

St Mary's Church, Bromley

Parish Magazine

September 2020

61 College Road Bromley BR1 3QG



www.stmarys-bromley.org.uk

Minimum donation 75p



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craft, games, worship and food.

Cancelled until further notice due to Coronavirus

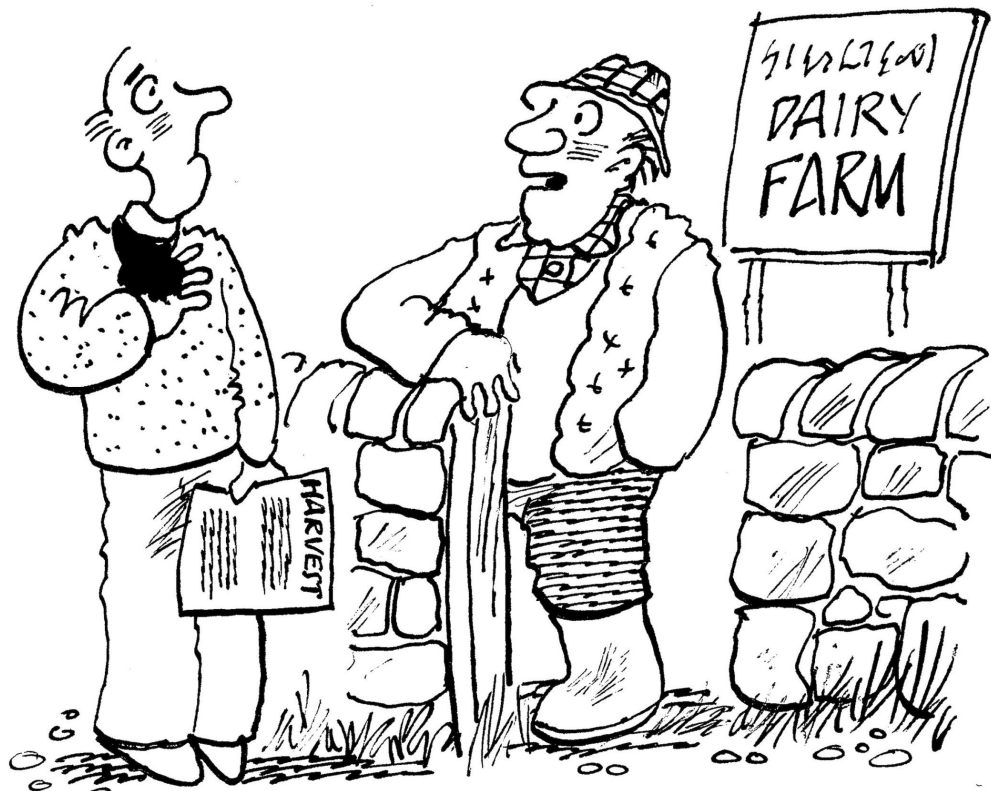
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Of course, Vicar, you are most welcome to some harvest milk. Would you like 4% fat, 3.5% fat, 1% fat, pre-treated, post-treated, homogenised, whole, skimmed, semi-skimmed or flavoured...?

Welcome to the September edition of the Parish magazine

6 months ago it was the beginning of Spring and we were all looking forward to the new life to come. Then lockdown came, so life changed. When walking Douglas in Shaftesbury Park I realised that the signs of Autumn are in the air, early morning mists, thick dew and cobwebs, plus the Autumnal air. Where have the last 6 months gone?

No visiting friends, no outings, no Church, shopping once a week and wearing masks, what have we all been doing? I expect I am not the only one wondering where the time has gone and trying to account for what I have done. I think general inertia overtook me and I have done very little. What have you done to occupy your time-have you learnt a new skill, written letters, completed Jigsaws, kept a diary, kept up with Church Services on the internet, did you follow the saga of Dean Robert and his cat? Did you even read the Parish Magazine on line? The editors would love to know how you have coped. Please email (joc1947@msn.com) or write to me with your stories. Jo Clark

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Editor for October 2020: Jill Atkinson

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Please support the editors by giving articles and notices to them by the copy date.



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Wednesday

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Thursday

Cancelled due to Coronavirus outbreak

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Disclaimer

The opinions, beliefs and viewpoints expressed by the various participants in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs and viewpoints of the Editors.

Vicar's Article

WHO CAN YOU SEE?



I like words and am delighted when one I have known for a long time takes on a new meaning. I remember it striking me that the first part of vinegar is French for wine. Now I knew that is wine if left in the open air it spoils and goes sour. So I was pleased to discover that a French word for sour is aigre. So vinegar means sour wine in French. Well I found it fun anyway!

Similarly neighbour means someone living nearby. Now neigh means being close to and bour is old English for farmer. This is common to the Boers, Dutch farmers who had gone from Holland to South Africa and sadly we had a war with at the beginning of the Twentieth Century. Perhaps you don't think of the person next door as a close farmer. But you can see how words with a long history would have been from an agricultural context. Or you do think of them as peasants anyway? Now words are not just about their derivations. They change form as they move through time and from nation to nation.

On a recent holiday I went for a walk in the countryside around where we were staying. The fields and woods were delightful. I found hares scurrying away from me. I also came across an enclosure keeping pheasants. The land was flat and that gave the impression that the skies were bigger. It was a wonderful afternoon. One of the difficulties was that at some points I had to walk along quite busy roads. Being out of town there were no pavements and so being alert to the traffic was very important. The general rule is to walk on the right hand side of the road so you can see the traffic approaching you. But on a tight corner the traffic could be obscured if you are on the inside of the curve. It is safer to be on the outside of the curve and have a better view even if the traffic is now coming from behind.

But even if you know where the traffic is the roads were not big enough to allow passing traffic and a pedestrian so I had to step out of the road on to the verge. As a car approached I looked toward the driver and waved. I was pleased and a little surprised that the driver waved back. Well I had done them a favour and they did not have to move to the centre of the road or slow down. They had been as active in looking for pedestrians and seeking their welfare as I was to be safe. So each time a car passed I would wave at them. The great majority of drivers waved back.

Why I am I making something of this? I suppose because I was pleasantly surprised by behaviour that I not been told about when learning to drive with the Highway Code or even in the Country Code as a Scout. My other source of surprise was finding a sense of society and mutual respect that is often absent in town. How many times as a driver do we spot someone we know walking on the pavement or as a pedestrian see a friend drive past us. And yet there are oblivious to us. Maybe we wave and it is not returned. Maybe we feel a little foolish.

I think a lot of this is about the scarcity of people in the countryside compared to the town. The overload of so many people in a town makes us insular and not expect to be noticed let alone interacted with. In the early months of lock down Gill and I would make an effort to go for walks. Exercise is good for both mind and body. On our travels we would pass people and I would gently wish people a good day. Most people returned the greeting but usually after stepping out of their reverie. They had not expected to be noticed. Often these walks happened in our local countryside. It is not the place it is the culture that we have of self sufficiency, feeling overloaded, maybe even anxious about making the first step.

On my holiday walk I liked people who were neighbourly even though it was such a fleeting experience. I learnt something new about sharing an encounter that we both recognised because we were looking out for each other. All of this should have been familiar as our faith says 'love one another as you love your self'. Who is my neighbour? Well it is the person that you see. Is it easier in the country where people are more rare but just as important in our towns that can be rather impersonal.



Alan Keeler

The Vicar's Day off is Friday

Alison Tyler

Tell God your plans

and wait for Him to laugh, Who could have predicted the pandemic which has thrown all our plans into disarray?

Ask God for his plans for your life on the other hand and prepare to be amazed and surprised. I had this unex-

pected and extraordinary conversation with a young

woman I met recently, who she told me that as a young teenager she had decided that she wanted a relationship with God, rather than just a religion to follow, and so prayed at every opportunity. Once you commit your life to learning God's will and opening yourself up to answering His call and inviting him into your life, she said, you never know what will happen next or where you will end up.

Now I know and believe this too, but sometimes find myself forgetting, especially during lockdown, and when unthinking and under pressure, so I have consciously used some time recently to pay fresh attention and to listen to God's messages. She, the young woman I met, is a wonderful example of how as Christians we can support and encourage one another just by sharing our faith with each other and our experiences of encounter with God- reminding each other of how much God loves us. When our own faith feels wimpish and weedy we can allow the faith and joy of others to help us, encourage us and build us up more strongly.

The pandemic has provided us not only with a degree of boredom, possible loneliness and constraint, but also with many new and different opportunities to learn things, practice new skills, grow lots of plants , do lots of sewing, make scones and host cream teas (whatever we have explored and enjoyed really) and read many books, in my case a lot of thrillers and theology. It has been hard work. We have perhaps looked again at our lives and how we live them and then made some changes. Perhaps we have appreciated our life more, as a gift to be shared as much as possible, and not as a possession to be hung onto. Maybe we have seen our experiences as a reminder, or as the beginning of the realisation for the first time, that we live our lives not by choice, but by grace and that our life itself is not only a gift, but a blessing. If we have been through difficult and testing times during the pandemic, maybe of illness or loss or heavy responsibility it may have taught us more about what we really value, and what is important to us. We might also have had the love, support, and care of others to encourage, inspire, and sustain us. I hope we have offered shared and received the all the things that we have or need to have had in the lockdown.



So now we are beginning to move out of lockdown just a little more, taking all our locked down experiences into the future. It's not quite time for that celebration nor yet for a comprehensive memorial of all that has been lost, it is though still hard work and still possible to give thanks always and every day for God's great goodness at all times and in all our different circumstances.
Alison Tyler.



"But did they plough the fields and scatter at a safe distance?"

And were you a brownie?



And were you a brownie? And did you delight

To dress up in uniform shining and bright.

And had you a belt round your very small waist?

And did you love cooking, and scissors and paste?

And were you a pixie, a gnome or an elf?

And that little girl was she really yourself?

And that little girl, was she really yourself?

Mary Chater



It is quite likely that you, or someone in your family, was a brownie – a recent sur-



vey discovered that over 50% of women questioned had at some point belonged to the Guide movement - & even allowing for any possible bias, that means at least one in four women across the UK has been actively involved for at least a year.

The same survey found that 70% of those who had been involved believe that this had a positive impact on their life, and 20% believe it contributed “a lot”. They were more likely to be involved in volunteering themselves, and scored more highly for qualities such as confidence, independence, team work and leadership. They also spoke about all the opportunities they had been given – including activities at camp (such as abseiling, canoeing, even escape rooms). Certainly, almost all my foreign travel has been through either official Guiding trips, or independently with some of my many friends made through Guiding activities.

You may be less aware that a completely new programme was phased in in September 2018, with most of the traditional badges being pensioned off, & a whole new range of Unit Meeting Activities, Skills builders & interest badges being introduced, to offer more of the activities the girls both want and need in the 21st Century.

The 13th Bromley (St Mary's) brownies group existed all the way back in 1926, although at some point it must have lapsed, as it was re-registered in 1951 - and it has continued to meet ever since. When Sue Lawrance recruited me to help with the 3rd Bromley (St Mary's) Guides in 1976, there

was also a 3rd Bromley Brownie group meeting on Mondays before the guides (anyone remember that?). Sadly, a shortage of leaders (rather than children) led to its closure.

It is difficult to predict when GirlGuiding will allow indoor Brownie & Guide meetings to return, or quite what shape or form they will take, at least in the short-term. However, I do know that I will need more support than I currently have (my one full-time regular adult helper has resigned) to keep our brownie group running smoothly, whether it be online or in the hall.

The ideal volunteer would be young, enthusiastic, great with youngsters, and with not only unlimited spare time but also a wonderful sense of humour. Naturally, she should also be prepared to submit details for a db's check – and I would love her to be an expert at risk assessment. A bit of experience of Girlguiding would help – but isn't essential. If you know any such person, please direct them to me!

As you will appreciate however, very few, if any, of us could match all these ideals, which is why I am trying to recruit more than one new helper, so that we have a team of volunteers who between us can continue to offer the memorable experiences shared by brownies at St Mary's for the past 69 years. The current school generation has missed out through Covid19, and volunteering through Girlguiding is one way in which we can support young people as they adapt to the post-Covid world. It will also open volunteers to lots of opportunities, & will look good on a CV. There is lots more information at www.girlguiding.org.uk

Please spread the word! Thank you,
Jill Atkinson



One facility that has now reopened after lockdown is the tea shop.

A cup of joy!

A tea shop is a wondrous place
Where I for one just love to be!
A place to rest from life's harsh pace
And sit and drink a cup of tea!

Indeed, it's time to take a rest!
From all life's pressures, take a break!
And just today it might be best
To have a slice of home-made cake!

Letter to the Editor

A view from the pew



We had a cruise booked for September – a big holiday for a big birthday, and to make up for no holiday last year. Knowing us, it wasn't to exotic climes or distant lands, it was a circumnavigation of Britain.

Places we had never quite reached and a few we were happy to return to, were included in a two-week voyage from Dover. It would have included Guernsey and the Scilly Isles, neither of which we had explored. It intended to give us time in Dublin: a chance to revisit Lewis and go for the first time to Shetland. Aberdeen and Edinburgh were also on the itinerary, giving us an opportunity to explore them further.



However, as with so much of normal life this year, the cruise has been cancelled. We have our money back, and now plan to go to a self-catering hideaway in Hay-on-Wye, the “second-hand book capital of the world”. It will be lovely to be close to the Black Mountains, Brecon Beacons and the Wye Valley. But no sea, unlike the cruise!



So what do we look for in a holiday? Quite often when it is drizzling and not very inviting, we will say “Just like being on holiday”. Having spent all our holidays in the UK (apart from one cruise to Norway!) and many under canvas, we expect our holidays to be wet and windy. We don't look for, or particularly want, strong sunshine. However, we do need hills and countryside. And I do want to see the sea. But not this year, not after seeing Bournemouth at a weekend.

If it isn't the weather, then what is it that we want from a holiday? Getting away and leaving (most of) your responsibilities behind. Having space to expand your mind and body with exercise and views. Regaining a sense of perspective from country ways and village life. Slowing down and resetting the pace of living. Forgetting the tyranny of the clock, appointments, deadlines, meetings, timetables, connections, decisions, invitations, lists, adjudication, rehearsals, advice, meeting and greeting, leaving and grieving, no-time-for-thinking, - just for a short while.



Is this not what we have been experiencing for six months, at home with the pandemic? Despite the way it has ravaged parts of society, some of us may have had the opportunity to step back, re-evaluate and consider our priorities. How will that change our actions in the coming months? Now that we have had time to think through what we do, and why we do it. What will be **our** new “normal”?

Peter Fall

Oberammergau

Oberammergau is a small village in Bavaria, Germany. When in 1633 bubonic plague was sweeping through Europe, a man travelling back home to Oberammergau for Christmas brought the plague with him. It spread throughout the village. According to local tradition, a vow was made that if God would spare them, the villagers would perform a play depicting the life and passion of Jesus Christ every ten years. The village was saved from all effects of the plague and the villagers kept their word and first performed the Passion Play in 1634. It has since been performed every ten years. (The 2020 Play has been rescheduled for 2022, due to the pandemic)

Death stalked the streets in the Bavarian village
As the plague brought havoc, death and despair,
Europe was ravaged as millions died,
Neither man or woman or child was spared.

They gathered together in desperation
A vow was given – if they could be saved
A play would be made of the Saviour’s life
This was the promise the villagers gave.

Miracle of miracles their village survived,
Not one more death their lives had been saved,
So every ten years this Play is performed
To honour the God who had come to their aid.

Prayers were made and the answer came
A heavenly lesson we too can own,
That He who dwells in ineffable light
Is also the One who brings blessings down. *By Megan Carter*

Violet's Story

The Red Cross society is a neutral, impartial, humanitarian organisation. The international Red Cross and Red Crescent movement was formed in 1870.

All the Commonwealth countries were involved in the fight against The Nazi regime and the war against Japanese forces contributing what they could depending upon their geographical location and resources.

During the war The Red Cross were involved in many ways particularly in sending food parcels to Prisoners of War (POW) and needy civilians. They assisted in the distribution of mail to and from the POW's and their families.

The Canadian Red Cross became concerned about families in GB whose homes and possessions had been lost or destroyed during the heavy bombing raids. The Canadian Quilters began making quilts to be distributed to homeless families in the UK. As a war orphan I did not fit into that category and was still hospitalised. In 1941 I received a doll who I named Violet. She was beautifully dressed in crisp white cotton long sleeved dress, knitted vest, frilled bloomers, and socks and shoes. She was cherished, she even had her own cradle to lie or sit in.

When I started my nursing career Violet was packed up and stored.

Years later when our sons were young, we were invited to play dates for the children to interact whilst the Mothers had time to chat and drink tea.

When we hosted the children, Violet was put in the toy box for boys and girls and she was joined by the black male doll that I was given by the Swiss Red Cross in 1942. It was during this time that she lost her socks and shoes and the black doll was broken. When we moved to Bromley in 1966 Violet was packed away in the loft for over 30 years.

In 1999 I joined the Patchwork and Quilting course at the Kentwood Adult Education Centre. There I met skilled quilters and overheard a conversation



discussing the WW2 quilts they were finding in Charity shops. They were overjoyed when I mentioned Violet. They had already planned talks and exhibitions for the quilts and wanted to add Violet to their exhibits. Immediately I pronounced that I would wash and starch the clothing only to hear the words No No absolutely No.

Violet left Canada from either Montreal or a Halifax port in 1941. The USA was neutral and although they were supplying food and essential raw materials etc to GB they had to leave from a Canadian port. The St. Lawrence river was blocked with ice for several months in the winter.

Violet has travelled throughout GB as a part of The WW2 quilt exhibition. In 1941 her most dangerous journey was crossing the Atlantic Ocean in a Merchant Navy Ship when the Atlantic was full of German U boats whose main aim was to sink ships especially the Merchant Navy to fulfil Hitler's command to starve GB into submission.

Jean Dodds

Some observations out of the coronavirus crisis...

When you wear a tight mask around your face, a hat, a face shield, a gown, two pairs of gloves, and something to protect your shoes, it is a totally different (nursing) thing; and, as nurses, you have to stay in that side room or unit for 12-and-a-half hours. It is really draining physically. You...can't even go to the loo because your patients are terribly sick. They are on maximum (life support), so you can't take your eyes off that monitor. – *ITU nurse on the reality of nursing in PPE*

Those who have found God in digital church may want to keep God there rather than discover transforming participation in the Body of Christ.... We need to find creative new ways of combining physical gathering with the virtual. – *Canon Mark Collinson, Principal of the School of Mission Winchester Diocese.*

No donations are coming in. Everybody is at home, and the last thing they expect is charities ... sending emails asking for money. But at the same time, we have projects to run, staff to pay...– *director of a humanitarian charity*

Mothers' Union Matters



Mothers' Union is changing lives up and down the country. In particular, the re-imagining of AFIA

(Away From It All) holidays is now benefitting around 2000 individuals a year throughout Britain and Ireland. AFIA has always provided holidays – some in MU-owned caravans – and financial help for parents rebuilding relationships with their children by enabling them to go out for a treat, to the cinema or McDonalds. AFIA provides a safe place to restore and rebuild relationships and to find peace and rest.

Now Mothers' Union members are finding even more imaginative ways of playing to the strengths and commitment of MU to support women and children. So it now partnering with other agencies, such as Women's Aid groups and Welcare, who put forward the women and children for an AFIA break. Then, secondly, linking with funding and provision, such as Field Studies Centres with a Kids Fund grant. Where there are fewer MU members this has proved a viable and valuable alternative to the usual model. Children and parents have expressed delight at the outcomes. 10-year-old Charlie said "The best thing was making new friends and the coolest thing was seeing a dolphin. My adventure was out of this world." Mum said "It has been a fabulous three days – no one wants to go home, and memories have been made that will last a lifetime. Thank you to all the staff at the centre – they were fabulous and kind. Thank you, Women's Aid for your continued support. Special thank you to Mothers' Union – without you this would not have been possible. Please never underestimate the impact this break has had on all the families that have participated. No words can express our gratitude. It has been life-changing."

Where there are more MU members, seaside breaks with organised activities and the support of a large team of MU volunteers have been offering space for rest and recovery for families. A Granny said "It's lovely to just stop struggling and help each other; we don't often have that chance. We so appreciate being here."

Part of the contributions from the "virtual" sale of plants, and from any other extra funds you can raise, will go to MU causes such as these. Directly benefitting women and children in their life struggles. Practical help for those who are in need: a good slogan for the largest women-led volunteer-led movement in the world.

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CHOIR AND MUSIC AT ST MARY'S

Thankfully, the organ is playing again in St Mary's!

Though singing is still not permitted, hymns are off the menu, and the choir is furloughed on half pay*, it is lovely to have organ music before and after the service. In addition there is music during the communion, sometimes based on the anthem the choir would have sung.

The virtual choir is still ready for action whenever we are needed, and so will be preparing an anthem each week during the autumn, alone at home, just in case. Kept in touch via the Newsletter, the choir continues to listen to and learn music as a team, separated in distance but not in spirit. Our neighbours hear great music, whether they like it or not!

We had a virtual choir lunch apart, and can't wait to get back together to exchange experiences that haven't yet been reported, and to hear if the vocal chords are still functioning. And when we hear each other sing for the first time again, we can say "You should be a tenor. Tenor twelve feet further away"!



Finally, according to a recent survey, replacing words with the names of musical instruments often goes undetected. It's organ a good cause.

Peter Fall

*Joke. Choir members are not actually paid.



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Still learning in lockdown....

After a while, you grow surprisingly attached to the crops you have watched growing in a field.

I am more likely to recognise a dog I have met before than its owner – but then, dogs come a lot closer.

Left unattended, grass grows as tall as me.

A sunhat is useful for keeping hair under control.

It is easy to put some things off for far longer than they would take to do.

When you have a fringe, it grows more quickly than the rest of your hair.

Once you decide to “grow it out”, it then grows very slowly.

People in the country really are more likely to talk to you when you pass than those in suburbia.

If rules become too complicated, it is difficult to remember and abide by them.

There are all sorts of interesting walks and places to visit around Bromley – but none of them equate to the South Downs Way.

I have now accumulated so many new passwords and logins that I struggle to remember any of them.

Jill Atkinson.

Paul Tomlin.

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St James the Least of All

On how to survive a weekend away with the young people



The Rectory

St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren

I think your idea for both our Confirmation groups getting together for a weekend away – socially distanced, of course - was excellent and our meeting last week drew most of the plans together. We didn't take any minutes, so let me record the decisions I believe we made.

Since all of us have to sleep far apart at the centre, I am prepared to spend the nights at a local hotel. By chance, I have found that there is a four star one only a few miles away, so I have booked myself in.

As the dining area in the youth centre may be cramped, I am also willing to have dinner each evening at the hotel, thereby creating more space for the rest of you. An additional sadness is that, since breakfast at the hotel is not served until 8am, I will not be able to join you either for your pre-breakfast dip in the nearby stream. It would be grossly unfair to expect you to pack lunch for me, so I will arrange for the hotel to provide me with a picnic hamper for one which I can have while you all enjoy your cheese and pickle sandwiches.

I think it will be an excellent learning experience if you prepare all the teaching sessions yourself, but be assured that I will always be on hand to give the advice of experience. That large armchair near the fire in the common room seems to be the best place for me to sit, so I can keep an eye on proceedings, while I take on the responsibilities for stoking the fire. This reminds me; do make sure that the young people are encouraged to saw enough logs each morning for me to fulfil my obligations.

Naturally, my arthritis will prevent me being able to accompany you on your afternoon hikes, but I will cheerfully park my car wherever you leave the minibus, to provide a second vehicle in case of emergencies. I do not mind

in the least waiting all those long hours until you get back; I have already found an attractive tea shop in the village.

I am fully aware that not sleeping or dining at the centre, not being responsible for preparing the teaching, nor being involved on the walks will mean that my contributions will be ever so slightly limited, but these are sacrifices I gladly make in order to give you further experience in your ministerial career.

Your loving uncle, Eustace

Platinum Wedding

With thanks to the Daily Telegraph.

I read this notice of celebration of a Platinum Wedding in the Daily Telegraph.

A couple married at St Mary's 70 years ago. Does anyone remember them? BOSWELL-WHITE- On July 22nd at St Mary's Plaistow, Bromley Kent. David to Joan. Now with family of four children, four grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Are politicians the oldest profession?

A surgeon, an architect and a politician were arguing as to whose profession was the oldest. Said the surgeon:
"Eve was made from Adam's rib, and that surely was a surgical operation."

"Maybe," admitted the architect, "but prior to that, order was created out of chaos, and that was an architectural job."

"But," the politician pointed out in triumph, "somebody had to have created the chaos in the first place!"

Who do you think you are?

I remember once, many years ago, helping take a school party to the pantomime at the Churchill Theatre (oh yes I did!) and we sat in the front few rows. I am not mentioning this to remind you all of the delights of pantomime, but to share a discovery I made on that occasion. The staff were roughly evenly split. Half were desperate for someone in the course of the production to summon a teacher or teachers from the front row up onto the stage – and the other half were equally fervently praying that this wouldn't happen. (It didn't). Those of you who know me well will know which group I fell into.

I am sure that different personalities favour different styles of church services. Some services will suit those who are happy when things are predictable, others prefer a more lively expression of their faith. Some may be fearful of being put on the spot – a reason the front pews aren't the first filled? And perhaps this is why online services have appealed – no one is going to be asked to do anything outside their comfort zone, or to be judged if they don't know when to stand or sit. But equally, I know from PCC discussions, that others would welcome a more interactive style of service.

Last month I wrote about different approaches to giving money to the church, and asked that you considered how long it has been since you last reviewed your contribution in the light of your current circumstances. I tried to relate different types of appeal to different biblical characters. So – which personalities do we have in the congregation at St Mary's, and how have we all responded?

I am delighted to say that Joseph of Arimathea has several followers, and we have had generous "one-off" donations which are keeping us going, not only from current congregation members but also a further contribution from the estate of Heather Hibbert. And several of those who previously donated through the stewardship envelope scheme have found inventive ways of continuing to do so – for example by passing their donations to other church members, or by setting up standing orders. We are now promoting "contactless giving" at the end of services, and this is also generating income. However, the motivation for this generosity remains unknown – for example,

were any readers inspired by my latest facts & figures? And as for my appeal to be like “Martha” & review your giving, I have absolutely no idea whether the majority of readers have done so but decided to leave it the same; or whether in most cases this remains on the “to do” list (or even the “don’t intend to do” list). Come to that, I have absolutely no idea how many people even got as far as reading the magazine anyway!

So, a further plea. You have been spared a stewardship campaign this summer. If you were intending to change your regular donation to church funds, to set up a new standing order, or to make a one-off donation, it isn’t too late. I freely admit that I took several weeks to follow my own advice. And if you have struggled to find the church bank details on the website, you can find all the information under the heading “Giving” – or to make it really easy, the details are: St Marys Plaistow PCC account number: 42417198, and sort code: 60-04-02. Jill Atkinson.

September sees St Michael and All Angels Day. Here are a few lines from an ancient Celtic poem about the archangel...

Saint Michael

Saint Michael, angel of the sea,
Lord of the horses he,
Saint Michael, of the angels king,
Of war, of shepherding;
On steed he flies across the skies;
The first-fruits of the harvest corn,
The first-fruits of the flock-lambs born,
Are his, he meets the soul forlorn.

The saints and angels watch o’erhead,
Their wings and prayers o’erspread:
The righteous ones in heaven wait,
St Peter at the gate;
In might arrayed they shield and aid;
Be with us e’er, archangel powers,
Be with us, angels, life’s long hours.

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

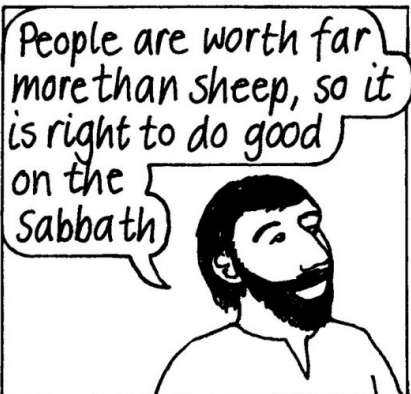
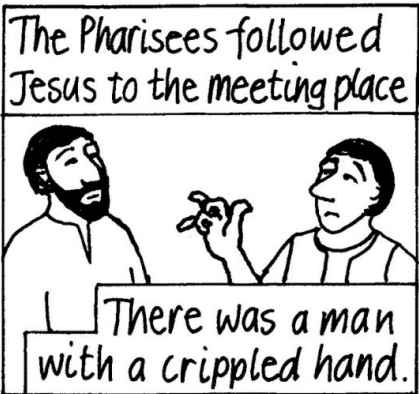
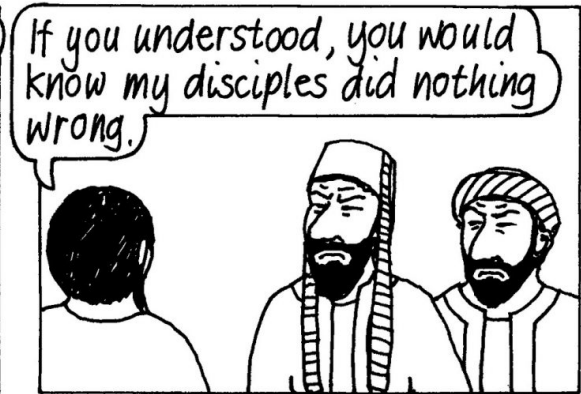
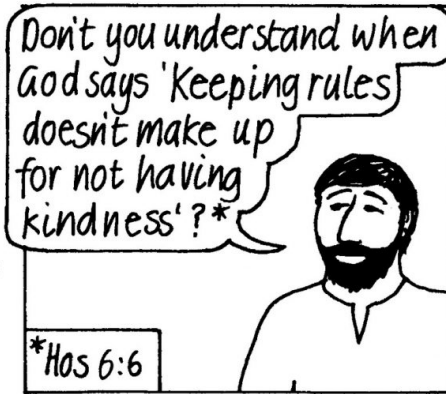
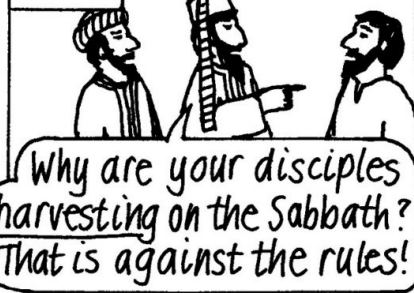
It can be read in the Bible in Matthew 12:1-14, Luke 6:1-11

The Pharisees watched Jesus to see if he broke any of God's laws, or the rules they had made up to stop the laws being broken.

Jesus' disciples were hungry so they picked some wheat from a field as they walked.



The Pharisees said to Jesus



HYMN: The story behind ... ABIDE WITH ME

One of the most famous hymns in the world came out of Brixham, near Torbay, Devon, in 1847.

In those days it was a poor, obscure fishing village, and the vicar was the Rev Henry Francis Lyte. It was a discouraging place to be a pastor, but Henry felt that God wanted him there, and so he stayed, though it was lonely work, and he suffered constant ill health.

By the time he was 54, Henry had contracted tuberculosis and asthma, and he and his family knew he was dying. It would have been so easy for him to look back on his life and feel a complete failure. What had he ever much accomplished? And yet – and yet – Henry knew that in life it is not worldly success that matters, but how much we respond to Jesus Christ, and how much we follow Him.

In September of 1847 Henry was preparing to travel to the south of France, as was the custom for people with tuberculosis at that time. One day before he left, he read the story in the gospel of Luke about the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. They were met by Jesus on the day of His resurrection, and they invited Him to stay with them because it was getting late. “Abide with us”, they said “for it is towards evening.”

“Abide with us – for it is toward evening.” These words struck a chord with Henry, who knew that it was getting ‘towards evening’ in his life. So, he sat down and wrote this hymn as a prayer to God – (*the following are just some of the verses*)

Abide with me

*Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide!
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.*

*Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim; its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou who changest not, abide with me.*

Shortly after Henry wrote that hymn, he preached his last sermon. He was so ill he practically crawled into the pulpit to do so. A few weeks later, in Nice, France, he died, and so of course he never knew that his hymn would go on to become greatly loved the world over.

WORSHIP DIARY

Open for Worship

St. Mary's has now been open for Sunday worship for two months. Some people will feel confident to join wider social gatherings. Others may feel they are vulnerable and wish to wait. Both of these choices will be equally respected.

We continue to make worship available online from St. Mary's.

Services in the church building will have to observe social distancing:

You will have to wear a mask unless you are exempt or while sharing in leading the service from the front. Masks will be available in church if you have forgotten your own one.

People will be exempt if they have breathing conditions or an illness or disability that prevents them from using a face covering. Children under 11 are also exempt.

If you are exempt and would gently like people to know, we are now supplying badges for you to wear, and keep when you leave. You might find them useful when out in the community.

Hand sanitizer will be available in the church.

Individuals or social bubbles will have to keep 2m apart.

There will be cleaning between events.

We will keep a record of people who attend. We may well know a person's name and have their phone number. If we ask for this information it will only be used to help inform people if we have had a visitor who subsequently is found to have the virus.

What is our worship?

St. Mary's continues to make worship available with services through its Facebook page.

You do not have to be active on social media to do this.

Simply use your computer browser to view

<https://www.facebook.com/stmarysbromley/>

We now offer the following:

A live streamed service of Holy Communion from 10.25am on a Sunday. It will then be available as a catchup shortly after the service ends. In the church the distribution of Holy Communion is by bread and not wine. Sadly there is no singing and exchanging the Peace is without contact. We will not be offering coffee after the service.

This is followed by a social video conference using Zoom, a sort of after church coffee time at 12.15am. The log in is found on the current Newsletter,

see below.

Compline or Night Prayer from 8.00 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays on our Facebook Page.

Private prayer in the church on Wednesdays 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

The words for the services are available on St. Mary's website:

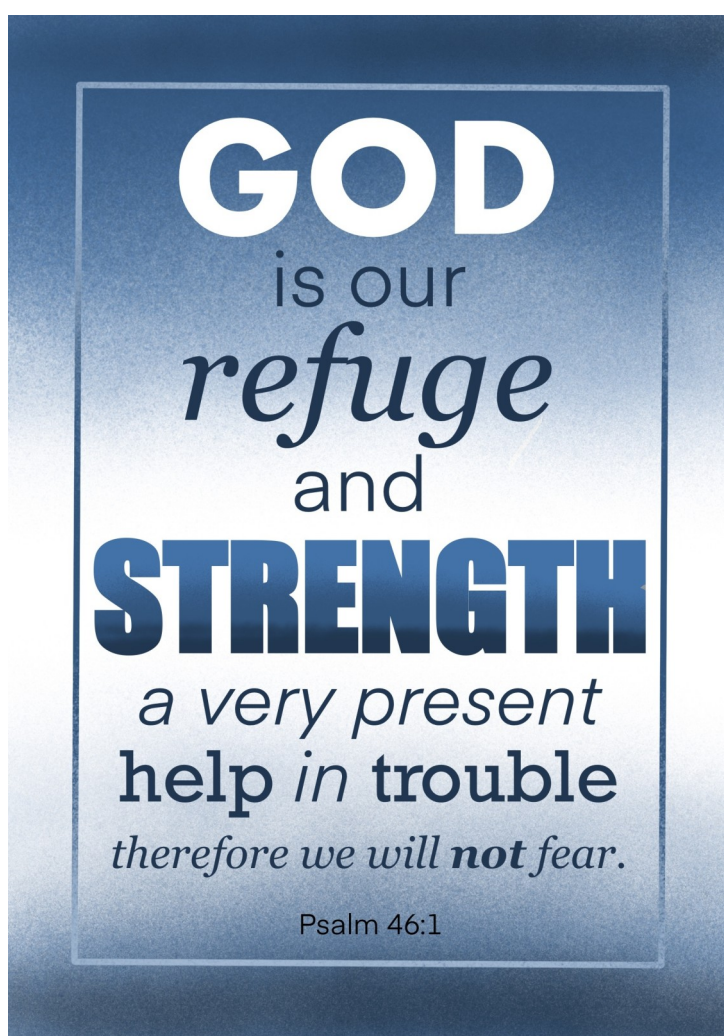
There will be a sheet of A4 that can be printed out.

Or the words can be downloaded to the viewing device. Set this up with a split screen. Display the words on one side of the screen and the video on the other. If you have difficulties please contact Alan Keeler.

If you find printing out or screen splitting difficult please ask Elaine Wakefield to post you a copy.

NEWSLETTER

This is distributed to our immediate congregation. A copy can be found on St. Mary's website. Choose the options Current news and then Pew Paper. If you would like a copy posted please contact Elaine Wakefield.



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