

Dear Friends,

As I write this towards the end of March, I look out onto the vicarage garden which is covered with a blanket of snow. It is completely white and the promise of summer has receded for a short while as the 'Beast from the East' takes grip again. However, we all know from experience that the warmer, lighter days are just around the corner.

I know it is likely to be the case that some of you reading this may not share the Christian faith which I attempt to live out the best I can through the Church of England. That being said it would be a sorry state of affairs if that prevented the possibility of 'light', 'warmth' and 'hope' of friendship and relationship in the community. I take it as a given that Christ is my light and saviour and after that I don't need to fear the views and opinions which differ from my own but rather seek to understand, engage and even move on in my faith as I learn from them. This necessarily leads to contact and conversation. There have been so many times I have forged friendships with people who might even describe themselves as atheists because I have had the privilege to get to know them. Actually, I believe the warmth, hope and indeed challenges these encounters have fostered, are indeed the spirit of Christ working in and through them. (Even if my friends might not see it that way.)

As a Christian, I enjoy living out an open, warm and hopeful life with my fellow human beings in the community, trying to engage with the issues and events of today's time, place and culture, even when they may or may not share the same views, opinions or even faith that I do. Again, for me, this is what Christ was about. Easter is here once more when we remember the risen Christ and the great hope he brought to all humanity.

Whatever you do and wherever you are during Easter, this comes with warmth, friendship and hope for the future.

All good wishes to you and those you love this Easter.

Craig

Vicar's Diary Dates and Notices

5th April	Women's Fellowship Service	2.30pm	St. Peter's, St. Mary Bourne
6th April	Friday Reflections	7.00pm	The School House, Hurstbourne Priors
24th April	Bible Study	11.00am	The Vicarage, St. Mary Bourne

Benefice Website 'The Bright Waters Benefice' - www.brightwatersbenefice.com