

# Saints ALIVE

*The magazine of:*  
*All Saints, Leighton Buzzard*  
*St. Nicholas, Hockliffe*  
*St. Michael's, Eggington*  
*St. Michael and All Angels,*  
*Billington*  
*The Good Shepherd, Sandhills*

April 2021

70p



## **Inside:**

**Fr Bernard:** the Easter Vigil brings light out of darkness

All Saints' own choir is leading a special performance of  
**Hallelujah Chorus for Easter**

with members of church choirs from all over Bedfordshire

**AND**

**Farewell to Nick and Esther Clarke,**

moving to pastures new, leaving a massive hole and a wealth of memories

# All Saints Leighton Buzzard

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# *Easter 2021*

*by Rev'd Dr. Bernard Minton*



Christmass is inseparable from Midnight Mass. The Wisdom of Solomon declares that “while gentle silence enveloped all things, and night in its swift course was now half gone, Thy all-powerful word leaped from heaven, from the royal throne” (18:14-15). This established the tradition of celebrating the birth of Christ in the midst of the darkness of night. Midnight Mass, with its lights shining in the deep darkness, symbolises something powerful and beyond words about the birth of hope when all seems lost; about the romance of God seeking out a world wrapped in darkness and slumber.



Easter is associated with the dawn, and the rising of the sun. Christians quite often meet together on hills before dawn on Easter Day to welcome the rising sun, symbolising the Resurrection of Christ, and in memory of the women going to the – as it turned out – empty tomb “early, while it was still dark” (John 20:1). There is also a special service that marks this time, the Easter Vigil Service, the Easter version of Midnight Mass.

My earliest memories of this service are stumbling into church in the evening to listen to Bible readings in the dark, before a fire was kindled. In those days, in the early 1980’s, the service was still held on Holy Saturday night in a truncated form, where it was held at all. But by the end of that decade, our church had caught up with the ancient practice of starting that service, not at night, but in the pre-dawn gloom, so that as it reaches its climax, the dawn light springs up to greet the Easter Candle and the risen Christ it symbolises.

Ever since then Easter has for me meant a horribly early start, and a service that begins in the dark of night, with a defiant fire kindled, and the new Paschal Candle blessed and lit. Then we listen to the story of redemption in candle-lit Bible Readings, before the great Easter Song, the Exultet, is sung, followed by the Gloria, said for the first time since Ash Wednesday, accompanied by bells and party-poppers and anything else we can find to make a joyful noise! Finally, we bless the font and renew our vows, and celebrate a Eucharist as the sun rises.

We have held this service at St Mary's in Old Linslade for the last few years but, along with so much else, it was not possible in 2020. We were shut out of our churches, so I did the best I could on my own in the Vicarage garden! This year we will be back, at 5:30 am in St Mary's! The service will be recorded live and either streamed immediately, or later that day, connectivity depending. You are welcome to join us in person (if you think it safe) or remotely, to share this experience of joy and light.

*Fr. Bernard Minton*

## *Our present pattern of services across the Ouzel Valley Team*

### **All Saints**

#### **Sundays:**

**Please note new times which allow for cleaning between services**

8am Holy Communion

9.30am Parish Eucharist

11.30am

1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday (until Jan 1<sup>st</sup> 2021):

All Age "Service with a difference"

2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Holy Baptism

6pm Said Evening Prayer

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday: followed by Benediction

#### **Weekdays:**

##### **Holy Communion**

7.30pm Tuesday

(Service of Healing on 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday)

12.00pm Wednesday (**Not presently happening.**)

10.00am Thursday

9.00am Saturday

**Morning Prayer:** St. Hugh's Chapel

9.00am Monday – Friday

**Evening Prayer:** St. Hugh's Chapel

4.30pm Monday – Friday

### **St. Barnabas, Linslade**

#### **Sundays:**

8am Said Eucharist

10am Parish Eucharist

6pm Evensong

[www.linslade-parish.org.uk](http://www.linslade-parish.org.uk)

**During Lockdown, services in Heath & Reach, Eggington and Hockliffe are being shared by Zoom from each church in rotation at 10am. For details please contact Fr Noel McGeeney.**

### **St. Leonard's, Heath & Reach**

#### **Sundays: Occasional services**

8am Holy Communion

For details please visit:

[www.saintleonardschurch.com](http://www.saintleonardschurch.com)

### **St. Michael's, Eggington**

#### **Sundays: Occasional services**

### **St. Nicholas', Hockliffe**

#### **Sundays: Occasional services**

### **St. Michael's and All Angels, Billington**

#### **Sundays:**

11.15am Morning Prayer

### **Good Shepherd, Greenleas School, Sandhills:**

#### **Sundays at 9.45am:**

1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>: Communion

2<sup>nd</sup>: Messy Church

4<sup>th</sup>: All Age Worship

*Service times may vary.*

*For details of services and all other events, please see the websites.*

**Sunday Saints:** for age 3+ year olds, meets during 9.30am Sunday service at All Saints.

**All Saints Toddler Time:** meets in All Saints on Wednesdays during term time.

Morning session 9.30 – 11am every week; afternoon session 1.30pm-3pm, except 1<sup>st</sup> Weds of month.

£1.50 per parent / carer & child; 50p extra per child; refreshments included: **restart in September.**

**ACTIVE:** (Senior Youth Group for age 11+) **not meeting at present because of a lack of leaders.**

**If you could help, please contact the office.**

**Young Adults:** meets fortnightly on Tuesdays at 8pm. See Facebook page "All Saints Young Adults".

**Bereavement Café:** a support group offering friendship and understanding.

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month, 2.30-4pm The Spire Coffee Shop, All Saints

**Choir Practice:** Friday evenings, 7pm for 30 minutes for all members.

**Bellringers:** Practice on Monday, 7.30pm-9.30pm.

**Spire Coffee Shop:** Tuesday, Friday & Saturday 10am-2pm.

*Contact Details on Page 2.*

## ***News Roundup***

Services are gradually re-starting, observing all government guidelines to keep everyone safe. Inevitably, things will change, but at the moment, the plan is:

- Tuesday evening services will restart from 13<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm;
- Sunday 6pm Said Evening Prayer from 18<sup>th</sup> April (no choir allowed yet);
- Sunday 8am & 11.30am will re-start in May.

Please contact the office for details.

We will keep our website and Facebook page updated.

<https://allsaintslb.org.uk/>

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



## ***Worth a smile***

### ***Notices found in church newsletters – that didn't quite come out right!***

- \* This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs Brown, our church warden, to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.
- \* Ladies are requested not to have children in the church kitchen.
- \* For those who have children and don't know it, we have a crèche in the crypt.
- \* Bring and share church supper: Prayer and medication will follow.
- \* Don't let worry kill you. Let the church help.
- \* The organist invites anyone who enjoys sinning to volunteer for the choir.
- \* At the church meeting last week the rector spoke briefly and delighted the audience.
- \* Remember in prayer the many who are sick both of our church and the community.
- \* Smile at someone who you find hard to love. Say 'hell' to someone who doesn't much care about you.

We're still battling COVID-19, and the next thing is here already:

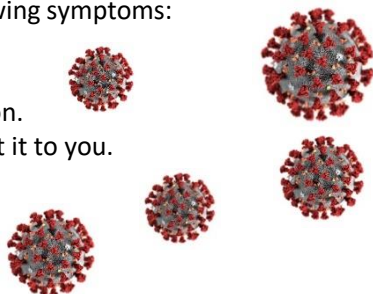
### **The \*NILE Virus, type C\***

Virologists have identified a new Nile virus - type C. It appears to target those who were born between 1940 & 1970, and has the following symptoms:

1. Causes you to send the same message twice.
2. Causes you to send a blank message
3. Causes you to send a message to the wrong person.
4. Causes you to send it back to the person who sent it to you.
5. Causes you to forget to attach the attachment.
6. Causes you to hit SEND before you've finished.
7. Causes you to hit DELETE instead of SEND.
8. Causes you to SEND when you should DELETE.

It is called the \*C-NILE\* virus!

And if you can't admit to doing the above, you've obviously caught the mutated strain — the \*D-NILE\* virus.



# Parish Registers

## Holy Matrimony, February:

No weddings

*'Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate'*

## Holy Baptism, February:

No baptisms

*'One Lord, one faith, one baptism'*

## R.I.P. February:

2: Jeffrey Sermon at All Saints; 8: Jennifer Tipping at Berton; 10: Pauline Murrie at Crownhill; 11: Christopher Hart at St. Barnabas; 15: Joyce Dalton at All Saints; 16: Jean Majchrowski at Berton; 26: Betty Harrowell at Old Linslade Cemetery

*'Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die'*

## Years Mind, April:

1: Frederick Saunders; 2: Betty Ransom; 3: Isabella Campbell McKee Bell, Doris Ranger; 5: Albert Woolhead, Charles Waples, Robin Boyce; 6: Ethel Higgs, Alison Austin; 7: Peter Archer; 8: William Stebbings, Elsie Hyde; 10: Florence Hyde; 11: (Sam) Henry George Dixon, Susan Moule, Graham Joynes; 12: Marjorie Bester; 13: Hugh Frank Delafield; 15: Stephen Royle; 16: John Wilson; 17: Jean Rumbelow; 19: Mal Royle, Edith Foskett; 20: Burt Edgoose, Katie Palmer, Eddie Pool, Jamie Crossan; 21: John Macfarlane; 22: Michael Gardner, Pamela Webb; 23: Norman Warburton; 24: Penny Edwards, Jean Plummer; 25: Albert Russell; 26: Kathleen Royston, Trevor Howlett; 27: David Guess, Doris Hyde, Zoe Walker; 28: Travers William (Bill) Ellison; 29: Derek Windle



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# ***Pulford VA Lower School***

***Head Teacher: Mr Dave Heather***

***Office Manager: Mrs Alison Quick***

***Tel: 01525 372188***

***Website: [www.pulfordschool.org](http://www.pulfordschool.org)***

A church school for  
a whole community



It is currently the day before the school's return following the latest lockdown. As I look back and reflect on the past year and all that has happened, it would be easy to focus on all the negatives: the missed opportunities with family and friends, furlough, lost job to name but a few; but I am keen to take the positives from the year: a greater sense of community, quality time as a family and an opportunity to re-evaluate priorities. When I think about all that has happened on a personal level, I believe this is equally reflected in the experience of Pulford School my children attend.

So how has the school continued to adapt over the last year? It has been wonderful to see the school, like the rest of society, transfer to the virtual world. Observing our children whilst they attend on-line classes transfered an insight into school life. Pulford school has delivered daily worship streamed live via the school Facebook page, not only enjoyed by pupils at home, but also the grandparents of those currently attending school, an uplifting time each morning seeing their grandchildren during these challenging times whilst enjoying a cup of tea in the comfort of their own home. It has provided them with a reason to get up and out of bed to hear the latest updates from the Pulford Panda family.

There was the new challenge of home-schooling for teacher, pupils and parents alike: the introduction of bubbles, and for some classes, the new experience of learning under canvas as classes moved to a marquee so that guidelines could continue to be met.

Key worker children are looking forward to their friends returning to the classroom and playground, and teachers no longer being split in two with the challenge of providing online google classroom while supporting the children at school.

Zoom was something that I thought rockets did to get to the moon. Little did I know just over a year ago that it would become a method of virtual meetings for my children to meet up with friends, birthday parties, interviews for new jobs, Saturday night catch-ups with friends and even the school governors' meeting which runs smoothly and to time.

Throughout the challenging period, it has really felt that in the face of adversity there is a sense that the school community has become even closer; and who would have thought that the community would have been increased by 4 pandas?

So let's hope that we can continue to hold on to the positives as we all move forward, and all our lives can return to some kind of normality.

***Andrew Wood, parent and governor***



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# HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

## All Saints Parish Church

Services will be in church within Covid secure procedures, people over 11 will be requested to wear a face covering and households cannot mix.

Services marked \* will also be  on our YouTube Channel (search for All Saints Church Leighton Buzzard). Fuller details on our website [allsaintsib.org.uk](http://allsaintsib.org.uk)

### **Palm Sunday 28th March**

Parish Eucharist 9.30am \*

No procession from the Market Cross

Stations of the Cross 6pm \*

### **Mon, Tues, Weds at 8pm**

Online reflections on YouTube

### **Tuesday 30th March**

Holy Communion 8pm

### **Maundy Thursday 1st April**

Holy Communion 10am

Holy Communion 7.30pm \*

Followed by watch of prayer till midnight (not streamed)

### **Good Friday 2nd April**

Reflection & Music 12 noon\*

Preaching of the Passion 12.45 - 1.50pm\*

The Good Friday Liturgy 2-3pm\*

### **Holy Saturday 3rd April**

A quiet service of reflection 9am

Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter 9pm\*

### **Easter Day 4th April**

Eucharist for Easter Day 9.30am\*

Festal Evensong 6pm (with pre-recorded Music)

# *On behalf of so many at All Saints, we say Farewell, Esther and Nick Clarke*

Many of you will know that Esther and Nick Clarke will be moving to a new life in Herefordshire and they take our love and best wishes with them on this new chapter in their lives.

*Katrina Grant writes:*

## **Esther – an inspiration**

We pay special tribute to Esther for the outstanding work she has done in leading us at All Saints' in our response to the climate crisis and helping us become an Eco Church congregation. She has been a real inspiration, sharing her extensive specialist knowledge, organising environmental events and talks which involved our wider community, leading our Eco Church application for the Bronze Award, and co-leading the online conference for churches in our region which reached thousands of people. We will miss her enormously in the Eco Church team. She would be the first to say it has all been a team effort, but we would not have done it without her, and we are now determined to take forward the Eco Church legacy.

*And John Wallace writes:*

## **Nick – churchwarden, skilled cabinet-maker, MC, notice-giver-extraordinaire ...**

We also give enormous thanks to Nick, who has been a valued and active member of All Saints for many years. Listing Nick's contributions is quite a task – he has been involved in such a wide range of activities, was churchwarden for 6 years, and leaves many physical reminders. Rather like Sir Christopher Wren, he has left tangible evidence of his involvement in the building. His skill with wood as a cabinet maker can be seen in the doors that front both of the aumbreys, the one that holds the Holy Oils in the South Transept and the one for the Reserved Sacrament in the Chancel. He made the altar rails at the North and South sides of the Tower Altar as well as a lectern. He has worked on the choir stalls so that at last they can be moved more easily. Maybe that was as much for his own benefit as he works as part of the gang that sets up staging for events – a vital role in ensuring the wider use of the building by the community.

But there is more to Nick than that. As a server and more recently as a sub-deacon, he contributes to the smooth running of worship and his skill at dramatic reading helps to bring alive both the words of Scripture and he has frequently entertained us with his performance as a comper of various dramatic events.

Nick was one of those who started the Young Adults Group, which fills an important social space and is also a way into church for some. Nick's easy-going manner has helped to put many at their ease.

As he moves to Herefordshire with Esther, we thank God for the contribution that they have both made to the life of All Saints and the wider church witness in Leighton Buzzard through their involvement in 'Churches Together'. We wish them God's richest blessing for the future.

# *In honour of Nick and Esther*



Nick and Esther have been involved in every aspect of church life: here Nick is examining something very small, perhaps a bug, found by the young bug-hunter, at an Eco-day in the churchyard, inspired by Esther; together they encourage the not-so-young Young Adults, sometimes not even in the churchyard; and just some examples of Nick's tangible legacy – aumbrey doors, communion rails, ...

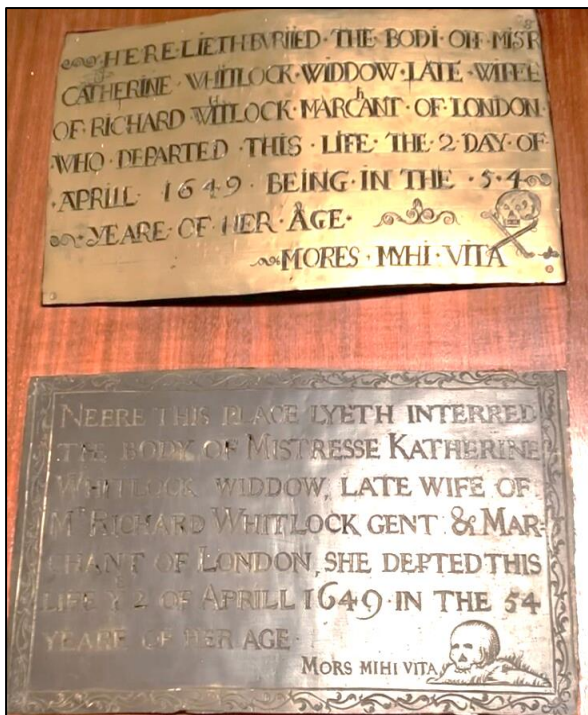


# Lift your eyes ... Looking at some of All Saints' curiosities

with thanks to Terry Warburton for his help with this series

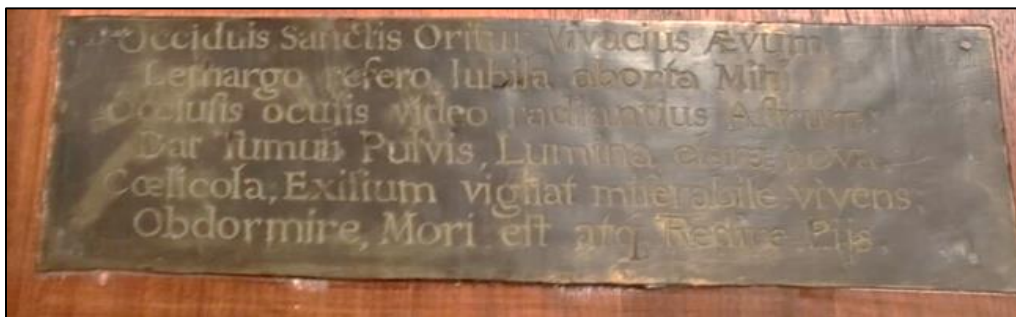
## The Whitlock Plaques

On the north wall of the chancel just behind the rood screen is a 17th C memorial to Catherine Whitlock, commissioned probably by husband Richard. The top version, it is thought, is the original which contains mistakes. Her merchant husband was not described as a Gentleman and worse, names were misspelled! He clearly was not a happy customer and had the plaque redone on the other side. This time correctly. The result is the bottom plate which was on display in the chancel but removed during the 1985 fire repairs when the reverse side was revealed. This was copied for all to see!



Below the plaque was the Latin text (below), which is quite beautiful in its words and meaning. Here it is, translated to English by Roger Harrison:

*Everlasting life appears to the righteous at the point of death  
I feel sleepy as sensation deserts me  
I see a bright, shining star through closed eyes  
The dust of the grave emits clear, new light  
Heaven watches over the pitiable reality of exile  
To sleep, to die, is to be restored to grace*





### ***And a Stairway to heaven?***

Opposite the Whitlock plaque, carved deep into the south chancel arch a curious flight of steps can be seen. The pier has been cut away too, to widen the space available. They do not seem to go anywhere.

Before the Reformation our 15th century wooden rood screen would have been higher than it is today (look in the guide book for the reason for this) and sitting above it was a rood loft, the centre piece of which would have been a representation of the crucifixion, with Mary and John either side.

The steps gave access to the loft, enabling lights to be lit around the figures and veils to be draped at important religious times, such as Holy Week. Also to provide a platform from which a service could be led. The screen marked the boundary between the nave, which was the parish's responsibility and the chancel, which was more holy and reserved mainly for the clergy.



# *On a musical note.....*

## **Easter Sunday - The Hallelujah Chorus**

It has been a long-standing tradition here at All Saints, and one which I very much look forward to each year, for the choir to sing the Hallelujah Chorus at the end of the Easter Sunday morning service. We missed out last year because Lockdown-1 came so unexpectedly and we hadn't got our act together to produce virtual music. Indeed, I think our very first venture into the world of virtual recording was Charles Wood's arrangement of the Easter introit "This joyful Eastertide". Crikey – that was a long time ago.

Determined not to miss out this year, plans are afoot for a big performance. I have extended an invitation to all church choirs in Bedfordshire (sadly, there aren't that many) to join us in a virtual performance and I am pleased to say that singers from at least five of those choirs will be submitting recordings for the massed choir. The idea is that I will send audio recordings of the finished product to those participants for them to play in their own churches on Easter Sunday morning.

Patrick has very kindly agreed to take on the huge task of aligning all those voices so that everyone sings Mr Handel's Hallelujahs at the same time and I am hoping to get a recording from a trumpeter to add a bit of sparkle.

And lots of interesting things have come out of this project. For example, two of the participants, Fran and Richard, are choristers at St James' Church in Biddenham. It turns out that they are the parents of one of the school friends of our eldest son, Jeremy. We haven't heard from them in ages.



Fran sent this photo of her grandmother's well-thumbed copy of Messiah. It must be 100 years old, and, Fran says, too fragile to use, but in those days Messiah, or at least extracts, would have been sung regularly in the choirs and choruses throughout the country!

Long may we continue the tradition of singing the Hallelujah chorus at All Saints.

***Paul Dickens***

## ***St. Nicholas, Hockliffe***

***Vicar: Rev'd Noel McGeeney***

***Tel: 01525 237633***

***Churchwardens: Brian Speller: 210 565;***

***Roger Spalding: 07451 877 501***



***"I believe in God. I just don't like going to church."***

Around Christmas, in that in-between time when we were actually allowed to go to church in real life, this was the comment made by my 6-year-old. He finds church difficult, mostly because it involves sitting still and being quiet, even more so when everything is being live streamed and we are not supposed to get out of our places.

Zoom church has worked out pretty well for him. He sits down at the table with me, does a bit of colouring, and then, when he has had enough, he wanders off and goes to find something else to do. Once we are muted, he doesn't even have to be reminded to talk quietly.

Now we are beginning to see the end of lockdowns and Zoom church, it has made me think about how, as a church, we can engage more with the kind of children who don't do well with sitting or listening. Who prefer to be charging around outside, being noisy and getting dirty. And who will quickly switch off if church is just a place where they have to be seen and not heard.

At St Nicholas's, I'm the messy church co-ordinator and also the ad-hoc children's activities organiser for regular Sunday services. Now that we are looking forward to the return to the church building, I have started to think about how I can create activities which will appeal to children who don't necessarily always want to do colouring or anything that could be perceived to be like being at school. I'm hoping to make use of our beautiful churchyard once the weather improves as well as including crafts, puzzles and the ever-popular food related items, made slightly more challenging since St Nicholas's does not yet have running water.

Before Covid lockdowns, we often had five or six children at family services and I know they are more likely to come regularly and learn more about God if I can provide activities to make them think and to grow in their understanding about God, faith and being a Christian. When there are so many alternatives to coming to church, this seems essential if we are to ensure that our children don't drift away from church as soon as they are old enough to make their own decisions. Although it's a cliché, it is fair to say that the children we see in our buildings today are our future leaders, messy church organisers, clergy and PCC members.

So as we return to our services and hopefully leave Zoom behind, I pray for ideas to enthuse young people, nice weather to make the best use of our outdoor spaces and for our numbers to grow to keep our church alive for the future and to bring God into our communities.

***Claire Vogeli***

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# ***St. Michael's, Eggington***

***Vicar: Rev'd Noel McGeeney***

***Tel: 01525 237633***

***Church Officers:***

***Carol Hart 384634***

***Paul Brown 751861***



The origins of the Eggington Townlands Charity are recorded in “The History of Eggington” by Guinevere Calder. Guinevere records that in 1650 the 112 acres estate was held in the Manor of Leighton Buzzard and Grovebury and included two cottages occupied by poor persons rent free with the churchwardens deciding who should have them. Rents from the estates were shared out every Whitsuntide, with  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the money being given to 57 poor persons living in the parish (in 1821 this amounted to 8s each).

In 1884 the Charity became subject to a Scheme regulated by the Charity Commission and this was updated in 1968. It obliges the Trustees to apply the annual income to a) assist in defraying the cost of the maintenance and repair of the parish church of Eggington; b) pay a yearly income to the Vicar for his own use (in recent times the incumbent has opted to have their share paid directly to the Eggington PCC); and c) relieve persons resident in the parish of Eggington who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress by making grants of money or providing or paying for items, services or facilities to relieve such distress.

The Board of Trustees comprises five residents of Eggington and the two churchwardens of St Michael's Church, who serve ex-officio.

In 1840 the Charity owned a field behind the Church. It contained 51 allotments and the rents contributed to the charity money distributed in the parish. By 1964, however, much of the land had become overgrown, so some was sold to the parish council for the development of the playing field. There remains an area which the charity continues to rent as allotments. There are currently some plots available. If anyone would like to rent one of these please contact me on [j.smith160@btinternet.com](mailto:j.smith160@btinternet.com).

In the past the Trustees have sold other pieces of land and the money raised has been invested in ethically-sound stock and Government gilts. A recent sale enabled the Charity to contribute to the cost of repairs to the Vestry. The charity still owns a field in Eggington, which it rents to a young farmer in the village.

Clearly, the demographic of the village has changed since the Scheme was originally set up in Victorian times. Of course, the role of the church to relieve hardship and distress is recognised (three-quarters of the income is still reserved for St Michael's) and it continues to provide emotional and spiritual relief to many residents, as well as being a catalyst for community spirit and companionship. But “need, hardship and distress” can be interpreted more broadly now and can apply to villagers of all ages; the hardship felt by so many during the pandemic has highlighted this even more.

***Jane Smith***

## **St. Michael & All Angels, Billington**

**Vicar: Rev'd Steve Marsh**

**Tel: 01525 838450**

**Churchwardens:**

**Sandra Brewin 373644; Julia Haviland 850380**



Billington is blessed with two orchards plus more apple trees on a patch of land known as the chipping dump. Last year, probably because of the Lockdown, the trees received no attention and remained straggly but produced a bumper crop of apples. Much of their bounty was picked and used by people in the village but unfortunately many pounds were lost because the fruit was ripped off the trees before it was ripe and apples were scattered the length and breadth of the village green. This year we hope it will be different and if there are apples, pears and plums to be picked, some at least will be shared amongst the stalwart P3 workers. Headed by Colin Gibbs-Jones (pictured up a tree) and helped by Geoff and Julia Haviland and Colin Weedon, most of the trees were pruned over three weekends. They have done a fantastic job and hopefully will reap a reward.



We cannot come to this time of year and not notice the multitude of daffodils which line our village verges without thinking of Michael Grant. He devoted so much of his time and energy to obtaining bulbs and persuading us all to join him in planting them. They certainly are a wonderful memorial to him. We have a new pavement through the village now and thankfully the Highways Department have managed to lay the tarmac without destroying the flowers.

We have very much enjoyed sharing Zoom services with the Church of the Good Shepherd for many weeks but we are hoping that for Easter we will be able to return to St Michael and All Angels. It is more than likely that the Tenebrae Service will take place at 6pm on Good Friday in church. Easter Day will probably be celebrated with a family Communion Service at 11.15 am. These arrangements will be confirmed after the PCC meeting on 22nd of March. Please phone Julia Haviland or Sandra Brewin (numbers above) to find out more.



## ***Good Shepherd, Sandhills***

***Vicar: Rev'd Steve Marsh***

***Tel: 01525 838450***

***Churchwardens: Steve Nixon***



**CHURCH of the  
GOOD SHEPHERD**

### ***We will meet, sing and dance again***

Our lively church WhatsApp group is full of personal news, requests for prayers, sharing of resources and just those little things that can help brighten up the day.

Recently shared was a video of primary school children in Worcester singing 10,000 Reasons by Matt Redman during their assembly. In it the children joyously sang the rousing anthem, swaying in unison. It is clear the video was not filmed in COVID times as the school hall is full and the children are all singing together, something schools are prohibited from doing at the moment.

Listening to the double-Grammy winning song brought back many memories as it has been performed by our band numerous times at the Church of the Good Shepherd. Memories of being spiritually filled up with worship, looking over to see others singing their hearts out and hearing the tapping of feet at the back of the hall as children dance.

Research has shown that music can help reduce blood pressure and the heart rate of patients with heart problems. Listening to tunes can also have a positive effect on our wellbeing, reducing anxiety and even boosting the immune systems of patients after surgery. Live music magnifies these benefits as the room or venue is filled with people who are connected by their shared music tastes. Add in the purpose of live music as worship and the instruments become a powerful tool to feel good, connect with others and show gratitude to God.

The Apostle Paul told the Colossians, *“Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.”* (Colossians 3:16).

Enjoying live music together as a community is an important part of our ‘church experience’ and we have a wide range of talented musicians in our church band to lead us in our worship. Now the same band members are leading our worship through Zoom from their living rooms. The primary school video reminded me of that feeling which cannot be replicated on Zoom as there’s nothing like the feeling of stepping through the school entrance (we are based at Greenleas School, Kestrel Way) and being beckoned by the drum beat, jaunty piano and lively violin whilst being greeted by the welcoming smiles of our friends.



Once the restrictions have been lifted, we look forward to the chance to meet again and rejoice with song and dance.

***Jo Bellamy***

## **Saints on Earth**

*Personal accounts of the wide-range of spiritually significant men and women who have inspired and influenced us. Rev'd Steve Marsh looks at the life of*

**Jackie Pullinger**  
**whom God has led to see the world**  
**“with Resurrection Eyes ...”**



‘If I were you, I would go out and buy a ticket for a boat going on the longest journey you can find and pray to know where to get off.’

This was the advice Jackie Pullinger, at the age of 22, was given by a priest. Not the sort of advice you would give to everyone, but Jackie’s passion to fulfil God’s call on her life was so strong that this made perfect sense to her, and so, this is what she did.

In 1966 Jackie bought a ticket for a ship travelling from France to Japan and discerned God’s call to disembark when the ship docked in Hong Kong. This was the start of a life-long adventure in the Walled City of Hong Kong working amongst the heroin addicts, prostitutes, and Triad gangsters.

This short introduction to the ministry of Jackie Pullinger could make the success of Jackie’s ministry sound immediate and easy. It was anything but! It took five years for the inhabitants of the Walled City to trust Jackie and realise her care for them was genuine. Once this trust was won, the transformation that Jackie and her team, called St Stephen’s Society, brought to the Walled City was incredible.

Jackie’s work was brought to the attention of the UK public by TV Journalist Alan Whicker in his programme ‘Whicker’s World’. Whilst making an episode about Hong Kong, Alan Whicker kept hearing the phrase ‘Jesus makes you fat’. Intrigued by this, he sought out the source of this story, finding Jackie’s ministry. The heroin addicts were painfully thin due to spending all their money on drugs. The drugs also suppressed their appetites. When helped to be free of their addiction by Jackie and her team, the former addicts regained their appetites and put on weight. When asked how they had gained weight, the former addicts would say ‘Jesus makes you fat’. Hearing this, and wanting freedom from addiction themselves, more and more addicts sought out Jackie and her team for help.

One element of the method Jackie and her team use to help people to break their drug addiction has particularly caught people’s attention. Jackie in her prayer life ‘prays in the Spirit’ or as it also known ‘prays in tongues’. This is praying guided by the Holy Spirit, using words that are not of your native language. This type of praying is mentioned in the New Testament, most notably in 1 Corinthians 14, and Romans 8:26 where it says that ‘*In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.*’

Whilst the addicts are attempting to break their addiction, Jackie and her team encourage them to 'pray in tongues', and when they do, they do not experience painful withdrawal symptoms. The method has a high rate of success amongst the drug addicts in Jackie's care and has brought Jackie and her team much notoriety. Anyone who has been on an Alpha course and attended the session on the Holy Spirit may remember Jackie's ministry being explored as a powerful example of the Holy Spirit at work in the world today. The Walled City was demolished in 1992, but Jackie and the St Stephen's Society are continuing to work powerfully amongst the heroin addicts, prostitutes, and Triad gangsters in Hong Kong.



I personally find Jackie's ministry very inspiring. When I struggle to discern God acting in our world today, I often think of the ministry of Jackie and her team as a powerful example of God transforming people's lives today. I am also blessed not to just have the experience of reading Jackie's book, or watching her interview on the Alpha course, to recharge my expectation of God acting today. When I was on the leadership team of a church in Chichester, we were thinking of who to invite to speak at our church weekend away. Seeking ideas from the congregation, a lady came to us and said 'Would you like Jackie Pullinger to come and speak at the church weekend?' We were stunned by this and responded, 'that would be great, but how are you going to get Jackie Pullinger to come to our church?' The lady replied, 'Well, I am Jackie's twin sister, and she is coming to visit me in the summer'. We were amazed by this, as we had known this lady for years, but she never mentioned before that she was Jackie's sister. Jackie and her team came and led our church weekend away, and their expectation of God speaking and acting in our world today was very inspiring. Many people in our church had their faith deepened and a few ministries were launched. When asked by members of our church about her high expectation of God acting today, Jackie said that God had led her to 'see with resurrection eyes'. By this she meant seeing the world through God's recreative power, unleashed at that first Easter, and still working today. God had led her to see people and the world 'with resurrection eyes', recreated as God intends and promises us in Rev 21: vs 1-5.

Jackie's phrase of 'seeing with resurrection eyes' has stuck with me and when I am struggling to discern God's action in our world today, I often pray 'Lord, let me see with resurrection eyes'.

**Footnote:** If you are interested in reading about Jackie's ministry, I recommend her book 'Chasing the Dragon'. If you prefer something visual, there is a video of Jackie being interviewed by Nicky and Pippa Gumbel at this 'YouTube' address: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFQ1SHZXulk>

*Rev'd Steve Marsh*

# Churchyard prayer trail for Holy Week and Easter

Our churchyard is a beautiful place in which to spend a few moments in prayer, contemplation and wonder, and people across our community visit it regularly. This year the Eco Church group has created an outdoor prayer trail for Holy Week and Easter as part of our Forest Church way of taking prayer and worship outside.

Being outdoors, we hope that the trail will be accessible by many people – come along anytime from the start of Holy Week. The Trail will remain for the week after Easter. The trail encircles the church building, leading you through the churchyard with signs and reminders of our Lord's Passion, and suggestions for reflection, with chalk messages and ending with an Easter garden. The trail is also available online – so please look out for it on Youtube and Facebook.



## **Are you passionate about the environment and climate change?**

We would love more people to get involved with our Eco Church work. Did you know that since Eco Church started 5 years ago, over 3,000 UK churches have joined, and 1,074 have achieved awards- and we are one of them? Now we are setting our sights on the Silver Award. We also looking at how we can join in with Climate Sunday later in the year – it's the churches' response to COP26 – the UN Climate Change Conference which takes place in Glasgow in November.

## **Look up!**

Next time you are round All Saints check the skies and you might get a glimpse of the two Peregrine Falcons which have been spotted perching on the spire. We would love to install a nesting platform and will be taking this idea forward with the PCC.

If you would like to know more about Eco Church please speak to Katrina Grant, Laurelin Burge, Brian Irvine, Patrick Waring or John Payne-Cook.

*Katrina Grant*

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