

St Bartholomew's Church. Otford Parish News



SERVICES AT ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

September	8am	10am	3pm	6.30pm
1 Sept 11th Sunday after Trinity	Holy Communion	All Together Worship	-	Evensong
8 Sept 12th Sunday after Trinity	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	-	-
15 Sept 13th Sunday after Trinity Stewardship Sunday	Holy Communion	Morning Worship	-	Evensong
22 Sept 14th Sunday after Trinity	Holy Communion (BCP)	Holy Communion	Messy Church	-
29 Sept 15th Sunday after Trinity	Holy Communion	Morning Worship for Harvest	-	Harvest Festal Evensong

SUNDAY CLUB (FOR AGES 0-14) INFANT: 3-7

JUNIOR: 8-11

SENIOR: 12-14

First Steps for toddlers and their carers meets on alternate Wednesdays during term time. For more details please contact Najen Harris, 01959 522813.

EPIC (for school years 5-7) meets on the 2nd Saturday in the month, 6-8 pm in the Church Centre.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FELLOWSHIP meet every Sunday evening during term time in the Church Centre, 6.30 - 8.00 pm.

HOLY COMMUNION Every Wednesday 10.00 am (Book of Common Prayer)

If you would like to book a baptism or wedding, please contact the Church Office 01959 523185.

Cover photo: Summer Events - Men's Walk and Youth Weekend
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FROM THE CHURCHWARDENS



So do not fear, for I am with you, do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you: I will uphold you with my righteous right hand: Isaiah 41 v 10. In these words, I find great encouragement during times of uncertainty.

We are in a time of change and challenge; Richard and Donna have moved to their new Parish in Pembury, we thank them for all their hard work in Otford and hope they will quickly settle in and feel at home in their new community.

Many of our young people will be moving school, changing class teacher, preparing to set off for University, or new jobs; we pray for all young people and for those who will teach and encourage them.

St. Bart's is also now in a time of change. The PCC have started the process of creating a Parish Profile, which is the document prepared for and given to all who may be interested in becoming the new Vicar of Otford. It is our shop window into the life and work of St. Bartholomew's.

During the period of a Clerical Vacancy or Interregnum, services will be led by our Lay Readers and local Clergy until we have our new Vicar in place. Service times and patterns will remain the same during this period.

Whilst we can't be exact in our timings, we are working to complete our Parish Profile by the end of November. Our Patron, Westminster Abbey, along with the Area Dean and Archdeacon, will all need to review and approve our document, aiming for completion by year end. Our plan is to advertise and seek applications in January with interviews and an appointment being made in either February or March. The start date would be a minimum of three months from appointment.

Change is always a challenge in any walk of life; the Church is no different. The PCC would ask

for your prayerful support during this period. We will be holding regular opportunities for prayer in Church, within our homegroups and during our services. An interregnum is a time to reflect on the work of our Church, its place within the village and then look forward to where we feel Called to Grow.

Called to Grow is a Diocesan initiative which encourages all parishes to think about who they are as a church within their community. What does this mean for St. Bartholomew's church within our community? What do we need to do now to be the Church we need to be within our community? We are then encouraged to put our ideas into action within the Church and Parish, and then review our actions, either continuing what we started or changing and adapting our actions considering feedback from the Church and Community.

We invite you, during the month of September, to write or e-mail the Churchwardens, via the Church Office, indicating the ways in which you would be looking to grow the mission of St. Bartholomew's Church in Otford over the next five years, as we plan and prepare our Parish Profile.

So do not fear, for I am with you, do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you: I will uphold you with my righteous right hand: Isaiah 41 v 10.

The Wardens will provide regular updates on progress over the coming months.

Janet Hunt
Churchwarden

DIARY FOR SEPTEMBER 2019

1 The Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

8.00 am Holy Communion (Rev. Canon Derek Carpenter)

10.00 am All Together Worship

6.30 pm Evensong

2 7.45 pm CAMEO

7.45 pm Finance & Standing Committee (Church Centre)

4 9.30 am 'First Steps' (Otford Methodist Church Hall)

10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) (Rev. Adie McCall)

7 9.00 am Churchyard Working Party

8 The Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

8.00 am Holy Communion (Rev. Chris Reed)

10.00 am Holy Communion (Rev. Chris Reed)

9 7.45 pm CAMEO

11 10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) (Rev. Adie McCall) refreshments afterwards

14 10-6.00 pm Friends of Kent Churches Ride & Stride

6.00 pm EPIC (Church Centre)

15 The Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity: Stewardship Sunday

8.00 am Holy Communion (Rev. Andrew Proctor)

10.00 am Morning Worship

6.30 pm Evensong

16 12-2.00 pm Soup Lunch (Church Centre) with SAYT guest

7.45 pm Homegroup (17 Leonard Avenue)

18 9.30 am 'First Steps' (Otford Methodist Church Hall)

10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) (Rev. Adie McCall)

7.45 pm PCC meeting (Church Centre)

22 The Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) (Rev. Nicky Harvey)

10.00 am Holy Communion (Rev. Nicky Harvey)

23 7.45 pm CAMEO (17 Leonard Avenue)

25 10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) (Rev. Adie McCall) refreshments afterwards

29 The Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity: Harvest Festival

8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) (Rev. Andrew Proctor)

10.00 am Morning Worship

6.30 pm Festal Evensong

30 7.45 pm Homegroup (17 Leonard Avenue)

PUZZLE PAGE

Holy Cross Day (14th September) is when the Church celebrates the Cross as a symbol of triumph, as the sign of Christ's victory over death. It began back in the fourth century, when Helena, mother of the Christian Roman Emperor Constantine, travelled from Rome to Israel to seek out places of special significance to Christians.

Much of Jerusalem had been destroyed by the Romans in 135 AD, but even so, Helena located what she believed to be the sites of the Crucifixion and of the Burial (and modern archaeologists think she may well be correct). The sites were so close together that she built one large church over them - the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. And that church, built in honour of the Cross, was dedicated on 14th September 335.

The sign of the Cross has been used by Christians since early times. Tertullian, writing about AD 211, noted that Christians seldom did anything significant without making the sign of the cross.

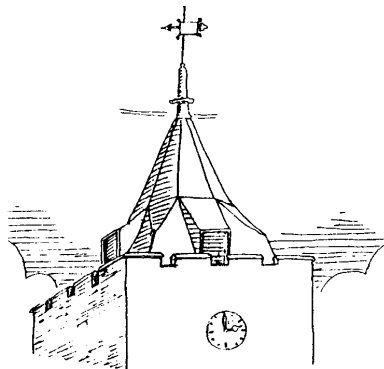


Holy
Cross
Day
Celebrate
Symbol
Triumph
Victory

Death
Helena
Roman
Emperor
Constantine
Rome
Israel

Site
Crucifixion
Burial
Sepulchre
Church
sign

FROM ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH



CHURCHYARD WORKING PARTY

We are very grateful to all those who came last month to help in the Churchyard and we look forward to seeing everyone again on **Saturday, 7th September, 9.00-11.30 am**. If anyone can help for an hour or two it would make a difference. Come and join in the fun and bring some useful tools too!

AUTUMN SOUP LUNCH Monday 16 September Church Centre – 12-2pm

Do come and join us for homemade soup and bread followed by a light dessert.

Our coffee-time guest will be Beth Pinder from the Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust. Please add your name/s to the sign-up sheet at the back of church. We look forward to seeing you there!

THE FRIENDS OF KENT CHURCHES BIKE & HIKE Saturday, 14th September

This will be held between 10.00 am-6.00 pm. Potential sponsors will be most welcome. We are looking for a rota of people to welcome visiting cyclists and walkers to sign them in. If you can spare an hour or two, please contact the Church Office on 01959 523185. The money we raise is divided between Friends of Kent Churches and our parish.

POVERTY AND HOPE APPEAL

The Bishop of Rochester's Poverty and Hope Appeal this year is concentrating on supporting, in prayer and financially, projects in Burundi, Syria, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe and, as always, Commonwork Trust in the UK.

The projects in Syria and Burundi are new this year. In Syria young people will be provided with education, psychological support and community initiatives. War-damaged educational and youth facilities will be repaired, providing training to young men in basic construction skills and there will be vocational training in nursing to address a critical shortage.

In Burundi the project is providing horticultural training, good seed, and access to land to support widows, young people and marginalised ethnic groups.

The projects in Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka continue, helping the churches work with people living with HIV and AIDS to reduce stigma and transform lives.

Bore Place in Kent, is home to the Commonwork Trust, a charity founded over 40 years ago with Christian values at its core. It is a centre for education and health, set on a 500-acre organic farm in West Kent and offers a variety of activities and experiences in food, farming, justice and global citizenship education for people of all ages and abilities, including those who are most vulnerable and have fewer opportunities.

The Poverty and Hope Appeal is run by volunteers and over 95% of the money raised goes to the projects. These are overseen by one of the partner organisations, Christian Aid, USPG, CMS and Commonwork. They ensure the money is well spent and regularly report to the Poverty and Hope Committee, led by Bishop James.

Please give generously if you can. Your gifts will bring hope to those who need it most in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and right here in Kent.

**THOMAS BECKET RETURNING TO OTFORD
ON SAT 19TH OCTOBER
BRINGING KING HENRY II WITH HIM.
WELL! WELL! WELL!**

850 years after his murder in Canterbury, Becket is coming back to Otford - a place where it's said he particularly enjoyed staying while Archbishop (1162-1170) - in spite of the taste of the water and the songs of its nightingales which disturbed his devotions.

A Turbulent Priest is a musical from the pen of James Cary. It follows the extraordinary story of Thomas and King Henry, their bromance, bust-up and betrayals. In short, plenty to sing about!

But at heart, the show asks questions about the place of the Church in our society. Does the State have final say over what's right and wrong? Should the Church make a stand and speak out? Are Christians prepared to face the consequences of that stand?

James Cary is an award-winning sitcom writer for TV and Radio. He's the co-writer of *Miranda* and *Bluestone 42* for BBCTV and for Radio 4's *Another Case of Milton Jones*. James is also a member of the House of Laity of the General Synod of the Church of England.

One of his previous plays, *The God Particle*, was performed at Otford Methodist Church last autumn. Following performances at Spring Harvest, Keswick Convention and Brighton Fringe, **A Turbulent Priest** will be on tour this autumn and coming to St Bart's on the evening of Saturday 19th October (6.30pm). Tickets will be available in September *but please book the date in your diary now!*

CHURCH OFFICE AND CHURCH CAR PARK

During the clerical vacancy (September onwards) the church and church car park will only be open during church office hours - Monday to Friday 9am-12.30pm.

If you wish to visit the church at another time please contact the church office 01959 523185 or st.bartholomews@otford.net

YOUTH WEEKEND

'The earth is the Lord's and everything in it!' Creation was the theme of our children and youth weekend away at Kench Hill this year.

We looked at 3 main concepts which can be found in the creation stories of Genesis 1 and 2: what we learn about God's nature, human nature and relationship with God and what our responsibilities are toward creation.

We were a smaller group this year but we still had an age range of 8 to 18+++! We always have such a good time of learning, discussing but also fellowship, getting to know each other better and good fun.

We cooked, learned about the intricacies and wonders of our universe from macro to micro, discussed how we can do more for the environment, how to make fractal patterns and designed banners for the four seasons.

To find out more about what we did do come to Family Worship at 10 am on Sunday 1st September where we will share a little more with you and have the banners and other craft objects on show.

FAITH IN THE FAMILY...

September: People Jesus met

Bible stories: During the summer months, the young people who came to Sunday Club explored the stories of various people who met Jesus. Each of their lives was touched or transformed by their meeting or relationship with him.

Mary and Martha

were friends of Jesus and had invited him to their home for a meal. While Martha was 'busy, busy' cooking elaborate dishes, Mary sat at Jesus' feet, listening to him teach. When Martha complained to Jesus that she was doing all the work, he defended Mary and said that she had chosen to do the important thing. Mary saw the big picture, while Martha was distracted by details. It was a question of priorities.

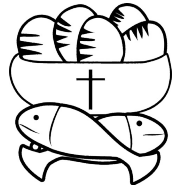


Then there was **Zacchaeus**, a chief tax collector, who was an outcast because he collected extra tax from his people to give to the Romans - and lined his own pockets! His

possessions did not bring him happiness for he was friendless. But when Jesus showed him kindness by going to his house, Zacchaeus found the strength to change his ways. He had been lost, but Jesus found and saved him.

One day, when Jesus was teaching a huge crowd on a remote hillside, the people became

hungry. **A young boy with two fish and five loaves** offered them to Jesus. He gave thanks for them and shared them amongst five thousand families! No-one went hungry. The young boy offered what he had to Jesus who was able to do great things with it.



Peter was one of the twelve disciples and a close friend of Jesus. He was a fisherman who was quick to lay down his nets and follow Jesus. He was excited by the wonderful things he saw Jesus do and perhaps the first to realise



that Jesus was the Son of God. Yet he was dismayed to find out that Jesus had not come to free them from Roman rule but to die on a Cross. It took him a long time to understand that this was something far more important - Jesus paid the price for the wrong things people do, bringing forgiveness and, with his resurrection, new life. At last, Peter understood God's will for his own life as he began to tell people all about his wonderful friend Jesus.

Parents pause for thought: Please do have a look at the big board in the Church Centre where the children have displayed their work relating to these five friends of Jesus. Perhaps you could ask your own children to tell you what they remember of the four stories. You could look them up together in a Bible or storybook (there is a wonderful selection at the Christian Bookshop at Pratts Bottom, just fifteen minutes away – tea and coffee, too!). Here are some ideas for chatting about each story and what it might mean for us today:



Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42):

Share how *you* prioritize, perhaps by making a list and marking one or two really important things. Chat about what is

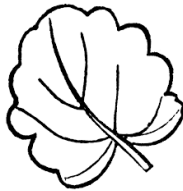
important to *God*, rather than what seems important to *us*.

If children are new to homework, establish a pattern of doing that first before watching TV, etc. Perhaps this new term is a good time to decide to put away devices at meal times and concentrate on talking and listening to each other!

Zacchaeus (Luke 19: 1-10)

At a meal, chat about whether money and possessions bring us *real* happiness. What does?

If you are clearing up the garden for the Autumn, children could do some bark rubbing to remind them of Zacchaeus climbing the Sycamore Fig tree.



Chat about making friends with anyone new at school or church.

The boy with fishes and loaves (Mark 6: 30- 44)

How about establishing a tradition of a family fish and chip supper to celebrate the end of the week? Traditions make strong families!



Discuss the things family members are good at. How might Jesus use these gifts in the world?

Perhaps you could introduce saying a simple Grace before meals or maybe just on a Sunday. Children might take turns.

Peter: Share why your own faith is important to you and how our layers of understanding deepen over time – questioning is good.



How can we all “follow Jesus”? Chat about making time to read Bible stories, to pray and keep going with Church or Sunday Club.

Prayer:

Dear God, Thank you that you were such a good friend to the people you met. Please help me to be a good friend to others, too. Thank you for being my friend, always with me to listen to me, to guide me and help me. **Amen**



Vicki Howie



IN MEMORIAM



Jean Hankinson, 1932 - 2019

Jean was born in Otford on 20th December 1932. Her parents were actively involved in village life. Her father, Jack Nash, was a local builder (and his company was the predecessor of Otford Builders Merchants). Her mother was a teacher in Otford Primary School.

Jean attended the village school, and then went on to Wally Hall. Jean lived in Otford throughout the Second World War. Upon finishing her schooling in 1949 she trained as a radiographer at Kings College Hospital. Her career started with a job at a private practice in Upper Wimpole Street.

Jean met her husband, Mike, when she received some extra Maths tuition from Mike's father at the family home in Riverhead. Jean and Mike got married at St. Bartholomew's Church on 14th July 1956 and soon afterwards they embarked on a life in the army, with postings to Carlisle, Northern Ireland, South Yemen, and West Germany.

Their son, Alan, was born in 1960. Four years later the family returned to Otford. Jean resumed her career as a radiographer, working for the NHS at Dartford, and Mike taught Maths at Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School.

Jean maintained a variety of interests. She took pleasure in wine making, cultivating her own grapes and raspberries in the garden at Streathfield. She also enjoyed reading books on a wide range of topics such as geography, history, medicine or biographies. She had an excellent general knowledge, and she was an expert at crosswords. Jean was a member of the W.I., and she also attended yoga classes run by Audrey Thomas.

Jean was a keen traveller. In the years when Alan was growing up the family went caravanning to various parts of Europe. She even travelled on the Trans-Siberian Express. Her son emigrated to Holland and Jean and Mike would travel to see the extended family which grew to include two grandchildren.

Jean retired at 60 and enjoyed her home and garden and participating in village life. For the last 10 years she developed a balance problem and was largely confined to her home. In her outlook Jean was down to earth and practical, an attitude inherited from growing up in the war years - she just got on with things in her quiet way.

In 2018 Jean and Mike moved to Lavender Fields nursing home in Seal. Mike died earlier this year, and Jean died just a few weeks later. She was truly an Otford girl, and her memory will be treasured by family and friends alike.



RECIPE OF THE MONTH ...

Cheat's Vegetarian Shepherd's Pie

One pack frozen onions
One pack frozen peppers
One pack frozen lentils or other pulses
Any quantity of frozen sweetcorn
2 cloves garlic
1oz (approx) butter or vegetable oil
1oz (approx) flour
¼ pint milk
Mature cheddar/parmesan (to taste)
Chopped fresh tomato
Chopped Parsley
Salt and pepper
Mashed potato

This is such a cheat, but tastes very good and the quantities are entirely up to you!

Cook the frozen onions, peppers and garlic in a little oil or butter until softened. Mix in the flour then stir in the milk to make a thick vegetable sauce. Stir in pulses, cheese, tomato, sweetcorn, parsley and seasoning.

Put into an ovenproof dish, top with mashed potato and bake for around 25 minutes or until the potato is golden brown.

Hilary Fothergill

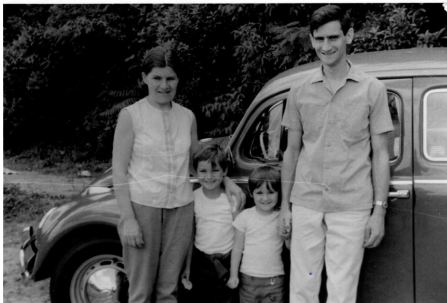


IN CONVERSATION WITH ... MAGS SOUTHGATE

Reader and active church member

Born in Brazil in 1966 to Baptist missionary parents, Mags and her older brother did not have a conventional British upbringing. Her parents had been posted to Brazil in their twenties, tasked with planting churches and training new church leaders in the state of Paraná in the southern part of the country; pioneer work in an area where there was no modern infrastructure. When the time came for Mags to be born her mother flew some 1000 miles in a bi-plane to the hospital in Curitiba (the capital of Paraná) – then just a town but now a massive city.

Mags' first home was the town of Umuarama then Cianorte. The family had a wooden house without electricity and there were no tarmac roads but Mags has happy memories of life there; of church and of other missionary families, and of a 'pool' converted from a hole in the ground by her father over which hung a large avocado tree.



The family moved to Curitiba where Mags and her brother went to the international school. Aged eight Mags moved away from her parents to the city of São Paulo to attend the British Council School. Secure in her parents' love, she never minded the separation and settled into

the home of a Baptist missionary family who provided term time accommodation for missionary children. Describing her time at the school as 'a great privilege', Mags thoroughly enjoyed both her education and meeting other pupils from all over the world. After a year Mags' parents came to the city and took over as hostel parents to missionary children. It was then, in 1978, that Mags was baptised (by full immersion) by her father.

Every two years Mags' family would return to England for a year, initially staying near her maternal grandparents in Eastbourne. From 1978-1979 they spent time in Eltham; Mags' brother attended Eltham College and the family became closely involved in the work of the local Baptist Church. After a further spell in Brazil, in January 1981 Mags began boarding at Walthamstow Hall where she did her O and A levels. She loved being there and relished the company of the other girls, many of whom were also missionary children. As well as the school's Sunday evening services, Mags also attended the Vine Baptist Church and their youth group.

Armed with A Levels in Portuguese, English and French, Mags took a year out before university and worked at Hildenborough Hall – a Christian conference centre. She started coming to St Bartholomew's Youth Group and made good friends with 'the gang' which included Dawn Hallam, the Bratbys, Phil Johnson ... and a certain Clive Southgate!

The following year Mags set off for university to study Hotel and Catering Management ... but she only lasted a week! From the outset she knew it was not for her. Interim jobs in a lighting shop and in insurance ensued before Mags reapplied to university and was accepted by Avery Hill College in Eltham to read

Theology. Three years later, shortly after the course ended, Mags and Clive were married in



St Bartholomew's Church. They then worked together for two years as resident assistants at Graham Chiesman House – the Diocese of Rochester conference centre – until it closed down.

The Southgates moved to Otford and Mags returned to Avery Hill College to train as a teacher. Their first child, Ben, was born in 1994 and Becca followed in 1998. After 'surviving' three years at a difficult school in Croydon, followed by three years as Head of RE at Mascall's School, Paddock Wood, in 2001 Mags became Head of RE at Combe Bank. Thirteen years on, in late 2014, Mags suffered a breakdown – in no small part precipitated by being hugely over-stretched. Not only was she Head of RE, but she was also Head of PSHE, responsible for student and newly qualified teachers, school chaplain, a form tutor and tuck shop manager ... as well as being a working mother, training to be a lay Reader and fully involved in church life. With time off from work, and supported by her faith, family and friends,

Mags regained her equilibrium. In September 2015 the school became Radnor House and Mags is still Head of RE.

Like her parents, Mags has always sought to share her Christian faith and being a Reader is one way to do this – she was admitted as Reader in 2014, in the same year as her father celebrated his 50th year in ministry. Mags has always been a very active member of the church, especially in relation to its youth work. As in previous years, this July she helped to organise the annual Children's and Youth Weekend at Kench Hill. She also serves on the Missionary Committee, runs stalls at the Christmas Market and Summer Fair, and has been known to be behind some extremely successful pop-up restaurants in the Church Centre!

In her spare time Mags loves doing seaside craft – collecting shells and sea glass and assembling them into beautiful framed designs – a creative and therapeutic hobby involving upcycling. Family life is a great source of satisfaction to her, as is having time alone now and then to walk the dog and mull over themes for sermons.

Christeen Malan



DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS

Sevenoaks District Council Launches New Noise App

Sevenoaks District Council has launched a new app for reporting noise complaints. The 'Noise App' is simple to use and free to download. The purpose of introducing the app is to make it quicker and easier to report noise nuisance safely and securely directly to your District Council, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Noise pollution isn't just annoying, it is bad for your health too. In the UK a staggering 84.1 million hours of sleep are lost by adults every week as a direct result of noise and on average six and a half hours of sleep are lost every week because of noisy neighbours. Regular exposure to persistent elevated noise levels can impact on both physical and mental health. It is hoped that the new technology will help to reduce the amount of anti-social behaviour in the district and improve the quality of life and wellbeing of residents, a top priority of your District Council.

The new app takes recordings of the noise nuisance together with the date, time and location of the disturbance and a report on how it is affecting you. The electronic noise diary is then sent via the app to the District Council; there is no limit to the number of reports that can be made. Each report will then be investigated by the Council and the data collected via the noise app can be used as evidence if the Council decides to take further action.

Prior to the introduction of the noise app, the Council dealt with noise complaints by sending paper log sheets to residents to record details. Not only was this time-consuming for residents, it slowed down the process of making a

complaint and gathering the all-important evidence. The app is designed to speed up the response time to complaints and to save the Council time too, as staff no longer need to review and analyse written responses. Paper log sheets will still be available for residents without smartphones or other suitable devices.

The Noise App is available for both iPhone and Android and you can download the app for free from Google Play and the Apple App Store. Search for 'The Noise App' and select 'Dartford and Sevenoaks EH' when you set up your account. Further instructions on how to use the noise app are available on the Sevenoaks District Council website at:

www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/info/20031/pollution/48/noise_and_other_nuisance.

If you find yourself in need of assistance with a noise disturbance on a Friday or Saturday evening the Council operate an out of hours service between 6pm and midnight. The out of hours service can be contacted on 01732 227000.

*Cllr Irene Roy
Member for Otford & Shoreham
cllr.roy@sevenoaks.gov.uk
Tel: 01959 525610*



OUT AND ABOUT



OTFORD EVENING W.I.

Our next meeting is on the 12th of September at 7.30pm in the Club Room, when our speaker, Rod Leeming, will tell us about his experiences as a Metropolitan police special VIP.

We will be holding our annual TABLE TOP SALE in the Village Halls on Saturday, 19th of OCTOBER. Tables available from Chris on 01959 522485.

LUNCH CLUB

Otford Lunch Club takes place from 11.45 every Thursday in the village Memorial Hall, High Street. The Club is a welcoming place for local residents to go along and socialise with friends, old and new. It is run by a dedicated team of volunteers and members enjoy a welcoming cup of coffee or tea followed by a hot nutritious two course meal each week, except August this year, and it may be possible to arrange transport. To find out more please contact Margaret Nicholson 01959 524147.



OTFORD/NEUFCHATEL- HARDELOT TWINNING ASSOCIATION

The next Social Gathering is at The Woodman on Monday evening 16 September from 7.30pm. Do join us and learn more about the Twinning Association, with some suggestions for our activities for next year.

There are still seats available on the coach from Otford to Hampton Court on Saturday 28 September 2019 with our French Twins - no need to speak French! - but please contact Jane Lawrey c/o The Parish Council Office if you are interested.



HOSPICES OF HOPE - On

Wednesday 30th October at 7.30 pm, we will be holding an event in St Bartholomew's Church Centre entitled 'The

Legacy of a Dictator' where the charity's founder, Graham Perolls, will be exploring former President Nicolae Ceausescu's legacy thirty years after the communist regime ended in Romania.

Tickets cost £10 per person and include cheese and wine

To book contact Hospices of Hope on 01959 525110, email events@hospicesofhope.co.uk or visit www.hospicesofhope.co.uk

1940s SOCIETY 'To celebrate the 75th anniversary of D Day, the 1940s Society present:

'Sword, Jelly and Gold – D Day the unknown story' a talk by Andrew Robertshaw, a military historian who is well known for his television series 'The Trench Detectives' and appearances in 'Time Team' and 'Who do you think you are?' He also was the military advisor and appeared in the film 'War Horse'.

Talk starts at 8pm at Otford Memorial Hall, **Friday 27th September**. Admission £3. Tea, coffee and cake served in the interval.'

HOPE QUILTERS' EXHIBITION Make a date in your diary to visit this exhibition. 20th and 21st September 10am - 5pm in St Bartholomew's Church. Admission £3. Raffle, trade stands, demonstrations and refreshments. For more details contact Sylvia Critcher 01732 462653

OTFORD HERITAGE TRAIL - THE BULL AND LUTYENS CHURCH HALL

Imagine you are facing what was once the main church hall for the village. The wide mosaic, designed by Kent artist Oliver Budd, tells the story of Otford's long history, much of which you will discover today. Once this entire area was covered in hops which would have hung over your head from strings attached to 16ft tall poles. The Bull stands behind you in a building whose ancestry stretches back to Tudor times.

THE BULL



The Bull Inn as it may have looked in 1650 – a village pub with a very long history.

Long before The Bull became an inn, its roof timbers indicate that an earlier home stood here. It was an L-shaped house built during the reign of Henry VII (1485-1509). The king post of the original rear wing is still visible within one of today's rooms. The house was leased to William Cornford, the master carpenter of Otford's Palace. He lived here from 1512 until 1518 whilst the Archbishops' Palace was being built. It served as his home, office and meeting place. At that time it was called Morys House.

In 1600-1625 the early Tudor building was remodelled, with two new outer wings and a jettied front. The illustration above shows the

gables from the wings projecting to the front. Inside, The Bull still retains many of the original Tudor mouldings as well as a fireplace from the earlier building. Unsympathetic Victorian alterations saw the jettied front with its gables removed and the whole frontage covered in brick and hanging tiles. In 1756 it took the title 'The Bull', serving the village for the next 250 years.

LUTYENS CHURCH HALL



A brother's gift of a simple hall from a master

The Revd. William Lutyens was an enthusiastic and popular vicar of this parish from 1907-1914. His presence revitalised religious life in Otford and he instigated the founding of the Otford Cricket Club. At this time, an unsightly wooden hut, the Parish Room, stood on The Green, directly in front of the church. It was an eyesore. So Revd. Lutyens called on his brother, Sir Edwin Lutyens.

Land was donated by the village's generous benefactor, Lord Mildmay. Sir Edwin Lutyens, whose work includes many famous buildings as well as the iconic Cenotaph in Whitehall, offered to design the new Church Hall without charge. The final cost was £500 and the funds

were raised locally. In April 1910, the new Church Hall was opened by the Bishop of Rochester. The building demonstrates Lutyens' vernacular of the rising roof apex and, if you look carefully, a little owl box located at its very top.



On the south side wall of the Church Hall is the 'Otford Millennium Mosaic' relating the village's story from the Age of the Dinosaurs... to a Spitfire in the Battle of Britain.

THE RECREATION GROUND

In 1899 land was rented from the Mildmay Estate to create a village recreation ground. Before that time this whole area was one large hop garden. Line upon line of 16 foot high hop poles trailed their strings downward to support the vigorous climbing bines whose green feathery cones were picked and dried to impart the bitter flavour to beer.

Picking them was very labour-intensive and so it became normal for whole families, particularly from London's East End, to 'go 'oppin down in Kent' throughout September. They considered this their annual holiday from the grime of the city. In Otford, the school closed for much of the month to allow the villagers to benefit from this additional source of income.



Hopping usually involved mum, gran and the kids – men were rarely seen.

To give you an indication, there were 9 farms growing hops in Otford and a total of 16 oasts used to dry the picked hops throughout the parish.

OTFORD... CENTRE OF THE UNIVERSE?

Yes...! At the far end of the rec. stands the 'Otford Solar System', the largest scale model in the world. Explore the nearby planets as they were positioned on 1st January 2000, but for the nearest stars you must go to plinths in Los Angeles and Sydney.



With thanks to Rod Shelton, Phil Clucas and Ed Thompson



THOMAS BECKET: CHANCELLOR, ARCHBISHOP, SAINT AND VISITOR TO OTFORD

Thomas was born around 1120 to Norman merchants Matilda and Gilbert Becket who had settled on Cheapside in London. As the son of a middle-class family, Thomas was well educated and in 1145 joined the household of Theobald, then Archbishop of Canterbury.

As a trusted fixer, Thomas quickly became Theobald's right-hand man undertaking several missions to Rome. Becket's talents were noticed by Henry II who made him his chancellor. The two became close friends and, following Theobald's death, Henry made Becket Archbishop in 1162.

At this time the Pope claimed authority over all kings and bishops - bishops were powerful landowners who acted as the king's advisers. Henry II, sometimes called "the Father of the Common Law", set about reforming the law in medieval England introducing a jury system where only royal judges or justices could try criminal cases.

An emerging power struggle between Church and State was to strain relations between Henry and Thomas. In 1164, Henry introduced the Constitutions of Clarendon designed to increase the king's influence over the bishops and the Church courts. Current law saw clerics accused of a crime tried in a Church court where the punishments were not so strict. Henry demanded that where Church courts found a cleric guilty, he had to be handed over to the king's court to be punished.

Refusing to sign the Constitutions of Clarendon, Becket was found guilty of treason in the same year at a great council meeting in Northampton.

Becket fled to exile in France where he remained under the protection of King Louis VII for several years. Following a diplomatic intervention by Pope Alexander III, Thomas was allowed to return to England in 1170.

On Thomas' return, a frustrated King Henry is said to have uttered the words "who will rid me of this turbulent priest". Four knights, believing the king wanted Becket out of the way, confronted and murdered Becket in Canterbury Cathedral on 29th December 1170. Becket was canonised in 1173, and his shrine in Canterbury Cathedral has been an important focus for pilgrimage ever since.

During his life in service to the Church, Thomas Becket frequently visited Otford which was conveniently placed between Lambeth and Canterbury. Thomas received a revenue from the parish of Otford as a reward for his work for Theobald, and as Chancellor was given the rectory of Otford in 1155. He would not, however, have ministered in the parish as he was not in priest's orders and held other benefices in addition to Otford. The roll of St Bartholomew's incumbents, hanging at the back of church, names Thomas Becket as an Absentee Pluralist.

Later, as Archbishop, Thomas became lord of Otford Manor where, legend has it, responding to the need for a supply of fresh water to his residence a spring miraculously appeared after the saint struck the ground to the east of the church with his staff. This medieval reservoir, which we now call Becket's Well, later served Otford Palace, becoming a shrine for pilgrims travelling from Winchester to Canterbury.

Anne Stevens

To find out more about the extraordinary story of Thomas and Henry, book your tickets for the musical **A Turbulent Priest** by James Cary to be performed in the **Church of St Bartholomew's, Otford at 6.30pm on 19th October 2019.**

MISSION OVERSEAS

On the warmest evening of the year on 25th July, 80 people descended on St Bartholomew's Church Centre for a quiz night to raise money for Pursue. We had a fantastic evening with varied quiz questions, including a tasting round; Swahili curry and plenty of desserts. It was a great opportunity to share a little about the work of Pursue and we are so grateful to all those who came along and helped us raise over £1,000 for communities in rural Kenya. Congratulations to the winning team!

Pursue works with rural communities in Kakamega county, western Kenya, seeking to address some of the complex causes of poverty in the area. Kakamega county is densely populated despite most people being subsistence farmers, with over half living below the poverty line. Pursue currently has six staff members running three programmes seeking to empower the community and provide hope for a better tomorrow:

Pursue: Better Living

Community-based workers offer basic health and hygiene education to community members, as well as treatment for jiggers and bedbug infestations. Jiggers are flesh-eating fleas which can cause serious discomfort and disfigurement of the feet, yet the condition is easily preventable when people are given the right information about how to treat and avoid reoccurrence.

Pursue: Education

Our experienced teachers work with small rural primary schools to offer weekly teacher development seminars to untrained teachers, seeking to improve the quality of teaching and learning in these schools which lack basic resources.

Pursue is also able to provide Adult Literacy and Numeracy classes to community members who didn't get the chance to attend school. These classes enable people to develop basic skills such as sending text messages, filling in forms and reading signs.

Pursue: Family & Community

The Community Workers facilitate the running of weekly widows' groups as well as marriage and parenting classes. These groups address social issues such as alcohol addiction and isolation. Through the widows' groups Pursue has begun to offer training and support to encourage community members to set up group income generation projects.

The money raised through the quiz night will enable Pursue to continue running these programmes and making a difference to the lives of individuals. This year we are working with 30 community members, 50 teachers from 14 schools and 30 widows. We are constantly encouraged to see the difference that our team is able to make in the lives of the individuals with whom we work, and the impact this can have on the local communities.

For more information on Pursue, or to donate, please visit www.pursue.org.uk

Harriet Bell



A BOOK WHICH INFLUENCED ME ...

Velvet Elvis by Rob Bell



Rob Bell is an American theologian and pastor who first came to my notice through his short videos NOOMA, which are great for engaging young

people who have grown up in the digital world. He is also a writer and the book Velvet Elvis is full of gems that make you think.

Velvet Elvis is perhaps a strange title (the sub title is 'repainting the Christian Faith') and it refers to a picture in the authors basement that he picked up at the side of the road. The painting inspires him to think about the on-going development of the Christian Faith. That our understanding of God should always be moving forward both individually and corporately, and then he goes on to explore what that means for those of us living in the current age. Development of theology and our relationship with God is a story woven through the history of the church. If you think of St Bartholomew's as a building that houses the people of God from generation to generation you come to realise that we in Otford have seen many changes; to the building, to our liturgy and worship, to the congregation and to our expression of our understanding of God.

The author combines thoughts about God illustrated from life – there is a great analogy using a trampoline - with a depth of knowledge of Jewish tradition. Rob Bell was the pastor of Mars Hill a 'mega church' in America and there is a chapter of the book

that describes how the church grew, and then how he nearly reached burn out as the senior pastor. But he relates these experiences to the tassels that God told the Israelites to attach to the corners of their garments as a reminder to obey all God's commands. He then carries on the thoughts about tassels into the life of Jesus and his interaction with the woman who was bleeding and salvation. This type of thought stream is typical of the style of the book, it is almost like a conversation which develops rather than a theological treatise.

This book contains a sense of energy, paragraphs are short , sometimes a single sentence, and the ideas tumble out over each other. I found that sometimes I needed to read a chapter several times to pick up all the ideas and have time to mull them over. Most importantly though, it made me think, to consider the ideas being presented, and perhaps to re-evaluate. I didn't always agree but I did find a fresh perspective and a challenging way of thinking about some of the ideas that Rob Bell talks about.

This quote from the beginning of the book sums up for me what it is all about:

'the challenge for Christians then, is to live with great passion and conviction, remaining open and flexible, aware that this life is not the last painting.

Times change. God doesn't but times do.

We learn and grow and the world around us shifts and the Christian faith is alive only when it is listening, morphing, innovating, letting go of whatever has gotten in the way of Jesus.'

Dawn Hallam

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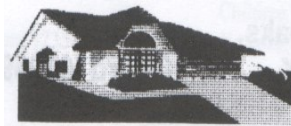
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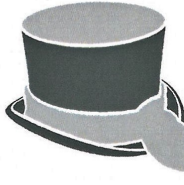
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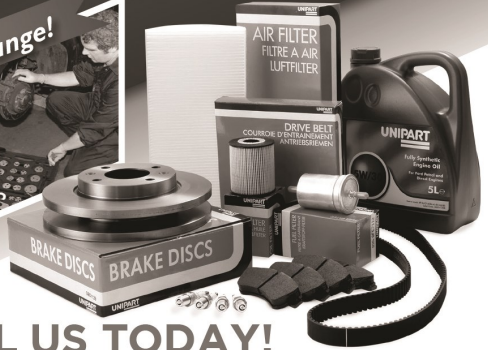
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