

St Bartholomew's Church

Oxford Parish News

June 2020

www.stbartholomews.co.uk

£1

In relation to COVID-19, care should be taken when handling material delivered through your door.

SERVICES AT ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

All services and church meetings (other than those being held online) have been suspended until further notice.

A Sunday service and a message for the young people is being posted to the church website www.stbartholomews.co.uk each week.

There are other helpful resources on the website too, including: Prayer for the week, Noticesheet, Prayer Diary, Order of Morning and Night Prayer and this magazine should you wish to read it online.

Please look at the website if you can.

We hope you will enjoy reading this month's magazine. If you have comments about, or suggestions for, the magazine please let us know—we'd love to hear from you. *The Editors*

Cover photo: Parishioner's photos from lockdown

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FROM THE CHURCHWARDENS



I sat down to write this article in the garden today on a lovely warm May afternoon. Before starting I paused for a short while to be still and listen. What could I hear?

Birds singing, I picked out the robin our beautiful red breasted friend, beloved of Christmas card designers. Also, the call of a great tit sitting on a branch of a nearby tree, along with the blackbird building a nest in the cotoneaster nearby. A little further away in some poplar trees the more raucous sound of parakeets who have taken to visiting on a regular basis.

How quickly the minutes passed: the birdsong was amazing, what a joy to be able to sit and just listen. What was missing? No planes flying overhead, little traffic on the motorway and fewer trains combined to make the birdsong seem louder than I remember.

But what challenges are posed for us human beings? We are so used to rushing about undertaking our daily business, many still are, the delivery drivers, the staff within the NHS all doing vital work along with many other key workers, keeping us going during these unusual times.

As I paused, a poem that I learnt at school came into my head by W H Davies:

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.
No time to stand beneath the boughs
and stare as long as sheep or cows.
No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.
No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.
No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
and watch her feet, how they can dance.
No time to wait till her mouth can
enrich that smile her eyes began.
A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

been a challenge for many, a lack of social interaction and companionship, not meeting up for coffee or tea, not sharing together in a meal, or being able to sit and watch a film together. The new normal has become a conversation on the telephone, or meeting up via Skype, Zoom, Facetime or another video platform.

By the time of publication of the magazine some of the restrictions of lockdown may well have been eased, we will be moving into a new phase, it will not be anything like a return to pre-lockdown but hopefully more of an opportunity to connect with our family, friends and colleagues.

We continue to provide weekly services via the website www.stbartholomews.co.uk and begin to plan for the Induction and Installation of our New Vicar David Guest. We hope to welcome David to the Parish in August, if suitable arrangements can be made to allow David to move from his current parish.

In the book of John, we are reminded in chapter 14 verse 27: Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

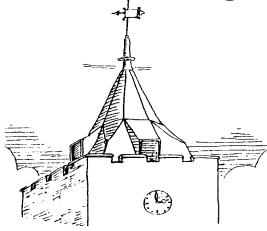
Keep Safe

*Janet Hunt
Churchwarden*



This period of lockdown and self-isolation has

FROM ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH



CHURCH OPENING

During this time the church lobby will be open from 9am-12.30pm for the collection of Church Magazines and to drop off food for the Loaves and Fishes food bank. Please observe social distancing when approaching the church for either of these reasons.

SERVICES FROM ST BART'S

During this time of self-isolation, St Bart's will be providing a weekly Sunday service available online at www.stbartholomews.co.uk. If you are able, please join with us online, Sunday at 10am, to share together.

There are many other online resources provided by the Church of England at www.churchofengland.org

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

The APCM has been postponed. Good notice will be given of the new date.

CHURCH FAIR

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 situation the Fair Committee have decided to postpone the fair from June to later in the summer possibly September. This will, of course, be dependent on future Covid-19 restrictions. We would ask that you keep in mind, for much nearer the time, items we require for a successful fair.

LOAVES AND FISHES

We would like to thank all those who have donated to the food bank during the Covid-19 crisis. These donations have been essential to the work of Loaves and Fishes.

Monthly Meditation - June

Julian of Norwich

I'm writing this in early May so I don't know what our lives will be like when you read this but life in Norwich in the 14th century was far more difficult than ours is now. There were several outbreaks of the Black Death and as many as half the population may have died. The city was also overwhelmed during the Peasants' Revolt. Amidst all this a young woman was given the last rites as she lay close to death; but instead of dying she had a series of visions which showed her the nature of the Love of Christ.

She became an anchoress or religious hermit at the church of St Julian (hence her name) and spent the rest of her life in prayer, giving counsel to others and writing about her visions which were eventually published as *XVI Revelations of Divine Love*.

The vision which is most remembered is one where after praying for compassion Christ tells her '**all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.**' She was impressed with her need to be joyful in all circumstances, however adverse, because all things will ultimately be put right by Christ. Whatever your life is like now, may this message give you comfort and hope.

Father of all, in you we have our preservation and our redemption.

Your love enfolds us.

Teach us to believe that by your grace all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.

Amen.

THANK YOU KEVIN GRAFTON

A celebration of 40 years as Organist and Choirmaster at St Bart's

Few parish churches can boast of retaining the same organist and choirmaster for 40 years, let alone one who has maintained such consistently high standards of choral and organ music. We are immensely grateful to Kevin for so reliably and professionally supporting our worship over this period of time.

Kevin has calculated that the number of services he has played for is in the region of 3,650, in addition to arranging some 50 concerts. He estimates that he has played 'O come, all ye faithful' 160 times, has overseen about 2000 choir practices and has worked with four different vicars – with a fifth one arriving imminently!

Speaking about his experience as organist and choirmaster Kevin said, 'I am very fortunate to have worked for so long with such a wonderful bunch of singers, and with such a versatile organ, perfectly suited to the church building. It has made my work a joy.'

Kevin is extremely thankful to his wife, Sylvia, saying that over the last 40 years he has always had her support, both whilst she was in the choir and now following her retirement from it. He considers she has put up with a lot over the years, adding that 'while it may not be entirely true that wherever we go on holiday, I will find an organ recital to attend, it is not that far from the truth!'

Choir members speak appreciatively of the wide repertoire of music Kevin has encouraged them to explore. This is summarised by David Runting

who was on the selection committee which appointed Kevin and who has been a St Bart's choir member for about 63 years,

'Kevin has always provided us with opportunities to sing not only well-loved settings and anthems but has also given us challenges to sing music which can sometimes be out of our comfort zone but which he is well aware are within our capabilities. I think we are blessed to have an organist and choirmaster who supports the broad range of music which our church enjoys.'

We are indeed fortunate to have such exceptional music in our church. It is greatly appreciated by the congregation as encapsulated by two long-standing church members, Cliff and Elizabeth Ward,

'Kevin has given us 40 years of the pleasure and opportunity of sharing and appreciating church music both old and new. He has encouraged and challenged the talents of our superb choir, widened our horizons and set the atmosphere of the centuries of our church on many varied occasions. The choir concerts have had something for everyone to enjoy. Thank you Kevin for enriching our Christian journey.'

Christeen Malan



INTRODUCTION TO THE REVD DAVID GUEST

Please note that I am NOT the late David Gest, Liza Minnelli's ex-husband. So there will be no reminiscences about life being a cabaret or anything with a "Zee!"

Born in Shoreham (by Sea, Sussex!) and brought up next door in Southwick I trained as a newspaper journalist and worked in Portsmouth, Petersfield, and Chichester, where I was the chief Arts writer and deputy chief reporter.

After the call to ordained ministry I trained at Chichester and was ordained in the Chester diocese in 1992. I served in a parish on the Wirral and then just outside Chester, during which time I also worked on the BBC Radio Merseyside Sunday morning programme. I moved to the Isle of Man to become an associate vicar in two churches in Douglas, diocesan communications officer, Head of Religious Broadcasting at Manx Radio, where I also produced and presented a weekly Sunday show, Bishop's chaplain, and writer on the diocesan newspaper (all of these were supposed to be "half time" jobs!).

In 2000 I moved back to the Chichester diocese to become diocesan communications officer, and also served in parishes in Hove before returning to my "home parish" of Southwick as assistant priest in addition to my communications job. In 2009 I became Vicar of All Saints, Heathfield, with St George's, Broad Oak, then in 2016 moved to be Team Vicar of Christ Church, East Sheen.

Among my interests are Celtic spirituality, and I have led a number of quiet days/retreats in addition to acting as a spiritual director for 40 years. I have a passion for the Arts: I've reviewed plays, sung, acted and danced my way through a number of amateur productions, and also written a number of plays, including whodunits,

pantomimes, and a Passion Play performed in the streets of Chichester. I am a member of Theatre Chaplaincy UK (formerly the Actors' Church Union) and currently serve as Chaplain to the Garrick Theatre. Among mixed interests are crime fiction, cats, genealogy, cult TV and Scandinavia.

I met a good many of my friends over dead bodies or outside police boxes; I appear as a question in the 1996 version of Trivial Pursuit; I once played Agnetha in an Abba tribute band called Bjorn Yesterday; I have appeared as an extra in the British soap Hollyoaks and the American soap The Bold and the Beautiful; I have sung at the Royal Albert Hall; and I once had an idea for a crime novel stolen by P.D.James!

I am excited to be coming to join you and look forward to working alongside you all as we together discern God's will and respond to his calling as pilgrim people together.

David Guest



No Yeast Bread

Ingredients

500 g plain flour (not bread flour)
2 tsp baking powder
1 tsp salt
310ml milk (using milk powder, or water with a spoon of oil or melted butter if you have no milk)

Method

Heat the oven to 190 degrees C. Place a heavy baking sheet in the oven to heat.

Mix the dry ingredients. Stir in the milk and bring the mixture together by stirring until a dough forms. It's easiest to do this with your hands.

Turn the dough out onto your work surface and knead briefly until the dough has uniform consistency.

Shape the dough into a round disc about an inch (3 cm) thick and deeply score the top with an X. This is important! Don't make a round ball of dough as it won't cook in the middle.

Bake on the baking sheet for about 35 mins until pale brown and sounding hollow when tapped on the bottom.

Provided by Louise Brown



Two Spring Poems

LIKE A CHILD THAT IS DEAR

O year, grow slowly. Exquisite, holy,
The days go on
With almonds showing the pink stars
blowing,
And birds in the dawn.

Grow slowly, year, like a child that is dear,
Or a lamb that is mild,
By little steps, and by little skips,
Like a lamb or child.

Katherine Tynan

SHORT BUT SWEET

In March we long for April;
In May we long for June;
Don't be in such a hurry,
It will all be gone too soon.

Reginald Arkell

Our thanks to Fay Plant for sending us these two delightful spring poems.



FAITH IN THE FAMILY...

June: Especially for fathers!

Abraham, the father of us all



Isaac couldn't sleep. He slipped out of the family tent into the cool night air. Good! His mother, Sarah, was too busy

winding wool to notice. But outside, his father, Abraham, saw him - and beckoned. Pleased, Isaac ran to sit on the rock beside him.

"Couldn't sleep?"

Isaac nodded.

"I knew a boy who had trouble sleeping, once."

"So what did he do?"

"He used the time to pray - and soon he learned that God was in charge and so all would be well."

"What are you doing out here, Dad?"

"I'm looking up at the stars. Want to know what they remind me of?"

"Yes!" Isaac loved it when Dad told a story - even if he *had* heard it before!

Abraham seemed to gaze into the past. "Well, I can never see all those millions of sparkling stars without thinking of the time God asked me to try to count them!"

"That's impossible!" exclaimed Isaac, staring up.

"Then God made me a promise that I would have as many descendants as there are stars in the sky. He said that he would send me a son . . ."

Isaac grinned . . .

". . . and he would give me this country of Canaan for you and all your children to call home."

"Tell me the story of my birth!" begged Isaac. He knew that was a long one!

Abraham smiled. "*That* story starts a year before you were born. I was sitting in the entrance to the tent, trying to keep cool in the midday sun, when I looked up and saw three strangers. I knew they'd be gasping for a drink, so I brought them water in the shade of the trees."

"What about food?" prompted Isaac.

"Yes, I hurried into the tent and asked Mum to make them one of her special meals - freshly baked bread, meat and creamy milk. It was quite a feast I served them! Then one of them asked me where your Mum was . . ."

"Why did he want to know?" asked Isaac, who already knew the answer.

His dad's eyes filled with tears. "He had unbelievable news for us. He said that within a year, Sarah would have a son!"

"And Mum was listening just inside the tent, wasn't she?"

A voice startled them both. "And I'm listening *now*, young man!" said Sarah. "*You're* supposed to be in bed!"

"Can't I just hear the end of the story? I like the bit where you laughed!"

"Yes, I *did* laugh when I heard what the visitor said. I thought I was much too old to have a baby. But then . . ."

". . . nothing is impossible for God!" they chorused, laughing.

Abraham put an arm around Isaac.

“Those visitors were no ordinary men. God was true to his word, as ever, and soon *you* were born.”

“ . . . and what does my name mean, again?” asked Isaac, innocently.

“I think you know!” laughed Sarah, propelling him towards the tent.

“By the way, that boy I was telling you about, the one who couldn’t sleep . . . that was me!” called Abraham.

“Really?” Isaac couldn’t imagine a time when his father had ever been unsure about things.

“But if you *still* can’t sleep, you could always try counting my sheep!”

Bible story (Genesis 18 and 21): Wonder as a family together . . .

I wonder if you ever have trouble believing good news

I wonder if you feel that nothing is impossible for God

I wonder who those visitors in the story really were

I wonder if you can find out what the name ‘Isaac’ means

About Abraham

God changed his name from Abram (Father (God) is exalted) to Abraham (father of a multitude of nations). He was a man of great faith: in obedience to God, he left his home to travel to an unknown land. He and his tribe were guided to Canaan, where he built altars and worshipped the true God. In nomadic fashion, they camped with their flocks, moving regularly to fresh pastures. His faith was tested in the 25 year wait for his son Isaac, whose

descendants would be the people of God and a means of blessing the whole world. Abraham was certainly not perfect, but his rock solid faith must have been a source of strength to his family – and to us!

Summer camp

Create some happy memories putting up a tent in the garden or house, telling some family ‘camp fire’ stories (perhaps about children’s births and names), singing songs, ‘fishing’ in a paddling pool and gazing up at the first stars.



Daddy and me

Relationships are everything! Children feel most valued and develop that all-important self-esteem by time spent having fun together, sharing and chatting.

Could you think up a team name for all your ‘Dad and me’ adventures? Make a lasting record of your ‘team’ activities by writing, drawing and sticking photos in a scrapbook.



Faith in the home

You might be interested to read the short article ‘Faith in the home is not just for the pandemic’, from *The Church Times* which can be found on the St Bart’s Otford facebook page (dated 6 May). (Look out, too, for a Father’s Day story for young children about Tiny Paws and Big Grizzly!!) In due course, we would love to welcome you to *Messy Church* with your kids and to the *St Bart’s men’s group*. Just ring the church office (01959 523185) for more information.

Vicki Howie

EVENTS, PEOPLE AND PLACES FROM OTFORD'S PAST

VE ('Victory in Europe') Day 75

On May 8th 2020 many Otford residents will have commemorated 'VE Day 75' which marked the end of the war in Europe seventy-five years ago. We thought you might wish to read some reminiscences of three local residents who were children at the time.

Gilbert Denton is a long-time resident of Otford. Here he summarises his memories of VE day in South-East London:

I was nearly nine when war was declared in 1939. By 1944 both my elder brothers were in the army, one in Italy, one in Belgium and we followed their progress so into 1945 we knew we were winning. We lived at Bexleyheath, just in Kent, south of London. We had seen the Battle of Britain overhead but escaped the worst of the Blitz. Our house had an incendiary hit the roof and bounce into the garden but no damage. The V1 Doodlebugs were more scary but mostly came down over London.

Of VE Day itself I remember it was declared a public holiday in advance so I was off school. We read the Daily Express and for that day they had prepared their headline - WAR IN EUROPE IS OVER I think. My sister and I wanted to go by train to London but my mother forbid us - too crowded. We went out and bought a Union Jack and flew it from the side gate.

I think there was a BBC radio broadcast in the evening by the King not Churchill. To commemorate Victory the GPO (General Post Office) issued a pair of stamps and there was a special slogan, Victory Bells & the V for Victory sign. I've sold mine - has anyone else got them for a display?

Audrey Curnow. Audrey's family moved to Otford in 1939 when she was aged four. Her father was the Village Police Sergeant and they lived in the village throughout the war. These are some of her memories of VE day in Otford:

I certainly remember the street parties which followed shortly after (VE Day). They were held in several roads in Otford - Leonard Avenue, Telston Lane, and Broughton Road, which is the one I attended as we were living in Rye Lane. I think all the mums co-operated for party food, as far as rationing, etc, allowed.

There was a tremendous celebration arranged in the village, when a huge bonfire was built on the large bomb crater in Leonard Avenue. Half of the Woodman, and several houses at the street end of the Avenue, had been demolished by a 1000lb bomb earlier in the war. The crater was never dealt with for several years, so the bonfire was built there. Four effigies were made to be burnt on the bonfire -

Adolf Hitler, Goering, Goebbels and Mussolini.



Preparing for the village bonfire in Leonard Avenue, Otford.

Mrs. Marchant, who kept one of the village stores, (between 'Hospices tea room' and 'The Bull') had had the forethought to bury deep a tin of fireworks which still ignited that night! I clearly remember seeing one of the real

characters in the village being chased around by a squib that evening.



Adelaide Marchant, who hid the fireworks used on VE day in Otford, outside her shop with her son Robert.

However, I was very nervous of the bangs of the fireworks - sounded too much like guns, I suppose, so I was taken in to the next door house, where friends of my parents lived, number 7 Station Road where Mr and Mrs Baker lived. I watched the rest of the celebration from there.

There are many other memories, though these happened a little later, for the VJ Day celebrations, and also when sweet rationing ended, and I over-indulged myself and was very sick!

John Hilden was fourteen at the time of VE day. His family had moved from South-East London in 1944 and lived at the top of Childsbridge Lane in Kemsing. On VE day he and three school friends (one was Ted Pragnell) climbed above Kemsing and carved 'VE Day 8th May 1945' on the trunk of a beech tree. Later that day they saw the street lights of Sevenoaks below them shining brightly for the first time in nearly five years. On Friday 8th May 2020 John climbed above Kemsing again, found the tree and hugged it. An emotion I'm certain many people will share. Unfortunately there was no sign of what he and his friends had carved seventy-five years earlier!

The May 2020 edition of the 'Otford History and Heritage Newsletter' was devoted to VE Day 1945, especially to events in London. If you would like to receive a copy of the Newsletter please email info@otfordhistoricalsociety.co.uk with your name. If you have any memories or photographs of VE day (or other events marking the end of the war) we would love to hear from you at the same address.

Alan Williams

(With thanks to Audrey, Gilbert and John and to Ed Thompson for the Otford photos)



The VE Day Party held in Tudor Crescent (the houses are yet to be built) on 9th May 1945, looking towards Kemsing

JUNE WALK

Perhaps my favourite walk in the Sevenoaks area, this is a six mile ramble through beautiful countryside, including fields of lavender (flowering late June/July) where skylarks sing overhead. The return section offers superb views over the Weald of Kent. An attraction of this walk, when cafes and restaurants can finally re-open, is that refreshments are available half way round at the National Trust café at Ightham Mote.

The walk includes a couple of steep sections. The footpaths are well trodden but uneven at times.

The starting point is the grassy area near the Buck's Head pub at Godden Green.

Look for the blue signpost to the Cygnet Hospital and take the single track road towards the hospital, passing 'The White House' on your left. On reaching 'Medlars Mead Lodge' (the hospital entrance) continue along the track to the right of the sign, pass 'Damson Mead' on your left and walk slightly downhill on the public bridleway. Stay on the bridleway as it bends to the left and descend past 'Medlars Mead' to where the track narrows into a footpath which continues downhill.

Stay on this path for about half a mile to the road, passing between fenced meadows where sheep and horses graze.

Cross the minor road to the enclosed footpath immediately opposite. Before long you will emerge into an open area of farmland. Here the



broad path is lined with young fruit trees. Continue straight ahead between the lines of trees.

On reaching the road, cross straight over onto the bridleway (the sign is next to a traffic assistance mirror). You will now be walking on a metalled track bordered by hedgerows and oak trees.

Continuing straight ahead the track emerges into



an open area with fields of grain followed by a large plantation of lavender – at its best and most fragrant from late June to early July.

Next the path descends steeply through a wooded area. Continue straight on for some distance, eventually passing the Hoppers' Huts on your right until you reach a small road.

Cross the road into the grounds of Ightham Mote and proceed uphill. At the top of the slope turn right into the car park and walk towards the ticket office and house. You will find the Mote Café straight ahead of you. If you don't wish to stop, you can skirt the café through the staff car park (to its left).

Where the car park ends, turn right – indicated Estate Walk (green arrow). You will now have a fine view of Ightham Mote.



At the end of the driveway, turn right on the road then left onto the Mote Farm track (marked Bridleway Farm Vehicles Only), passing some attractive farm buildings on your left.

Carry straight on uphill along the farm track. After less than half a mile there is a junction of paths. Following the green National Trust (NT) arrow, take the path which descends rather than the one to the right. Continue downhill, where you might be met by the strong smell of wild garlic, then up again as views over the Weald begin to unfold.

Pass Wilmot Cottage to your right then, still following the green NT arrow, go right to climb some steps. The path then bends to the left.

Shortly thereafter, on reaching a signpost opposite a NT information board, turn sharply right (following the green NT arrow) and proceed uphill. The ascent is steep and is bordered by a precipitous bank to your left where trees cling on by their bare roots. Half way up there is a wooden bench, ideally placed for a rest and to enjoy the far reaching view!

At the top of the slope, climb the stile then ignore the green NT arrow pointing right and go straight on into the woods. Ignoring a later side path leading right, carry on ahead until reaching the road.

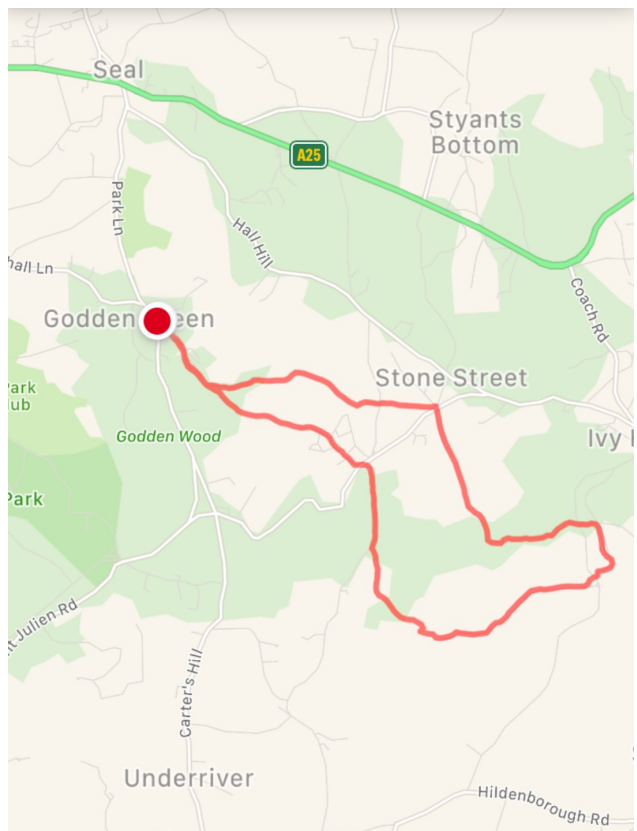
Turn right on the road and walk for a third of a mile until you reach a triangle of grass at the junction of two roads. Turn left before the grassy area, cross the other road and, follow the low lying concrete public footpath sign to a private driveway serving several large houses. At the far end of the

driveway continue downhill on the narrow footpath to a stile leading into a sheep field.

Go straight up the hill then down the other side. Look for a stile ahead of you at the corner of the woods next to a large oak tree (ignore the stile further to the left).

Climb up along the gulley in the woods, continue ahead, then at the cross path, turn left then immediately right to carry straight on. Ignoring any further cross paths continue ahead. The path curves to the left to emerge onto the lane taken at the outset of the walk. Turn left on the lane to return to Godden Green (and possibly the pub!).

Christeen Malan



WORSHIP, EXERCISE AND LEISURE FROM HOME

As our weeks in lockdown pass, more and more activities are appearing online and on radio and television to help us to adapt. Here are a few, to add to the suggestions in last month's magazine. URLs are shown in some cases, for online activities, and where they are not you should be able to locate them very easily with an online search.

Your own church will be providing online worship and weekly prayers and bible readings. You might want to add to this worship at one of our cathedrals, and since geography is no object to any of us any more, this can be whichever you choose. For example, you will find online evensong every Sunday during lockdown at Rochester Cathedral (www.rochestercathedral.org/worship-online) and daily prayers, morning and evening at Canterbury Cathedral (www.canterbury-cathedral.org/#onlineservices).

If Joe Wickes' daily 30-minute exercise regime has proved a bit strenuous, you might want to try one of his less demanding workouts. These include his 20 minute HIIT home workout for beginners or his 10 minute full body seniors workout. He also offers a 10 minute chair based workout. At the time of writing Joe himself is recovering from an operation on his hand and his wife is taking his daily classes for him, but there are still plenty of videos of all the above on You Tube.

Monty Don, thankfully, is always on hand with gardening advice (www.montydon.com/tips-and-advice) and Gardeners' World is on BBC 2 (currently Friday evenings). Its website is always helpful and if you're a gardening novice, you could try their ten tips for beginners (www.gardenersworld.com/how-to/grow-plants/gardening-for-beginners-10-tips)

More museums and galleries are also now gearing up to make it possible to explore their exhibitions virtually. What about a virtual tour of the Natural History Museum (www.nhm.ac.uk/visit/virtual-museum.html)? David Attenborough will guide you round its Hintze Hall, and older children might love the chance to study its Blue Whale online (<https://www.nhm.ac.uk/bluewhale/study/>) Or if you had hoped to get to the Ashmolean to see its Young Rembrandt exhibition you can now visit it online (www.ashmolean.org/youngrembrandt). On TV, BBC 4's four part Museums in Quarantine series began with a preview of the Tate Modern's Andy Warhol exhibition (available until September on i-Player) and later programmes are expected to visit the Tate Modern, the British Museum and the Ashmolean (focussing on the Rembrandt exhibition with Simon Schama).

You can find more details of the BBC's plans to make virtual art available on the television, radio and online at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2020/culture-in-quarantine>

As before this is just a tiny snippet of what is available. You will have more and better ideas – please do share them with others!

Eileen Arney

MISSION MATTERS

An update from Hospices of Hope

Next year marks the 30th Anniversary of the charity, which has been based in Otford High Street for much of that time. We have received constant support from the village during that period and really miss seeing everyone in the tea-room and shop.

Like everyone else, our hospice teams and their patients are facing unprecedented challenges in the current crisis and we would really welcome your prayers for their work.

Our staff are continuing to offer home care visits. They understand the risks and still want to help their patients. Please pray for their safety. Protective equipment is very hard to find in the countries we work in and disinfectant is scarce. Please pray that we will find a supply source for the protective equipment that we need.

We are keeping the inpatient units in Romania open. The state hospitals suddenly discharged all chronically ill patients, including cancer patients,

to make way for coronavirus cases. This has caused feelings of panic and abandonment amongst the patients and families affected by such drastic action and the hospices have been inundated with pleas for help. Please pray that our teams in Romania, including in the rural areas, will be able to continue working so that they can help these very vulnerable people.

The situation in Albania has been made worse by the recent earthquake. There are still people living on the streets after losing their homes. Our home care teams are continuing to work in Moldova. There is so much poverty in this country already and the hospitals will be unable to cope if the virus spreads. Please pray that our teams will be able to continue showing compassion to these desperate people.

Thank you for your support and prayers.

Graham Perolls, CMG, OBE For more information about our work see our website: www.hospicesofhope.co.uk



LIFE UNDER LOCKDOWN

A young person's perspective

It's been very different from what usually happens during this time. I'm used to going to places like castles and museums but of course I can't. Mainly I'm just bored and sick of lockdown. I can't see my friends at school.

But..... on a more positive note I am enjoying some quality time with my family which normally, because of school and their work, I can't have as much as I would hope for. I am also enjoying how I can finally get some of my Airfix kits done which have been sitting in a box collecting dust. Now almost all of them are done. Overall I have mixed feelings about lockdown. I hope everything will be normal again soon.

Alex Hart (age 11)

My experience of lockdown is quite mixed. I dislike it because we can't go to places like the beach. My family were going to go on a holiday to Bluestone in Wales but it was cancelled. We also can't go and see our friends and family. A reason that I do like it is it makes our lives a lot less complicated. I get to spend more time with my cat.

Samuel Batchelor (age 10)

It is very different from normal life because there are no people walking around and shops and restaurants are not open like they used to be. This makes me feel sad because some of my favourite restaurants are closed down. I like

seeing my friends on video calls but sometimes there is a bad connection and I can't hear what they are saying. It's much better to see them in real life.

Alex Batchelor (age 8)

I'm Eloise, I am 9 years old. Due to coronavirus I am home schooling, some things are better and some worse. I can write a lot more, because of no distractions. I miss my friends and teacher. In a way I like home schooling, because mummy can make things more interesting and I don't have a time limit on things. There is more learning outside, which is fun. My cat likes to sit on my knee, when I work.

I communicate with my friends, using Zoom! My Irish dancing class is over Zoom, it's quite good but better having the teacher in front of you.

During lockdown, I have learnt new skills, such as photography and cross stitch. I have enjoyed this as I wouldn't have done this otherwise.

I spend more time with my family, enjoying walks into woods carpeted in bluebells. Pond dipping, has also been fun, I was surprised how many shrimp were living there.

My highlight: the VE Day street party, in our front gardens and performing an Irish dance, with my next door neighbour in our street, whilst 2 metres apart!

Eloise Jones (age 9)

PUZZLE FOR JUNE

Coronavirus has turned our world upside down. But God is still there, and we can call on Him, as Psalm 91 (vs 1-6) reminds us...

Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High

will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.

² I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

³ Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly

pestilence.

⁴ He will cover you with his feathers,

and under his wings you will find refuge;

his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.

⁵ You will not fear the terror of night,

nor the arrow that flies by day,

⁶ nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness,

nor the plague that destroys at midday.

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WHERE ARE THEY NOW?... HARRIET BELL

My earliest memories of St Bart's are of the Sunday School run by Sylvia Grafton. The old church hall always seemed so big! I was in all the children's groups growing up. Sometimes YPF was only a small group, but that resulted in the forming of closer friendships.

I have particularly fond memories of playing rounders at the recreation ground, and of going carol singing around Otford at Christmas. Dawn used to invite the girls to her house for a delicious dinner and Bible study, which usually involved a lot of laughter and silliness!

I went abroad to volunteer in The Gambia with a Christian organisation during my gap year, and then spent 4 years studying - first as an undergraduate at Durham followed by a year doing a PGCE in London. I spent four years as a Primary teacher at a school in Orpington before moving to Kenya in 2014.

I now live in Kenya with my husband, Rich, and our two kids, Tobias and Semara. In 2017 I co-founded an organisation (www.pursue.org.uk) which runs community projects in rural areas. My focus is particularly on facilitating opportunities for teachers who have had no formal training to access seminars in how to plan lessons, manage behaviour and generally raise the quality of teaching and learning in their classrooms. We

work with some of the poorest schools, with very few resources, but we believe that empowering the teachers will in turn change the lives of their students for the better.

Whenever we are back in the UK, we always receive a warm welcome at church. It feels like a real family! St. Bart's is the place where we got married, our son was dedicated, my sister and cousin were christened, and my grandma's ashes are in the memorial garden; so it will always hold a special place in my heart.

Since my teenage years, when Dawn and others at YPF helped me to understand more of Christianity, my faith has been a central part of my life. It was the driving factor behind the decision to move to Kenya; we felt called to go and use the skills God had given us in a country where people don't have as many opportunities as in the UK. We have grown in our faith as we have interacted with others from around the world and are constantly learning more about God's diverse worldwide Church- and what an adventure it is to be a part of it!

We have no idea where the future will take us- but I hope my parents remain in Otford so that we can always come back for visits!

Harriet Bell (nee Shee)



WELCOME WILDLIFE INTO YOUR GARDEN



Bees are busy this month. A traditional country saying goes: *A swarm of bees in May is worth a load of hay. A swarm of bees in June is worth a silver spoon. A swarm of bees in July is not worth a fly!* There are about 250 British species. They collect nectar and pollen; their tongues differ in length. Only long-tongued bees can collect nectar from deep throated flowers. Honey-bees and bumble-bees are social insects but all other bees are solitary. Nevertheless all females construct nests for their young and provide food for them until they reach maturity. Most bees can be distinguished from wasps by their hairy legs and bodies. The female miner bee likes gooseberry and currant flowers and usually nests in a garden lawn where she throws up little volcano-shaped mounds around her nest entrance. Honey bees of course have a hive and owners care for them throughout the year and collect their honey. They have a story all of their own.

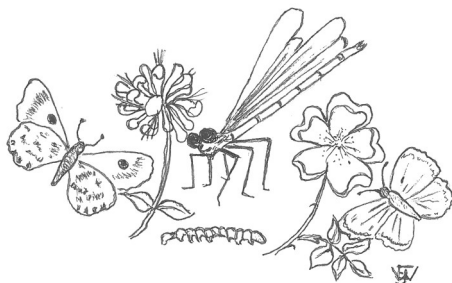
There are 9 species of wasps in the British Isles. They live around our homes, chew up wood and mix it with their saliva to form paper to build nests. Adult wasps enjoy fruit and other sweet foods, but the grubs are fed on chewed-up insects including garden pests, so they are quite useful. There are all sorts of flies in summertime, the hoverfly, crane-fly (daddy-long-legs), dragonflies and damselflies. Also an abundance of butterflies and very attractive caterpillars- some hairy ones can cause us to have a rash so it's best not to pick them up. A few years ago, two volunteers from Kent Wildlife Trust conducted two Moth Surveys in our back garden. They identified 129 species! Many fly in the daytime; in fact, the six-spot burnet, black with red spots on its wings, is a moth.

Wild flowers will be at their best, and identification will be fun when you go for a walk on the Downs. If you have never been to Oxenhill Woods, the entrance is at the bottom of Tudor Drive. Here are 61 acres of mixed woodland and meadow area and wide grass rides where, in many places, there are wild orchids; also some rustic seats to rest on and check your wildflower book. Covid19 may have reduced our enjoyment of the wild spring flowers and the clouds of bluebells with their scent. Hopefully next spring there will be no restriction on our appreciation of God's diverse and wonderful world.

June Tips

Try growing/leaving some of these plants to attract butterflies: thyme, geraniums, dandelions, candytuft, sweet williams, thistles, nettles, alyssum. To make *a butterfly feeder*, gently boil equal amounts of water and sugar until the sugar has dissolved. Cut a new sponge to fit snugly in a bowl. Pour the solution on top and allow it to be absorbed. Place outside for butterflies and other pollinators to have a drink.

Elizabeth Ward



DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS

Coronavirus (Covid-19) Update

Last month I wrote to you about how the District Council is adapting to the 'new normal' and the additional services being provided to deliver a range of government support packages for residents and business during the current crisis.

Since then the District Council has worked tirelessly to reach all businesses who qualify for financial support to ensure they have received the grants and discounts they are entitled to, working seven days a week to make it happen. The Council sent out around 4000 letters to all businesses rated for business rates focussing help on those in the retail, hospitality, and leisure sectors. Eligible businesses receive a cash grant of either £10,000 or £25,000 depending on rateable value and criteria set nationally.

The vital support for business is benefitting thousands across the District and forms part of a raft of measures, including nearly £20 million of business rates relief. The Council is urging eligible businesses who have not heard from them to get in touch as soon as possible so that they can make sure they have the opportunity to claim the money that is owed to them.

At the time of writing, the Council had awarded 1,674 businesses a total of £20.6m in relief and grants. This accounts for approximately 81% of all eligible businesses and 90.7% of the £22.7m of funding allocated to the Council by Government. Sevenoaks District Council were ranked 11th in the country for the amount of support they have got out to local businesses and the highest Council in Kent.

The army of volunteers offering support to residents across the District during the crisis continues to grow and now stands at just under 1500 helpers. The volunteers are offering all sorts of support from weekly shopping, picking up prescriptions, dog walking and social contact. The support on offer from the Council includes those in the high-risk category and currently there are nearly 3400 residents in this group who receive government food parcels delivered direct to their door as well as other vital forms of support.

You may have heard in the news that household waste and recycling centres are opening in some parts of the country. Kent County Council have announced that they will be opening their waste centres from 15th May for essential use. To visit a waste centre, you will need to book a slot in advance; these will be limited to maintain social distancing for staff and visitors. Journeys to the centres must only be undertaken if your waste or recycling cannot be stored at home safely or disposed of safely by other means. Bookings will be available from Wednesday 13 May at:

www.kent.gov.uk/waste-planning-and-land/rubbish-and-recycling/find-your-nearest-tip/sevenoaks

Stay safe and keep well.

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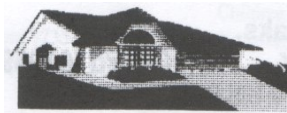
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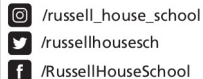
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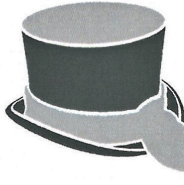
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'**First Steps**' (for parents/carers with pre-school children)
Contact: Najen Harris

SUNDAY CLUB (Sundays at 10.00am)

Infants (3-7s), **Juniors** (8-11s), **Seniors** (12-14)

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FELLOWSHIP

Contact: Dawn Hallam

OUTREACH

Chairman of Mission Links:
Andrew Hill

BELLRINGERS

The Tower Captain: Bobbie Fairclough
Secretary: Janet Whitehead
Practice night: Thursday 7.45-9.15pm

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

Joan Beacom

CHURCH COUNCIL

The Churchwardens Russell Edwards and Janet Hunt, Sam Barnett, David Calcott, Jo Chandler, Colin Deane, Phil Gardner, Dawn Hallam, Jocelyn Hart, Mark Holmes*, Martin Lea, Margaret Lidbetter*, Emma Peters, Derek Shilling#, Ben Southgate, Heather Stanley

Ex-Officio (Diocesan Synod) * Ex-Officio (Deanery Synod)