

St Bartholomew's Church, Otford Parish News



SERVICES AT ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

March	8.00am	10.00am	3.00pm	6.30pm
5th March Lent 1	Holy Communion	All Together Worship	-	Evensong
12th March Lent 2	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Messy Church	-
19th March Lent 3	Holy Communion	Morning Worship	-	Evensong
26th March Mothering Sunday	Holy Communion (BCP)	Holy Communion	-	-

SUNDAY CLUB (FOR AGES 0-14)

INFANT: 3-7

JUNIOR: 8-11

SENIOR: 12-14

These groups meet in the Church Centre during the 10.00 am service, except on the first Sunday when they meet in Church for All Together Worship.

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.

Vicar's off duty day: Monday

Cover photo by Richard Worssam

"Enjoying refreshments after midweek communion"

Magazine printed by Silver Pines Services, Magazine No. 03 Volume 87

VICAR'S VIEWPOINT



This year the beginning of the month of March coincides exactly with the beginning of the season of Lent, with Ash Wednesday falling on 1st March. It has long been the practice of Christians to keep Lent as a time when we give extra attention to spending time with God in prayer, remembering how Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness focusing on God's presence and his purposes before he began his active ministry.

However, in our fast-paced modern society we can find this to be easier said than done. Rowan Williams has observed, "Somebody once said that the deepest problem in prayer is often not the absence of God, but the absence of me. I'm not actually there. My mind is everywhere". It is very easy to allow ourselves to be distracted by many different thoughts and concerns.

We need to allow time to sit still until our minds become quiet. I like the image of a mountain pond. If you throw a stone into the water then ripples radiate across the surface, spreading out in an expanding circle. However, these ripples eventually subside and the surface of the water becomes still again. It is when the water is still that it reflects the sky and the surrounding hills and woods. Likewise, as we allow our minds to become still, then we become more aware of God's presence around us.

The story is told of Archbishop Michael Ramsey on a visit to the United States being interviewed by an eager young reporter. "Did you pray this morning?" she asked. He answered, "Yes." "How long did you pray for?", she asked. "Half an hour," he replied. "And what did you say in that half hour?" "Well," he answered, "I talked to God for about a minute. But it took me 29 minutes to get there."

There is a prayer written by one of the sisters at West Malling Abbey which I find to be very helpful, and which echoes the experience of Michael Ramsey: "Be silent, still, aware, for there in your own heart the Spirit is at prayer; listen and learn, seek and find, heart wisdom, Christ." It is good to say this prayer as an introduction to a time of silent prayer.

To be still and silent is in many ways counter-cultural in our achievement-driven society. Silent prayer is not about achieving anything as such. We come to this prayer with only one desire – to dwell in the present and be aware of the presence of the living God.

There is a remarkable amount in the Bible about the importance and powerful effect of silent prayer. A classic example is the story of Elijah who sought God on Mount Horeb at a critical stage in his ministry. Here he encountered the voice of the Lord not in the wind, earthquake or fire, but in the still small voice of peace.

The psalms are full of references to the psalmist waiting in silence for God, seeking renewed hope and strength. A famous image is from Psalm 23 of the Lord leading us by still waters and refreshing our soul.

Jesus, himself, put this into practice. St. Luke records how Jesus called the first disciples and engaged in a ministry of teaching and healing, but then notes as Jesus' fame spread and the crowds grew ever larger, "he often withdrew to lonely places to pray." (Luke 5:16)

So how do we put this into practice ourselves? With our jam-packed diaries, it comes down to the determination to find a regular time and place. Since returning from my Sabbatical, one thing I've found helpful each day is when I go over to lock the church as dusk falls, instead of simply locking the doors and returning to the Vicarage, I spend 15 minutes in silent prayer in one of the pews. I wonder what your solution to finding a regular time and place for silent prayer might be?

Your friend and Vicar, Richard



DIARY FOR MARCH 2017

**Morning Prayer will be said in Church on Tuesdays and Thursdays each week
at 9.00 am and on Fridays in the Cranmer Room at 9.00 am**

1 Ash Wednesday

- 10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) with the imposition of ashes. Coffee afterwards
- 8.00 pm Holy Communion at Otford Methodist Church
- 2 8.00 pm Initial preparation meeting for the pilgrimage to Greece (Church Centre)
- 3 2.00 pm Women's World Day of Prayer service (St. Bartholomew's)
- 4 9.00 am Churchyard Working Party
- 10-12.30 pm Wedding Preparation morning (Church Centre)

5 The First Sunday of Lent

8.00 am Holy Communion

10.00 am All Together Worship

6.30 pm Evensong

- 6 7.45 pm Homegroup (17 Leonard Avenue)
- 7 8.00 pm Parish Lent Group (Church Centre)
- 8 9.30 am 'First Steps' (Otford Free Church, Pilgrims Way West)
- 10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
- 9 7.30 pm Confirmation Group (Church Centre)
- 10 *Magazine material for the April edition by today, please, to the
Church Office, st.bartholomews@otford.net*
- 2.15 pm Magazine Editorial Team (Vicarage)
- 11 6.00 pm EPIC (Church Centre)

12 The Second Sunday of Lent

8.00 am Holy Communion

10.00 am Holy Communion

3.00 pm Messy Church (Church Centre)

- 13 7.45 pm Discussion (17 Leonard Avenue)
- 14 8.00 pm Parish Lent Group (Church Centre)
- 15 10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) coffee afterwards
- 16 7.30 pm Confirmation Group (Church Centre)

19 The Third Sunday of Lent

8.00 am Holy Communion

10.00 am Morning Worship

3.00pm Otford Junior Choir

6.30 pm Evensong

- 20 7.45 pm Homegroup (17 Leonard Avenue)
21 8.00 pm Parish Lent Group (Church Centre)
22 9.30 am 'First Steps' Easter Service (Otford Free Church, Pilgrims Way West)
10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
7.45 pm PCC (Church Centre)
23 7.00 pm Confirmation Group (Church Centre)
- 26 The Fourth Sunday of Lent: Mothering Sunday**
8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.00 am Holy Communion
- 27 12 - 2 pm Mid-Lent lunch in the Church Centre, interview of local author
7.45 pm Discussion (17 Leonard Avenue)
28 8.00 pm Parish Lent Group
29 10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) coffee afterwards



Registers



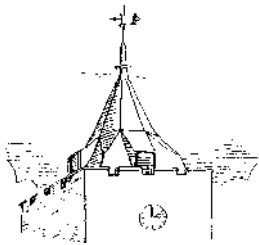
FUNERAL (Our Sympathy)

- 12th January Brenda Sallie **Aryanpur** (aged 80)
24th January Dennis Victor **Docking** (aged 86)
25th January Colin James **Sherwood** (aged 81)



One of my churchwardens is a stickler for 'Health and Safety'...

FROM ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH



PREPARATION MEETING FOR TRIP TO GREECE

There will be an initial preparation meeting for all who are interested in

going to Greece "in the footsteps of St. Paul" in the October half-term on **Thursday 2nd March at 8 pm** in the Church Centre.

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

This service, will be held on **Friday, 3rd March at 2.00 pm** at St. Bartholomew's Church and is intended for both men and women. The theme will be 'Am I being unfair to you?'. The service will be followed by refreshments. Everyone is welcome to this ecumenical event.

CHURCHYARD WORKING PARTY

This will take place on **Saturday, 4th March at 9.00 am**. We are desperately short of helpers so if you could come for one hour it would make a difference. Come and join in the fun and bring some useful tools, too!

PARISH LENT COURSE

The Parish Lent Course will be held on five Tuesday evenings in Lent, **7th March - 4th April, from 8-9.30 pm** in the Church Centre. We will be using the course prepared by the Diocese, "Place in the crowd" You can also view the material for this course at: <https://placeinthecrowd.org.uk/>

2017 CONFIRMATION COURSE

If you would be interested in going forward for confirmation this year, please let the Vicar know. The Confirmation Service will be on Sunday 25th June at 6 pm at All Saints Church, Orpington. The preparation sessions will be on **Thursday evenings from 7.30 - 8.45 pm from**

9th March, with breaks for the Easter and summer half-term holidays.

MESSY CHURCH: Sunday, 12th March 3.00 pm

Messy Church is particularly suitable for families with children up to the age of 11. Do come along for a fun time of creative activities, lively worship, tasty food and good fellowship.

MOTHERING SUNDAY, 26th March

You are warmly invited to our Mothering Sunday services when posies will be offered to ladies in the congregation.

MID-LENT LUNCH

You are warmly invited to a Mid-Lent Lunch on **Monday 27th March from 12-2 pm** in the Church Centre. £5 for homemade soup and bread and a choice of fruit. There will be a short chat with Vicki Howie about her new picture book which she will be selling this year in aid of general church funds. Do come along and bring your friends - see you there! For catering purposes R.S.V.P. the Church Office on 01959 523185 (mornings only)

THE REAL EASTER EGG

The Real Easter Egg is the only one which has a copy of the Easter story in the box. It communicates the real story of Easter to all generations. The Real Easter Egg was launched in 2010, is made of Fairtrade chocolate and makes a donation to the charity, Traidcraft Exchange, from sales giving at least 10p from the purchase of each 150g egg. Available from Tesco, Morrisons and Waitrose supermarkets. For details see: www.realeasteregg.co.uk

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH FAIR

This will take place on **Saturday 17th June at 2pm**, on and around The Green. Please put the date in your diary and plan to be with us, if you can.



DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS

Telephone: 01732 227000 www.sevenoaks.gov.uk
Cllr.Lowe@sevenoaks.gov.uk <http://michellelowe.yourcllr.com>

We have had the results back from our housing study that was sent to every household in the district and I am delighted that we had a really good response rate.

Nearly one in five households completed the survey which gives us really good data on what type of housing is needed and where it is needed - whether that is starter homes, family homes, older people's homes or some sort of supported accommodation – which can be for anyone from ex-armed forces adjusting to civilian life, to frail and elderly people, to people with learning difficulties.

We have not drilled down to ward level data yet - so I do not yet know the specific needs of Otford and Shoreham. However I was pleased that there were no major surprises with the overall district picture. The information presses home the very difficult housing challenges that we face – and the need to find innovative solutions to meet them. These are made more difficult by our planning constraints. As you know the district is made up of 93% Greenbelt and 60% Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The group that appears to be most in need across the district is the middle income group – those households earning £33,000 to £80,000. They are not entitled to social rented accommodation and do not really earn enough to buy a home – given that house prices in our district are up to seventeen times higher than average wages. As a result this group is privately renting.

Our private rented sector only represents 12% of our total housing stock against 18% for the English national average. As private landlords are renting to relatively high earners we have little housing left for people on low incomes – increasing the pressure on our social rented housing stock.

The over 65s are our largest growing age group – which presents the challenges of creating age-friendly adaptations and new builds (where possible), as well as age-friendly communities to enable independent living for as long as possible.

As the results of the survey are fed through to us, your elected councillors are developing a housing strategy that will feed into our new local plan (planning document) – to try and find housing solutions to meet our needs.

I really would like to thank all of you who completed the survey. It has provided us with the tools that we need to try and meet the housing needs of our residents.

With best wishes,

Michelle





IN MEMORIAM



Colin Sherwood, 1935-2017

Colin was born in North Wales in 1935 and lived in Deganwy during his early childhood. He attended a prep school in Anglesey as a boarder, and then he went to Sedbergh School (now in Cumbria, but at the time in Yorkshire), also as a boarder.

In 1952, at the age of 17, Colin went to Stafford to work as an apprentice for English Electric, which at the time had 600 apprentices. He learned the skills of a draughtsman, specialising in designs for tools, and he became a Standards Engineer.

Colin was actively involved in the parish church of Stafford which had a thriving youth club. It was while he was living in Stafford that Colin met Heather in 1961 through folk dancing circles. They got married on 30th December that year. Heather continued working as a primary school teacher until their son, Adrian, was born in 1967.

In 1969, English Electric was taken over by GEC, and in the merger many were made redundant, including Colin. However, he managed to get a new job with a telephone manufacturing company based in St. Mary Cray, and so the family came to Kent, and they have lived in Otford ever since.

In 1980 Colin had another job change, and for the next decade he commuted to Crawley. His work as a Standards Engineer was to ensure consistency of products across factories and distribution centres. For the last chapter of his career, Colin worked in Dunton Green for a company that supplied drugs to surgeries, hospitals and private patients. He retired at 60.

Colin maintained many interests. He was keen on photography, first developing his interest from his father. He liked music, particularly the organ, and he was an active supporter of the Sevenoaks Philharmonic Choir, helping out with advertising, tickets sales, and front-of-house work for the concerts.

Colin and the family also enjoyed caravanning holidays throughout the UK. He was meticulous in choosing the right pitch and always had a spirit level to hand.

Colin has been actively involved in the life of St. Bart's since 1969. He has served on the PCC, and he was a lesson reader and sidesman for forty years.

Latterly he suffered from Parkinson's disease and became increasingly housebound, but he bore this illness with patience and fortitude. His Christian faith shone out through his attitudes and actions and we give thanks for his contribution to the life of the church and the village over the years.





IN MEMORIAM



Brenda Aryanpur, 1936-2017

Brenda was born in 1936 in Twitton and grew up at "The Farm" which was run by the Hunt family as a full working farm with arable crops, cattle, a milk delivery service (complete with pony and trap) and an egg business. Her mother was one of ten brothers and sisters and so she had many cousins and uncles and aunts around her. Brenda would tell stories of her early childhood at Twitton Farm with prisoners of war working the fields, school lessons in air raid shelters and doodlebugs overhead.

Brenda attended Otford Primary School, and then Tonbridge Grammar School where she developed a love for poetry and history. She was also good at drama, singing and sport.

On leaving school Brenda embarked on what she called her "amazing adventure" - nursing. She trained at Charing Cross Hospital. Moving from the rural tranquillity of Twitton she experienced the hustle and bustle of post-war London and she had various anecdotes about treating some of London's notorious villains in the Casualty department and dancing in the fountains in Trafalgar Square.

Brenda was soon to spread her wings even further. She had listened to family stories of far-away war time postings in Mesopotamia and Egypt and she had always wanted to travel, so when the chance came, she grabbed it. She got a job working as a children's nurse for the National Iranian Oil Company in the 1950s. Working at the hospital, Brenda fell in love with and married one of the doctors. Sadly, the cultural and religious differences were too great for the marriage, and so she

had to return to England, while pregnant with her daughter, Sarah.

Brenda and Sarah settled at first in Speldhurst where Brenda worked at the Homeopathic Hospital where she learned all about this ancient branch of medicine. She was still only 30 when she returned to her roots, taking a job at Sevenoaks Hospital as Night Sister, a post that she held for the best part of a quarter of a century. She lived first with her sister in Shoreham, and then with the extended family at the Farm in Twitton. At the time, Sevenoaks Hospital had a casualty department, medical, surgical and children's wards, a maternity unit and a Nurses' Home. She believed that everyone was important, from porters to surgeons, from auxiliaries to patients, from nurses to cleaners.

Brenda also cared for her mother, her uncle and Sarah. She eventually retired due to arthritis in her hips.

Brenda maintained many interests such as the U3A, the Shoreham Over 60s club, cooking and gardening. She also took a real delight in her three grandchildren. Brenda had a gift for reaching out to people of all ages. She touched many lives and she will be fondly remembered.



FAITH IN THE FAMILY...

March: His mother treasured all these things in her heart

Pause for thought: This year, Mothering Sunday falls on 26th March. Traditionally this was the day when Christians visited their mother church (the most important church or cathedral) halfway through Lent. In Victorian times, the entire family went to church and returned to a special meal. Working children were allowed the day off to visit their mothers.



They took with them a gift such as flowers, gloves or a simnel cake. American soldiers who came to Britain during the Second World War revived the idea of a special day for

mothers. Cards were designed to show how hard mothers worked in the home.

Being a parent is never easy. Take time to read the Bible story on p 14. Here Mary has to deal with the first signs of independence shown by her son Jesus as he reaches maturity in cultural terms. Today, we still struggle with the challenge of finding the right balance between letting go of our children, allowing them the freedom to learn and explore, and keeping them safe.

When facing any difficult issues as a parent, it can sometimes be useful to think how our own parents treated us. We may want to follow their example in some areas and do things differently in others. Certainly God (whose love for us is sometimes referred to in motherly ways in the Bible) gives us the freedom to make mistakes. The gift of his friendship is always on offer as well as the chance to make a fresh start.

Being a good friend to our children is important and can be difficult to achieve if we did not have that sort of relationship with our own parents. It implies a 'coming alongside' for non-judgmental communication, rather than an inflexible imposition of rules from above. Praise is always encouraging to them and it can be very powerful to speak well to others of our children in their hearing!

A few weeks ago, the book *Little Women* was serialized on Radio 4. In one episode, Jo bemoans her inability to control her temper. Her mother, far from chastising her, reveals that her own temper was far worse as a teenager, and explains how she gradually came to deal with it. She expresses confidence that Jo will do the same. What a great example of good mothering!

Have you seen Jesus? Read the Bible story together as a family. Wonder about it as follows:

How do you think Mary felt at different moments in the story?

Do you think Jesus meant to worry his parents?

Do you think that people can seem angry when they are really just anxious?

Do you think this episode became a family story, often repeated? What family stories do you have?

Unbelievable chores! This could be played on a car journey or long walk. Parents think up chores they do that their children may not even know exist! For example, sorting recycling from the rubbish!



Children ask questions to which the answer is “yes” or “no”. Can they guess each job in less than twenty “nos”?

How many times? Anyone for some Maths practise? Everyone works out how many times the person caring for him or her has:

Made their bed for them so far this week/year

Provided a taxi service for them so far this week/year

Cooked something for them so far this week/year

Been thanked by their children this week!

thank
you!

A thank you card:
Place an A4 piece of paper in front of you, landscape (long edges top and bottom). Fold the paper in half from

left to right and then again. Open the paper back up.

On the first panel on the left, draw yourself holding a *huge* bunch of flowers/wrapped present. The bouquet or present should spill over a lot into the second panel. Draw the person you are sending the card to in the third and fourth panels, sitting in an armchair with some tea on a table in front of them. Colour in your drawing. Cut out the part of the bouquet/present that spills into the second panel.

Fold the card in half again, but then fold back the first panel so that the flowers/present pops out! You could write “Just for you . . .” on the front, then “. . . to thank you for all you do!” where there is space on the third or fourth panel.

Where does it belong? Are you always searching for things at home? Who usually

knows where they are? Why not challenge everyone to improve the way things are stored in their rooms, so that there is a special place for everything? You could decorate some shoeboxes, or label tins/sealable freezer bags/old mugs, or buy supermarket storage baskets for spare coins, crayons, hair bands etc.

Has anyone ever lost something precious/a person? Link with the Bible story. Why do you think Mary and Joseph found Jesus in the temple? I wonder what this family story told them about Jesus?

Building a nest: It’s nearly Spring when birds will be building nests. You could place some nesting materials such as moss, dry grass, wool, animal hair and scraps of material in a plastic fruit net and hang in a tree.

Go for a walk and collect some small dry twigs, leaves, bark and feathers to make a collage of a bird protecting chicks under its wings. You could supplement with a bag of craft feathers. Write a caption, “He will cover you with his feathers . . .” from Psalm 91: verse 4.

Gingerbread Family: Make some gingerbread dough. Everyone cuts out a gingerbread man, woman or child to represent themselves! Before baking, press currants into the shapes for eyes or buttons. When they have cooled, add other features and clothes with writing icing. As you do so, discuss whether you think it is easy to be a Mum/Dad/child today. Was it easy for Mary to be the mother of Jesus? Do you think the story is pointing ahead to something that happened at the end of Jesus’ life?



Vicki Howie

IN CONVERSATION WITH...BRIAN BEACOM

Former Freewill Offering Treasurer and a Freeman of the City of London

Born in 1933, Brian was six years old at the outbreak of the Second World War. His family lived in Chelsham Road, Clapham, not far from the family business in Battersea which his father ran – the Surrey Sterilized Milk Company. As a boy, Brian found a description of his street in the local library as ‘a middle class road of dreary respectability’! He remembers that they rented the house for £90 a year but were able to let the middle floor for two pounds a week.

To avoid the worst of the bombing Brian, his brother, and mother spent some of the war with relatives away from London but they did not like being apart from his father (who was not called up because of his reserved occupation) and returned home at the earliest opportunity. Brian told me that for him and his friends the war had a ‘buzz of excitement’ about it. Adventures included playing in bombed out buildings and collecting pieces of hot shrapnel. Once, he was standing outside his house when a V1 flying bomb - ‘Doodlebug’ - came over, the distinctive noise of its engine still running. He watched as the engine cut out and it landed on a school in Battersea, killing two cooks. His own home had the windows blown out and the ceilings down on different occasions. To avoid being disturbed by the air-raids at night, the family always slept in the Anderson shelter in their garden and were never without their gas masks. Food, of course, was in short supply and spam fritters were regarded as a real treat.

On Sundays, Brian attended Sunday School at St John’s Church, Clapham Road, where he sang in

the choir until he was 12. Aged 11, despite having attended nine different schools due to the war, he won an LCC Junior County Scholarship which resulted in him going to the City of London School. There, specialising in modern languages, he passed his School Certificate and Higher Certificate by the age of 17. During these years he was prepared by his headmaster for confirmation, then confirmed in St Paul’s Cathedral by the Bishop of London. It was due to his association with the school, especially the work he did in collecting subscriptions for the Old Citizens (the old boys’ association), that he was later nominated and admitted as a Freeman of the City of London – giving him the right to drive sheep over London Bridge!

On the advice of a successful businessman friend of his father, Brian decided to become a chartered accountant. He spent five years as an articled clerk with a small firm of accountants in London, starting on the princely salary of a pound a week. There he was renamed Edward, as they already had too many Brians in the business! After qualifying at 22 he undertook his National Service; this began on his 23rd birthday when he joined the Pay Corps. After



Sergeant Beacom stationed in Germany

basic training and a twelve week course, he became a sergeant and was posted to Hildesheim in Germany to run the pay office, with its staff of four, for the Second Regiment Royal Horse Artillery. Brian told me that he enjoyed this experience, not least being brought a mug of tea in bed every morning by the mess waiter.

Now 25, Brian returned to England and gained two and a half years of post qualification experience with the large firm of accountants, Barton Mayhew. He then began his lifetime career in insurance when he was appointed Accountant (number two in a department of 120 staff) at Sedgwick Collins, one of the largest Lloyd's insurance brokers. After five years he chose to move on. He then worked for another Lloyd's insurance broker before being employed in senior roles by three different insurance companies including Aegon and Municipal Mutual Insurance.

At age 70, Brian became St Bart's Freewill Offering Treasurer for eleven years, beginning just as the 'Building On' campaign (Church Rooms) was gathering momentum. His current interests include travel, walking the dog and cars – his wife Joan told me he has always been 'fanatical' about the latter.

Brian and Joan have lived in Otford for nearly forty three years; they moved here from Chelsfield in 1974 just after the birth of the second of their three children. Brian said they first met when Joan was running a Brownie pack in Clapham, whilst he was helping with the Cubs. He noticed her on a hot summer's day when she was with the Guides preparing for Guide camp by practising putting up latrine tents in the vicarage garden. Generously he bought them all ice-creams and was most taken with Joan. Being a rather shy man, he hadn't the courage to ask her out face to face so wrote her a letter instead. Clearly it worked – they will have been married for fifty years on the 24th September this year.

Brian and Joan are justifiably proud of their 'lovely family' and, before concluding the interview, Brian was keen to mention them all: Penny, their 'beautiful daughter', a talented musician and now Director of Music at a prep school; James their academic who sadly died whilst researching his PhD; and Matthew, a talented pianist, who is currently an IT manager with a major utility company.

Christeen Malan



*The Beacom
Family*

ANCIENT WISDOM - MODERN LIVES

Have you seen Jesus? (Based on Luke 2:41-52)

Mary was bent over a large basket, packing for the annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The children were playing, so she could work in peace! A thought struck her. Of course! Jesus would walk with the men this year, now that he was twelve. She straightened up. Twelve years since . . . ! It didn't seem possible! He'd grown from a helpless baby into this lively boy. She smiled. In some ways he was just like the other lads – always hungry, clothes dusty from play! But she knew he was no ordinary boy. How could she forget the visit of that angel with his heart-stopping message - those visitors to the stable with their unearthly story? She'd been over and over it all, trying to think what it would mean . . .

Mary relaxed on the long walk to Jerusalem, chatting with relatives and friends, and watching Jesus with his cousins.

"Who'll be the first to see Jerusalem?" they challenged each other.

"Who'll be the first to see the Temple – God's house?" asked Jesus.

They spent the week celebrating the Passover and thanking God for bringing their ancestors safely out of Egypt. Mary treasured this time away from so many household chores, soaking up God's presence. Too soon, it was time to walk home again.

She was at the front of the party with the women and babies, when Joseph caught her arm, his eyes anxious.

"Where's Jesus?" he asked.

She stared at him. "I thought he was with you."

"No! I thought he was with *you*!"

Her breath quickened as she turned to the other women.

"Have you seen Jesus? Oh please, have you seen him?" Heads shook. She could hear Joseph asking the same question, his voice urgent.

"No, no we haven't seen him – not since we were in the city. You'd better go back there."

Afterwards, the next few days seemed a bewildering blur. Disjointed memories of market places, narrow streets hemmed in by city walls . . . Often she thought she heard his voice, saw his back view, only to be dismayed as an unfamiliar face was turned to hers. By the third day, even Joseph could not reassure her that their precious son was alive.

Then they entered the temple. And there he was – sitting with the teachers, asking those profound questions of his. She could see they were impressed. If only they knew the way he'd treated his parents! The pent up emotion burst out of her.

"Son, we've been searching *everywhere* for you!"

He turned to look at her, those eyes bright and warm as if lit by an inner light. "I thought you

would know I was in my Father's House!"

She could not speak, her mind struggling with his words.

"Come on!" said Joseph, kindly. "It's time to go home."

And as always, the lad obeyed.



Vicki Howie

MISSION MATTERS: HOSPICES OF HOPE



St Bartholomew's continue to support The Hospices of Hope, who work with patients suffering from terminal or life-limiting illness in Romania, Serbia and

Moldova, as a mission partner. Amy Day, Community Fundraiser for the charity and based in the offices in Otford has kindly shared news about a number of projects which Hospices of Hope are currently working on.

Last year we opened our paediatric wing in Bucharest. The wing has 8 in-patient beds, a day centre, a sensory room, consultation rooms and a hospice school. It is on the top floor of our hospice in Bucharest and has a wonderful feeling of calm, light and space for the children to enjoy. This means that our new Bucharest hospice is fully operational and has facilities to treat over 2,000 patients a year. Our fundraising team in Romania is facing a huge challenge at the moment as legislation in Romania means a significant increase in wages for our nursing staff- so please include the team in your prayers.

We are very excited that our unique children's hospice in the rural village of Copaceni, outside Bucharest, will be opened at the end of this year. The centre will allow us to care for more children affected by life-limiting conditions such as muscular dystrophy, cystic fibrosis and cancer. It will include a respite facility and emergency accommodation for families facing homelessness. There will be a training facility so that our expertise in paediatric hospice care can be shared throughout the region. We are still working

hard to raise funds for the running costs of this building.

We are also working hard to raise funds for the first purpose-built, in-patient hospice in Serbia. We estimate that some two thirds of cancer sufferers in Serbia receive no medical or social care in the advanced stages of their illness. Raising funds in Serbia is challenging. It is easy to forget that Serbia remained in the grip of communism for a very long time and that its problems are manifold.

In Moldova we are changing our approach. Since 2008 we have been working in the capital, Chisinau. But we want to help the small hospice providers in other parts of the country where the need for help is huge.

In all the countries where we work we support our patients' families as we recognise the challenges they face in caring for their loved ones. We received this feedback from the daughter of one of our patients in Serbia whose father was suffering from terminal cancer:-

"One of the members of the team advised me about talking to my father. With this help I sat by my father's bedside and told him how he had inspired me and taught me everything in life that had made me a good person. My father woke up and gave me a look of love. That look meant everything to me and my mother".

Thank you for this update Amy, which I know our readers will enjoy.

Anne Stevens

THE MEDIEVAL DEER PARKS OF OTFORD

Deer were hunted by the Romans and the Anglo-Saxons, but it was the Normans who introduced the concept of enclosed Deer Parks. What was the role of these parks, and what evidence do we have that they existed in Otford?

These parks were “living larders” for the rearing and management of deer. They were game reserves and hunting grounds. The enclosure of a park (imparkment) normally required a royal licence, and these deer parks rapidly became a status symbol. The park supervisor (parker) often had a lodge in the park, sometimes on an elevated site from which to look out for poachers. Officially, venison could not be sold. It was consumed in noble courts, and was utilised as a high status gift.



Symondson's map of Kent, 1596. The Great Park (shaded) is seen south of Otford church.

In the middle ages the term “deer park” was not usually used, and instead they were simply called “parks”, thus reflecting the broad range of activities that actually took place there. Parks could also contain rabbit warrens (usually man-made), fishponds, meadows, woodland, and wildfowl. They were often part of a designed

landscape, incorporating the main residence, gardens and park. Classically, medieval deer parks were enclosed by a large earth bank, often with a deep trench on the inner (park) side, to prevent deer from leaping out. Banks could be surmounted by an oak wooden fence (pale) or thorn hedge. There are remains of these banks in some parts of the country, but they are less common in Kent where wooden pales were widely used.

Otford was one of 17 medieval manors owned by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The earliest reference to a park in Otford is of people “breaking in” in 1241. A survey of the Archbishop’s manors in 1273 mentions a park here, and there are references in 13C and 14C documents to payments to labourers for making and maintaining enclosures and ditches at Otford park. In 1315 there is mention of wages for a parker and the costs of keeping “the Lord’s greyhounds”. In 1381 repairs were needed, as during the “Peasants’ Revolt” people broke the gates of the park and tore down palings!

Otford is complicated in that there were actually 3 different parks! The earliest references are probably to the main park (“The Great Park”), south of the palace. As you drive to Sevenoaks from Otford this was on the left side (east), in the vicinity of the cemetery, Vestry Estate, and Sainsbury’s supermarket. The so-called “Little Park” was also to the south, but on the right (west) of the road, where one can still see extensive “park-like” fields that sometimes flood. The third, “New Park”, was to the north of the village, in the area of the present Park Lane and Park Farm (formerly New Park Farm). There is a licence for imparkment dated 1348 (probably for The Little Park) but foundation dates of the other two parks are not known. Parks often changed boundaries and area over time.



Medieval hunting scene.

In the early 16C Archbishop Warham built an enormous palace which overlooked the park to the south. Archbishop Cranmer, who enjoyed walking and hunting in his park, was forced to surrender Otford manor to Henry VIII in 1537. A survey in the early 1540s mentioned a park of 222 acres containing 140 deer. There is mention of hunting of hares, foxes and various birds. The fishponds are listed, as well as rabbit-burrows (a source of food). The Little Park was now "former parkland", and The New Park had probably also "disparked" by then. Henry died in 1547, and a repeat survey in 1548 showed that the palace was decaying, and much of the park pale was "rotten and almost fallen down".

The water courses in the former Little Park were clogged, resulting in flooding.

Saxton's 1575 map of Kent shows two separate parks at Otford, corresponding to the Great and the Little Parks. However, his maps are often "schematic", and he shows The Little Park to the west of the River Darent, whereas it was also to the east of it. Symonson's Kent map of 1596 shows only The Great Park, seemingly centred on the Guzzlebrook stream, a tributary of the Darent. Neither of these maps shows the New Park to the North. By the early 17C The Great Park had been sold off as farms. The last Otford deer park had gone.

With the exception of some possible earth banks in Park Farm, none of the original park boundaries are now obvious. However, the fishponds still exist near Castle House. Some field names on the 19C tithe map include the terms "park", and a large field below Pilgrims Way East was named "The Laund" (site of the "lawn" maintained for deer grazing). From Bubblestone Road if you walk south down The Old Walk and then across the fields, you reach Long Lodge, a converted oast on the site of the old park lodge. From this elevated spot, like a parker of old, you can gaze over the rolling park landscape.

Charles Shee



Looking east from the site of the medieval park lodge.

OUT AND ABOUT...



HARDELOT TWINNING

ASSOCIATION The next Social Gathering of the Otford-Neuchatel-Hardelot Twinning Association will be on

Monday 6 March 2017 at 7.30pm at the Woodman when we shall be showing the French film Ameiie with English subtitles. We shall look forward to seeing you.



EVENING WI Jolly Hockey

Sticks is the title of Ann Astin's talk at our March meeting when we will hear about the

enduring pleasure (according to fiction), of boarding schools for girls.

We meet on Thursday, the 9th of March at 7.30pm in the Club Room of the Memorial Hall and welcome any visitors. If you would like any more information, please contact 01959 524831.



SEVENOAKS DISTRICT

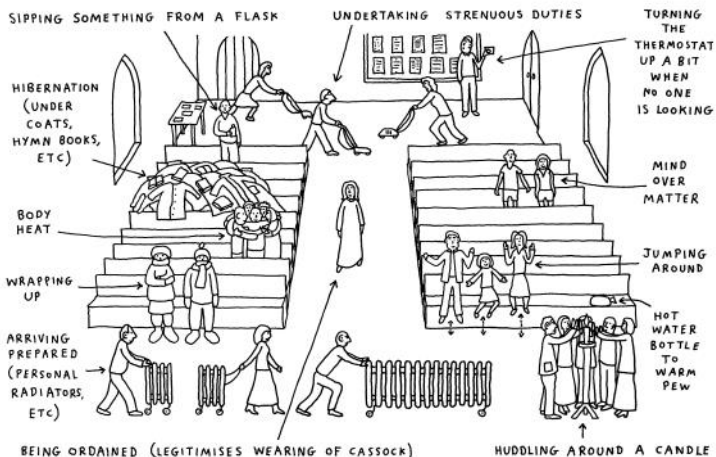
COUNCIL is holding the Voluntary and Community Awards again this year - and if anyone knows of someone who is an unsung hero and who deserves recognition

it would be great to nominate them. There are eleven categories including two new awards which have been introduced this year: **Best Healthy or Improved Eateries** - to recognise those businesses that are trying their best to improve our health; and **Best Family Friendly Business** - to try and recognise the effort made with regard to breastfeeding mums, buggies and help with older people living with dementia etc.

<http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/services/community-and-living/community-and-voluntary-awards>

WAYS TO KEEP WARM

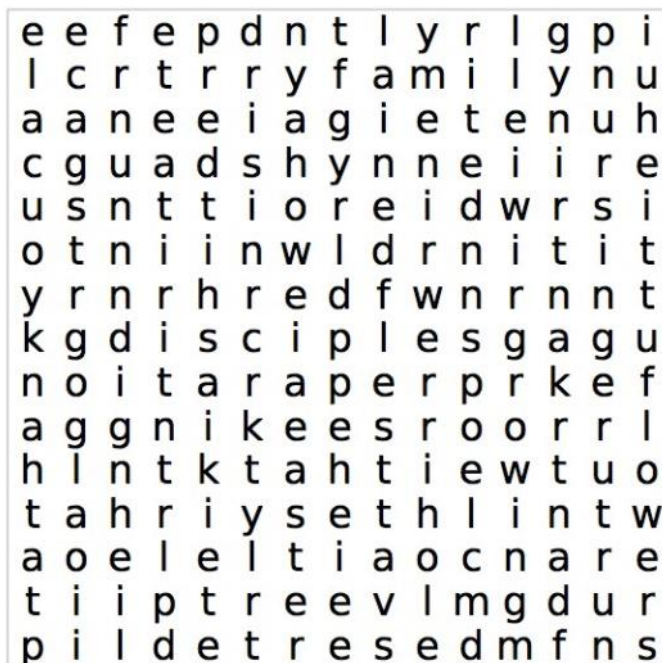
IN CASE THERE IS ONE YOU HAVEN'T TRIED



PUZZLE PAGE

March brings us Lent and Mothering Sunday. Lent is a time of spiritual self-assessment as we prepare for Easter. It is a time to turn to God, and grow closer to him. Mothering Sunday reminds us of not only the

mothers that have loved and raised us, but of Mother Church, who has spiritually loved and nurtured us throughout our Christian pilgrimage. How many words can you find on these themes in this month's Word Search?



lent

spiritual

easter

preparation

fasting

prayer

desert

selfdenial

repentance

seeking

finding

growing

mothers

love

care

nurture

learning

teaching

disciples

worldwide

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thankyou

nursing

family

BEACOM FAMILY FAVOURITES

Coq au Vin

(serves 4)

Ingredients

2 dessert spoons flour sprinkled with salt and pepper
8 chicken thighs skinned - the ones with bone in give more flavour
1 large onion peeled and chopped
6 rashers streaky bacon, chopped
150g button mushrooms - I don't add them as I am allergic!
2 tablespoons oil
1 clove garlic crushed
1 bouquet garni
2 stock cubes
300 ml water
About half a carton or can chopped tomatoes
300 ml red wine

Method

Gently fry the onion, garlic and bacon in 1 tbsp of oil until onion is soft.

Remove from heat and place in a casserole dish.

Place flour and seasoning on a plate and roll each piece of chicken in the mixture then fry in the remaining oil until brown for two or three minutes. Remove from heat and add to casserole.

Wash mushrooms and add along with the bouquet garni.

Add to the same pan the water, stock cubes, wine and tomatoes. Bring this mix to the boil. Pour over the chicken.

Cover casserole dish and place in pre - heated oven for 1 hour 30 mins at reg 4 - 160 deg.

Serve with rice or mashed potato and seasonal veg.

Enjoy!



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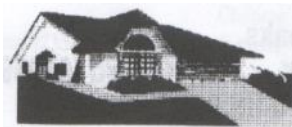
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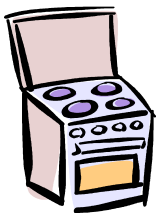
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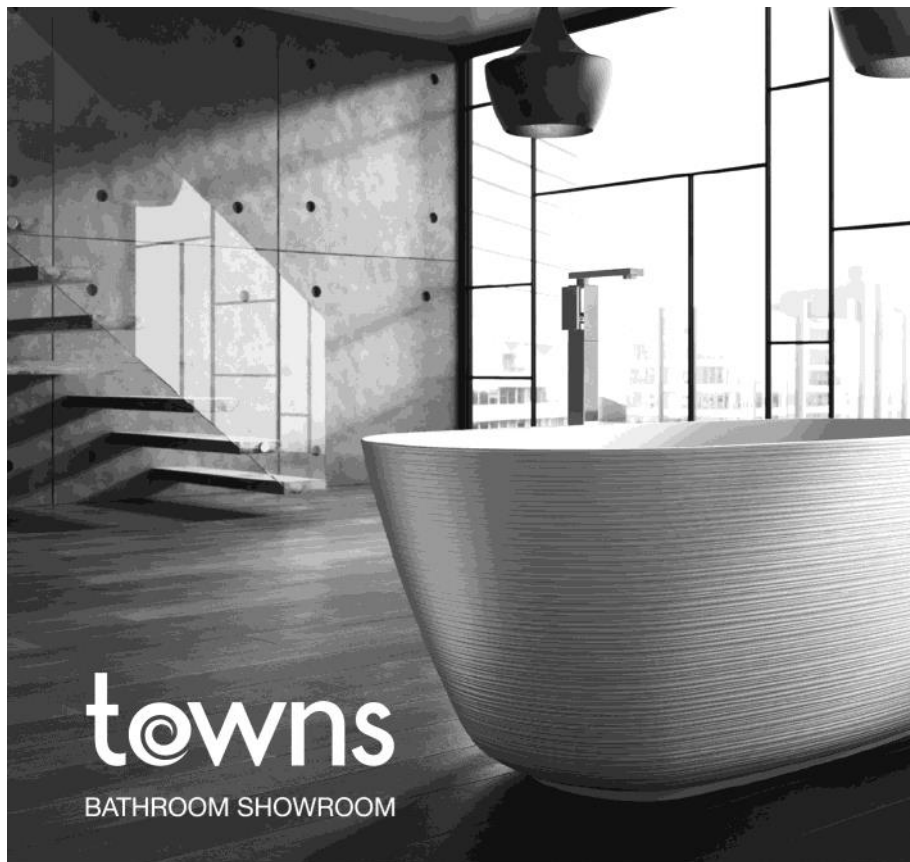
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LOCAL FOR ALL YOUR NEEDS

OPEN MON-FRI 8.35am-6pm SATURDAYS 9am-5pm

TELEPHONE 522072

Who's who in the Parish Church . . .

VICAR:	Richard Worssam 01959 523185
READERS:	Dawn Hallam 01959 526865
	Bill Lattimer 01959 522058
	Margaret Lidbetter 01959 524831
	Mags Southgate 01959 524720
READER EMERITUS:	Peter Downing 01959 522327
PASTORAL ASSISTANTS:	Susan Reid 01959 523234
	Margaret Lidbetter 01959 524831
	Donna Worssam 01959 523185
HONORARY MINISTER:	Chris Reed 01959 523439
CHURCHWARDENS	Margaret Lidbetter 01959 524831
	Russell Edwards 07933 352044

Organist and Choirmaster: Kevin Grafton 01732 452117

Sacristan: Tony Grogan 01959 523649

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Vice Chairman: Margaret Lidbetter

Hon Treasurer: Janet Hunt 01959 523820

Freewill Offering Sec: Mervyn Harris 01959 522813

Hon Secretary: Joan Beacom 01959 524304

PARISH OFFICE

Monday to Friday 10.00am-12.00pm:

Susan Reid,

Clive Southgate

01959 523185

Email: st.bartholomews@otford.net

CHURCH HALL

Manager and Booking Sec: Robert Hunt 01959 523820

MAGAZINE

Editorial team: 01959 523185 Vicki Howie,

Christeen Malan, Clive Southgate, Richard Worssam

Advertisements: Deborah Vigis 01959 523331
st.bartholomews@otford.net

YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S WORK

'First Steps' (for parents and pre-schoolchildren)

Contact: Najen Harris 01959 522813

SUNDAY CLUB (Sundays at 10.00am)

Infants (3-7s)

Juniors (8-11s)

Seniors (12-14)

For all groups contact Donna Worssam 01959 523185

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FELLOWSHIP

Contact: Dawn Hallam 01959 526865

OUTREACH

Chairman of Mission Links:

Andrew Hill 01732 469538

BELLRINGERS

The Tower Captain: Bobbie Fairclough 01959 522696

Secretary: Janet Whitehead 01959 524088 Practice
night: Thursday 7.45-9.15pm

CHOIR

Choirmaster: Kevin Grafton 01732 452117 Practice
night: Friday 8.00-9.30pm New members always
welcome

CHURCH COUNCIL The Vicar and the Churchwardens Margaret Lidbetter* and Russell Edwards, Samantha Barnett, Joan Beacom, Cindy Davies, Dawn Hallam*, Andrew Hill, Mark Holmes, Vicki Howie, Janet Hunt*, Mike Jones, Bill Lattimer, Nick Page, Derek Shilling#, Mags Southgate, Anne Stevens, Mark Tierney