305 210416 pastoralcare@eatonsocon.org

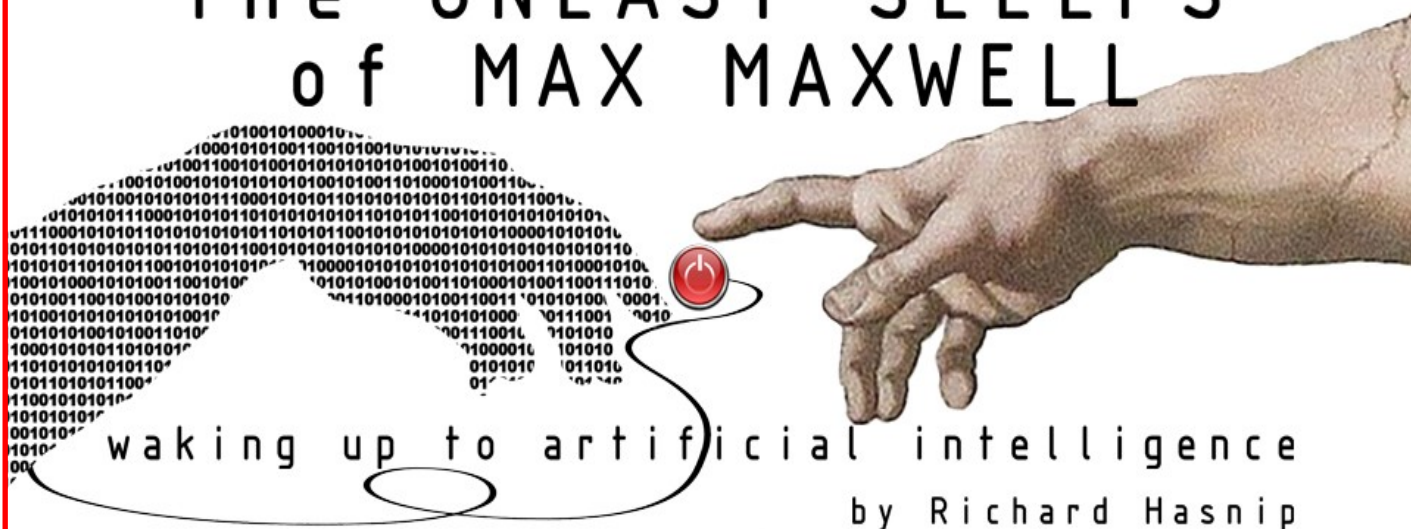




WEDNESDAY 1ST MARCH 7.30PM
ST MARY'S EATON SOCON

Ring 01904 655317 to book your tickets
£12 Supporter, £10 Adults,
£6 Concessions

The UNEASY SLEEPS of MAX MAXWELL



...waking up to artificial intelligence

**A new one-act play by Richard Hasnip, followed by
conversations with leading scientists.**

Max's grip on domestic practicalities is slipping, but if his brain-child is a success will all be forgiven?

Cutting-edge computer programmer Max Maxwell is days away from launching his new 'ethical' A.I. system, while his wife Ruth, vicar of the local church, is doing her best to support him – as well as their teenage son Sam, avid consumer of social media, and her mum, Helen, experiencing dementia in a local care home. And here there's talk of introducing robot carers. In his sleep-deprived state, a few colourful dreams and imaginary conversations with his 'project' help Max to explore the possibilities of what A.I. could become in the not-so-distant future.

All this provides an entertaining human story to spark questions about the ways in which A.I. already, and surely will, interact with our lives. After the play, there will be a short interval, followed by live Q&A with expert scientists from the local area.

Come and raise your questions.