

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*

July & August 2023

70p

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met a goat

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All Saints Leighton Buzzard

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In Vacancy

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Advertising: Please contact magazine-advertising@allsaintslb.org.uk

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No side effects

by Rev'd Steve Marsh



A few days ago, I went to the doctors, and after being examined, the doctor prescribed for me some new medication. Before starting to take the medication, I thought I should look at the leaflet in the box to ensure I would take the right dose at the right times. The leaflet in the box was very long, and once I had reassured myself I knew how to take the tablets, I wondered what all the other information on the leaflet was about. Much to my horror, it was all about side effects, most of which sounded worse than the condition the tablets were trying to treat. I seriously considered not taking the tablets at all, not sure what would kill me first, my condition or these side effects. Anyway, I started taking the tablets and was a bit paranoid for the first few days, worried about all possible side effects, but thankfully, none of them materialised.

Most medicines, in trying to deal with one problem have the potential to create side effects. Many people have a similar perception of faith, fearing that 'Believing in God' may lead to side effects such as feelings of guilt and having to go to lots of boring services. Others may be put off by the press stories of the failings of the church. This results in many feeling that the perceived side effects of faith outweigh the benefits.

In Matthew's Gospel (Matt 9:9-13) Jesus uses the metaphor of a doctor to unpack how God intends faith to impact our lives and what to expect from it. Jesus says that the side effects of faith should not be attitudes such as judgement of others and self-righteousness. Jesus says that 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but those who are ill. But go and learn what this means, I desire mercy, not sacrifice. For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.' Jesus has not come to judge and condemn people, instead he comes to bring healing and restoration, through love and grace, of which there are no side effects.

Considering the perceived side effects of faith I highlighted earlier, of guilt, fear of boring services and the failings of the church, these are created by unhelpful, religious practises that get in the way of the simple, loving relationship that God offers all of us.

However, if you can encourage people to take a moment to separate these false perceptions of God from the true nature of God, as a healer and restorer, hopefully you can help people access the loving care that God offers all of us. Care that has no side effects, care that needs no warning leaflet.

Steve Marsh

Matthew 9: 9-13 The Call of Matthew: *As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax-collection station, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him. And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with Jesus and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" But when he heard this, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous but sinners."*

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

1st & 3rd Sundays: All Age Service

2nd & 4th Sunday Holy Baptism

6pm Evening Prayer

1st Sunday: Choral Evensong Plus

3rd Sunday: followed by Benediction

Weekdays:

Holy Communion

7.30pm Tuesday

(Service of Healing on 3rd Tuesday)

10.00am Thursday

9.00am Saturday

Morning Prayer: St. Hugh's Chapel

9.00am Tuesday – Friday

St. Barnabas, Linslade

Sundays:

8am Said Eucharist

10am Parish Eucharist

6pm Evensong

www.stbarnabaslinslade.uk

St. Leonard's, Heath & Reach

Sundays:

8am: Holy Communion

11am Holy Communion (in church & via Zoom)

1st Sundays: Family Service

Tuesdays: 7pm Holy Communion

Morning Prayer via Zoom:

9.00am Monday - Saturday

www.saintleonardschurch.com

St. Michael's, Eggington

9.30am 1st & 3rd Sundays: Holy Communion

St. Nicholas', Hockliffe

9.30am 2nd Sundays: Family Communion

4th Sundays: Holy Communion

St. Michael's and All Angels, Billington

11.15am Holy Communion

Good Shepherd, Astral Park Sports & Community Centre, Johnson Drive, Sandhills, LU7 4AY:

Sundays at 9.45am:

1st Sunday: Holy Communion & CGS Juniors

2nd Sunday: 'In the Community', at Astral Park

3rd Sunday: Family Service

4th Sunday: Bring and share breakfast and Holy Communion

Free pop-up café every Sunday from 9.45am

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

All Saints Toddler Time: All Saints every Wednesday during term time, at 9.30am & at 1.30pm. £1.50 per parent / carer & child; 50p extra per child; refreshments included.

Leighton Young Singers Club: for children in Years 2-6, meets on Fridays at 6.30 - 7.30pm.

Bereavement Café: a support group offering friendship and understanding.

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

Choir Practice: Friday evenings, 6.45 trebles; 7.30 adults.

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

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

Contact Details on Page 2.

News Roundup

Welcome to this Bumper 'Holiday' issue of Saints Alive for both July and August. All information is up to date as at the time of publication. The next issue will be September.

*** **

The Coffee Shop will be closed from 2.00pm Saturday 12th August reopening 10am Tuesday 5th September.

*** **

Please remember that during Holiday Club week (14th - 18th August) access into church will be restricted to anyone not wearing an 'It's Circus Time' t-shirt!



Worth a smile

If a lot of swimming is so good for your shape, then why do the whales look the way they do?



My friend was working at an amusement park when a couple stopped him. "Excuse me," said the woman, pointing to a pond. "What is that water made out of?" Bemused, my friend replied, "Two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen." "See?" she said to her boyfriend. "I told you it wasn't real."



Reading while sunbathing makes you well red.



Grandchildren don't stay young forever, which is good because grandfathers have only so many horsy rides in them.



Friends sympathized as our curate complained that her back was really sore from moving furniture. "Why don't you wait till your teenage son gets home?" someone asked. "Well, I could," our curate replied, "but the couch is easier to move if he's not on it."



I used to be able to do cartwheels. Now I tip over while pulling on my socks.



Found in a heap of recycled files donated to our school was this curiously labelled folder: "Excuses I Have Used."

Parish Registers

Holy Matrimony, May:

No weddings

Holy Matrimony, June:

6: Martyn Stephenson & Georgina Willoughby;

10: Nicholas Ferrari & Rachel Clark;

24: Michael Burns & Sophia Pughe;

24: Andrew Luke & Miranda Janatka at St. Michael's

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

Holy Baptism, May:

28: Maisie Tanya-Marie Orpen

Holy Baptism, June:

25: Genevieve Georgina Bazil, Izabella Eve Yarland

'One Lord, one faith, one baptism'

R.I.P. May:

4: Constance Short at Berton, Janet Arnold at Berton; 11: Stuart Vines at St. Leonard's;

15: Dorothy Lawson at Berton; 16: Doris Garrett at All Saints;

23: John Tournay at St. Barnabas; 31: Richard Kynaston-Weaver at Legacy Chapel

R.I.P. June:

6: Evelyn Garner at St. Michael & All Angels; 12: Eileen Owen at St. Barnabas;

13: Michael Turrell at All Saints; 16: Iris Janes at All Saints; 20: Patricia Scott at Crownhill;

22: David Morris at Crownhill, Lucas Pollard at All Saints; 26: Norah Kaye at All Saints

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

Years Mind, July:

1: William Gilbert, Margaret Nash; 6: David Edgoose; 7: Vicki Smith;

8: Ruth Kiddle, Stephen Goodger; 9: Florence Groom, Elizabeth Hankins, Meg Hollins;

10: Joy Reynolds; 11: Eva Milne; 13: Primrose Cox; 14: Iris Marko;

17: Canon Alan Freeman, Josie Watkiss, Freda Hill; 19: Christopher Hinchliff;

20: Blake Edwards, Frances Tucker; 24: Judith Woodruff; 25: Dick Spratley;

26: John Brantom, William Parris; 28: Gary Plater; 29: Charles Beauchamp, Eileen Faulkner

Years Mind, August:

1: Evelyn Parris; 2: Annie Clements; 7: Norman Rumbelow, Bert Whitney;

8: Raymond Fisher; 9: Marion Deeley, David Harrington; 11: Derek Twigg;

12: John Froud; 16: Wilfred Dumble, Margaret Dumble; 20: Doreen Rolls, Carina Wallace;

22: Elsie Daniel, Doris Dunnett; 24: Leslie Nash, Linda Wood; 26: Bernard McAuliffe;

27: Catherine Flynn, Matthew Stephen Jones; 29: Vincenzo Difabio;

31: Joan Pearson

Pulford VA Lower School

Head Teacher: Rev'd Dave Heather, MBE

Office Manager: Mrs Alison Quick

Tel: 01525 372188

Website: www.pulfordschool.org

A church school for
a whole community



Pulford Pre-school teaches the youngest children of the Pulford family. We educate children who turn three during their first term with us, through to children who will start in reception class this September. A total age range of two years. Pre-school children attend a variety of different sessions, with some children attending just one or two half day sessions a week, to those who attend for the whole days, all week. We follow the Governments Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Development Matters curriculum. Most importantly we learn through play and develop a love of learning by having fun!

Recently we set off (and returned) with 46 children to visit Woodside Animal Farm. The trip was planned to develop the children's resilience, independence and learning in a different environment. As we set off, the long line of bright yellow school jumpers and cardigans took up most of the path along Pulford Road. They chatted happily and excitedly as we headed for our double decker bus. The journey to the farm was taken up with the children spotting things out of the window and many songs. The wheels on the bus was sung so enthusiastically by the top deck that it could be clearly heard by the bottom deck who also joined in!

As we explored the farm on foot and tractor and trailer ride, we named and counted many different animals and the children could be heard singing Baa Baa Black Sheep, to the smiles of the other passing visitors to the farm. The children also had a chance to get up close to some of the smaller farm animals guinea pigs, rabbits and two friendly goats. Minnie the small baby goat was definitely a hit with the children; they stroked her very soft fur. Our day continued with a fun outdoor picnic and an enjoyable spin on a fairground swing ride. Our journey home was a quieter affair, with many tired little people and several sleepy ones, who needed waking for our walk back along Pulford Road to Pre-school.



Our trip to the farm also helped our learning about the world God created for us. The awe and wonder of the children as they looked at different animals, some for the first time, reminds us of the amazing world God has given us to care for. We are helping the children to understand that we are all responsible for caring for the world in which we live. All those magical moments will become memories of the past, but the learning experience will stay with them forever, creating a love of the world in which they live and develop a caring nature to protect it for years to come.

Mrs Major, Early Years Teacher, Pre-school Lead.



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Selections

*Pet, gift and garden.
Household, kitchen tools and
electrical items.
Calor Gas, DIY and repairs.
Memorial.*



selections_pet_garden

On a musical note.....



Goodbye Sunday

Traditionally, the Sunday before schools break up for the summer holidays (Sunday, 16th July this year) is goodbye Sunday for the choir, but this year we have no leaving trebles. We are, however, saying goodbye to our Organ Scholar, Sam Kemp, who is moving on to be Organ Scholar at the Chapel Royal at Hampton Court. Sam will be very much missed by all of us. We shall also miss Sam's parents, Andy and Caroline, who have become such a part of our church community. Sam will choose all the music for that Sunday. Do come along and say goodbye and thanks to Sam and his parents on 16th July. There will be cake at the morning service; and a last chance to hear Sam at Choral Evensong at 6pm!

That Sunday is also the last Sunday before the choir breaks up for the summer. This long break is really important for the choir's well-being. The commitment given by our choristers and their families is much bigger than people sometimes realise. Friday evenings are taken up with choir practice and there are no weekends during the term for visiting family or friends. When there is Choral Evensong at 6 pm it can seem that most of Sunday is spent going back and forth to and from church. And 6 services within 8 days between Palm Sunday and Easter is a big haul. Of course, no one in the choir really minds doing all this – it is part of the choir commitment, and the rewards are immense and make it all worthwhile.



But the long summer break gives our choristers their weekends back for a while and enables them to relax fully from the pressures of performing. We are lucky to have a good choir at All Saints, but this can only be achieved by setting high expectations. This in turn involves concentration, which is mentally tiring. Choir breaks enable batteries to be recharged; and choristers come back in September fully refreshed and ready to give their all to the worship of God in the long session up to Christmas.

I too am able to take a break because we have a wealth of talented organists and pianists willing to step in and provide music all though the summer –which (unlike this cartoon) will not involve playing *Chopsticks*! My thanks to all of them.

Paul Dickens, Director of Music

Leviathan

By Audrey Ingledow of Billington

Sad mountain of quivering flesh –

Was your last cry a silent breath,

Or did the echoes beam through the washing waves to others of your kind?

Did they hear you and come?

Is *that* why they throw themselves desperately from life's waters to death's hard sands?

What have we done -

Is it we alone, or has some change caused so many to lie dead – melting horribly in the sun?

Some good people crowd around to try to save you –

Throwing water over you,

Mostly in vain;

If you go back to the sea, you only beach somewhere else –

Whale-song has become Whale-death-knell.

Streamlined, massive beauty has turned to lifelessness.

Leviathans – old even centuries ago – once masters of the seas,

Graceful pods slipping, diving;

Guarding and teaching your young;

Elegant and gentle; sharing and caring.

Those who pollute our seas knowingly, are condemned for ever in their own minds,

Knowing they destroy the beauty of eons.

Shame! Shame!

You will die one day, but your young will face greater disasters than you know.

Think of such beauty becoming extinct –

The balance of Nature destroyed – and for ever!

Shame! Shame!

Change your hearts and your ways – it may already be too late,

But earth's champions still have a chance.

If you do not change, your kind have little to hope for in future years.

Change! Change!

Clean the seas, make the waters safe and beautiful for us ALL again.

Audrey Ingledow, May 2022

Farewell to Mother Cate and the Irvine family

On 9th July we will say goodbye to Mother Cate after four years in the parish. As you will know, she is off to serve the people of Totteridge St Andrew on a part-time basis, with her licensing arranged for 5th September.

Her new parish is (to cite the Hidden London website) “A lovely (but inevitably pricey) ribbon village strung along the road from Whetstone to Highwood Hill and set amidst farmland, parks and golf courses.” Sounds a lot like Leighton Buzzard!

The website goes on to say, “Totteridge’s mansions are mostly recent creations, as the village has become a haven for business and media moguls who wish to retreat behind high walls and security gates.” Let’s hope they contribute to the Parish Share!



Mother Cate, and Brian, Rufus and Douglas, joined us shortly before the onset of COVID, after which everything we had known was thrown into turmoil. The advice from the Church and central Government was unclear, and the “rules” seemed to change by the week, if not the day. It was strange for us all, and particularly lonely for Cate presiding over the Eucharist, alone on the livestream except for the camera operator.

Cate introduced to us our latest curate, Mother Kirsty, to us in 2021, and it has been a great working partnership ever since, placing Kirsty in a strong position to lead our Easter services during Cate’s recent illness. Cate has also been keen to bring greater awareness to equality issues, and we have learnt a great deal from this, as well as introducing social events at Sunday evensong to help to grow our church. Cate also developed two years of Inspire weekends to try to enhance this growth.

Brian has also been a stalwart during the family’s time with us, particularly with the streaming team and forest church and we thank him for his efforts. We wish Cate and all the family all the very best for her new ministry.

***Bill, John and Sam
Churchwardens***

Calendar of Events

2nd July

Services as usual including Messy Mass BBQ All Saints 11.30am



2nd July & 6th August

Bereavement Support Café Coffee Shop,
All Saints 2.30pm – 4pm



5th July & 2nd August

Lunch Club in the North Transept, All Saints 1pm.
Tickets £5.00 available from the Coffee Shop.



9th July

Farewell Service for Mother Cate, All Saints 3pm

Evening Prayer with Hymns followed by refreshments



15th July

Young Singers & Trebles Concert All Saints 4pm

16th July

Services as usual including All Age Communion All Saints 11.30am

Leavers Choral Evensong 6pm

23rd July

Cream Teas Eggington 3pm - 5pm



AUGUST DATES

14th – 18th August

'It's Circus Time' Holiday Club All Saints 9.30am – 12.15pm

Service and BBQ 6.30pm on Friday

Access to church restricted to anyone not wearing the t-shirt!



25th – 28th August

Flower Festival at St. Nicholas Hockliffe.

See p23 for details.





ALL SAINTS PARISH CHURCH
LEIGHTON BUZZARD

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the fun!

HOLIDAY CLUB 2023

14th August - 18th August

Booking Now
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or collect an application
form in church





on ...

*Groups and activities,
sustaining the
Christian community of
The Ouzel Valley Team*



The Lunch Club meets, usually on the first Wednesday of each month at 1pm. The concept is to provide a home-cooked meal for older people in a relaxed setting. We aim to cater for about 36 diners. Although many are church members, we also welcome others, particularly those recently bereaved or who are isolated socially. Tickets are £5 and are available from the Coffee Shop on the Friday following the Lunch Club. They sell out quite quickly, but we would always try to accommodate new members.



This month, Lunch Club at All Saints



Volunteers help to clear the North Transept after Toddler Group, get out and set the tables, plug in the heated trolleys and hotplates....

Then all is ready for our cooks to arrive with the home-cooked food ready to serve to our expectantly waiting guests. In February, Julie welcomed a four-week-old baby to Toddler Group in the morning and we hosted a 96-year-old (our oldest diner?); that is quite an age range that we welcome to the church.



For 2023, we are having themes for the lunches. January had a Scottish flavour, we remembered St Valentine in February, St David in March and St George in April.

We are grateful to members and volunteers alike for making this a very convivial club. And of course, we will always welcome new volunteers and can find jobs for them to fit their skills. Volunteers are particularly needed to help set up and clear away before and after lunch. Please see me if you can help either on a regular or occasional basis.

Margaret Wallace
(Lunch Club Co-ordinator)

Thanks to Dave Hipwell for the photos

9 September 2023: helping All Saints



The Beds & Herts Historic Churches Trust (BHHCT) annual Bike 'n Hike will be on Saturday 9th September this year. It is the main fundraising event for the Trust which gives grants to help repair churches and chapels in Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and part of Barnet and last year raised over £91,000.

People who take part are sponsored to visit churches on foot or by bike – or by other transport. Half of the sponsorship money goes straight to the church nominated by the person who takes part. The Trust gives out the rest, plus gift aid, as grants to churches.

Last year, Team All Saints raised almost £1,500 plus Gift Aid – which meant £750 for All Saints Church, and we were awarded a Silver Certificate for our efforts. In the 30 years since the BHHCT began, All Saints has received over £100,000 in grants from BHHCT.

We would love to have more people in our All Saints Bike 'n Hike team this year. We know our church needs the money and Bike 'n Hike is a really fun day out. The bigger the team, the more funds we can raise to help our own church as well as others in Beds and Herts.

Over 600 churches are open to visit on the day, and many host events such as Heritage Days or afternoon tea. Last year Emma, Stephen and I enjoyed great hospitality at many churches we visited.

This year we plan to do a route that can be broken up into shorter sections if anyone doesn't fancy a long hike – perhaps stopping for a nice pub lunch en route. Are you persuaded?

To find out more or take part please let me know as I'm the Church Organiser for Bike 'n Hike at All Saints or visit the website: www.beds Hertshct.org.uk. You can also keep up to date via Facebook @BedsHertsHCT. You can contact me via katrina.r.grant@btinternet.com or T:07531 748339.

Katrina Grant



Bishop Richard is an enthusiastic supporter of the Trust



In Full Flower The Bishop's Garden

This is a dahlia called 'The Bishop of St Albans' which I grow in my garden.

Bishop Alan

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18th June-6th August
2-4pm

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Good Shepherd, Sandhills

Vicar: Rev'd Steve Marsh

Tel: 01525 838450

Churchwardens:

Stuart Blofeld

Katharine Reedy



**CHURCH of the
GOOD SHEPHERD**

What should church look like?

Recently we've been reflecting on our Sunday and midweek gatherings to see if there's anything we should do differently. All churches are located in a particular context and made up of specific individuals, and it's important to review things regularly to ensure that our collective life reflects a) who God is calling us to be and b) what will help to equip us for that task. A key Bible passage for us is Hebrews 13: 20-21, which is a prayer for Jesus to "*equip you with everything good for doing his will*" and to "*work in us what is pleasing to him*".

At Church of the Good Shepherd we have a big focus on the community and outreach. We also want to provide a space where those attending can encounter God and connect with each other. As we meet in a community hall, we have to set everything up and put it away afterwards, which makes Sunday mornings very hands-on. At the moment we are taking some time to ensure that we can be refreshed through our gatherings. On the second Sunday of the month we have re-started a time of gentle reflective meditation drawing on Ignatian spirituality. In our midweek homegroup we're sharing the stories of our faith journeys with each other, which is hugely inspiring and encouraging.

We ran an informal workshop with church members (aged between 10-85!) and also with the PCC, to find out what people enjoy and find helpful, what could be even better, and what they think church should look like. As you'd expect there was a wide range of views, but overall people felt our community is welcoming and friendly (but not too intrusive when people are new), with a depth of worship and preaching, support when going through hard times, and where we can seek and explore together the joys and challenges of following Jesus and being led by the Holy Spirit in 21st century Britain. Being a local church on the Sandhills estate is important to us. Importantly, what we say and who we are matches. Someone commented that church should "smell good" and be a place where things happen. This is not about cleaning products but about the "fragrance of Jesus" referred to in 2 Corinthians 2: 15 ("*we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing*").

Other people highlighted the importance of feeling heard and seen – important for all ages and especially for young people who are building their faith. Overall, we aspire for church to be a reflection of the kingdom of God on earth.

Katharine Reedy

St. Nicholas, Hockliffe

Vicar: Rev'd Noel McGeeny

Tel: 01525 237633

Churchwardens:

Brian Speller: 210565;

Roger Spalding: 07415 877501



We are now into Summer, and everything is “coming up roses”. The flowers are blooming, and we are probably thinking, or already have booked to go away for a holiday. We have nicer and warmer weather and are planning to get “out and about”. We feel we could do with a change, no matter how small or big, and feel that we need to “recharge our batteries”. It is good to do something different, that will not only make us think and ponder on how lucky we are. Maybe we should have a go at something we have never done before.

There are many people who have nobody to turn to, especially if they are on their own. Having somebody to listen to them is important, but of course we can take our problems and worries to the Lord in prayer and listen for a reply.

We pray for the local community and for all people in their daily life and work,

We pray for the young and the elderly, for families, and all who are alone.

We give thanks for human skill and creativity and all that reveals your loveliness

We give thanks for human love and friendship and for all that enriches our daily lives.

At St. Nicholas we are constantly having to think of reaching out to the village. “What can we do?”

We have now a new Churchwarden – Tom Ware, who being younger than us, will have a little more energy and fresh ideas. Tom is taking over from Roger who is still a P.C.C. member. We thank Roger for being a Churchwarden for us, and thank him very much for all he has done and is still doing on the P.C.C., and his continual musical contribution that he organises for our services and events. Thanks also go to the band members who support us on a regular basis.

St. Nicholas, Hockliffe
25th – 28th August 2023

Verses & Rhymes
Flower Festival

Opening times:
Friday 25th August: 10-5
Sunday 27th August: 12-6
Monday 28th August: 10-5

Our Cream Tea afternoon which took place on Sunday 4th June, was a great success, and raised £340.50p. We thank everyone who supported us and also to the band.

We are planning to have a Flower Festival, as we haven't had one since 2018. If you would like to take part, or help us in any way, please contact me Carol on 01525 210565 so I can send you a form.

Carol Speller

St. Michael & All Angels, Billington

Vicar: Rev'd Steve Marsh

Tel: 01525 838450

Churchwardens:

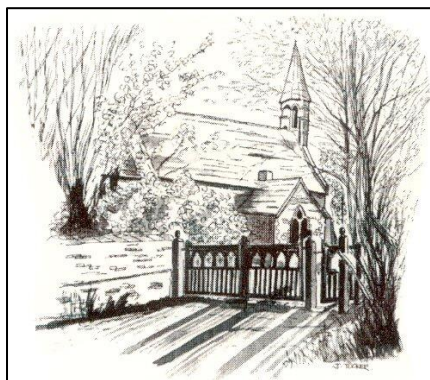
Sandra Brewin 373644;

Julia Haviland 850380



Evelyn Garner's funeral took place at St Michael and All Angels Billington on Tuesday 6th June. As reported in the June edition of Saints Alive Ev, as she was known, was the oldest resident, who had lived her entire life in the village. Her funeral was attended by many family members including her two daughters Christine and Margaret and their children. The family provided a generous tea for the large congregation in the village hall. The occasion was truly a celebration of Ev's long life and the contribution that she had made to village life.

Our Annual Parish Church Meeting was held after the 11.15 service on Sunday 28th May. Several issues were discussed regarding the fabric of the Church and Churchyard.



Among these was the troublesome problem of what to do about our one bell which has been unusable for a long time. It appears that the cost of repairing it would be beyond what our budget could afford; also the beautiful gates into the Churchyard, made many years ago by Geoff Haviland, although appearing at first glance to be in good condition, are in fact rotten under the surface. We are hoping that in the near future the Garden of Rest will undergo a restoration.

Our Churchyard has been a joy to behold over the past weeks. Our lovely gardener Andrew has been careful in mowing, leaving all patches of primroses and other wildflowers until they have seeded.

Finally at the Parish Meeting we discussed how we could encourage more people from the village to join the congregation, not just to boost the finances (a lot of people say that the church is always asking for money!) but because we really believe that in these troubled times, to turn to God in prayer and to attempt to live according to his will is a good and positive way forward. Everybody has a gift which could be used to unite our community and make it an even more wonderful place to live.

Sandra Brewin

St. Michael's, Eggington

Vicar: Rev'd Noel McGeeney

Tel: 01525 237633

Church Officers:

Carol Hart 384634

Paul Brown 751861



Our Expanding Parish

Over the past couple of years, the area surrounding Eggington has changed significantly. We have been so blessed until recently to be surrounded by the most beautiful countryside and I cannot deny that it brings a tear to my eye to see it engulfed by new housing estates as I travel between my work in Heath and Reach and my home in Eggington. I am, however, realistic. This is happening country wide in an effort to respond to our expanding population and need for housing. I have children. I would prefer that they have their own houses when the time comes. Who am I to judge and to be so selfish as to want the countryside all to myself to feast my eyes and fill my soul.

My parents would tell me they remembered when all of Bideford Green/ Planets Estate/ Cotefield drive was fields, and I am becoming one of those parents who says similar. Wistfully I think back to when all to be seen was calm and still rather than constant construction traffic.

I am not a big fan of change, but it is a fact of life. Unfortunately, we have to embrace it. Realise that the world is moving on and we have to move with it. There is much discussion on the fact that there have been nowhere near the facilities provided that had been promised to accommodate the additional housing and that is definitely a cause for concern. The lack of medical facilities in particular has been somewhat of a topic of debate locally.

As a local facility I feel that the church is hugely underappreciated. A facility that is open to everyone and where people are welcomed with open arms. The benefits to the soul of singing, giving thanks of praise, thinking of others and being in the company of a loving and caring community is priceless. The church is, and always has been, the epicentre of the parish. Where parishioners meet to share their hymns of praise, prayers for others and contemplation over the sermon. With the new housing we have gained new parishioners and it has been wonderful to see. A church with previously dwindling numbers now feels to have found a new energy. With young children and a large group gathering to catch up over tea or coffee at the end of the service it is more of a party atmosphere and surely that is what the church is all about. Feeling part of something and celebrating what we have.

Our services run from 9.30am on the first and third Sunday of the month.

Cream teas served in the church yard on Saturday 23rd July from 3pm to 5pm.

Everyone is welcome.

Hannah Johnston



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Many thanks to Chloe, Lily-Maya, Lyra, Vincent, Elsa, Lily, Evelyn, Lillian, and Bethany who walked, ran and toddled round the church on 4th June. They have raised £45 so far and there is more promised. The money raised will support families in the diocese via two projects run by the Mothers' Union: The Away From It All holidays project provides holidays and days out for families in need of some time fun time together.

MU also supports 4 women's refuges in the diocese by providing start up packs of bedding, pots and pans, kettle, toaster, cutlery etc when residents are ready to move into new accommodation. They have supplied advent calendars, Christmas presents, Easter eggs, a coach for a day out, and entertainment too.

To mark the occasion the children all received a certificate and Thank you sticker.

Alison Dobbie

Caption Competition: A reader sent this happy picture of busy volunteers. But who was saying what? Suggestions on a postcard! [Ed.]





Tell out my soul:

*A series exploring how elements of our worship
What we do and why we do it.*

This month:

Holy Communion ...

by Rev'd Cate Irvine

There are lots of words for this act that is so central to our Christian faith and the words we use will be shaped by our theology and church culture as well as personal preferences. We might speak of Holy Communion, the Eucharist, the Lord's Supper or the Mass, depending on our church tradition.

For this article I will use Holy Communion – the term that I think most people would be happy to use. Holy Communion has a central role within the life of the Church because it is something that Jesus commanded us to do. At the last supper, which we commemorate particularly on Maundy Thursday, Jesus is starting to say farewell to his friends and to leave them guidance for how to live once he is no longer with them on earth. He washes their feet, tells them to love one another and, when he shares bread and wine with them, he instructs them to do the same in remembrance of him (*1Corinthians 11.23-26*).

I am writing this article in my last weeks here in the Ouzel Valley Team Ministry so perhaps those ideas of connection and transformation have a particular resonance for me, but they are always at the heart of our faith. We cannot save ourselves, everything we do is in God's strength and through God's grace and we, as God's people come to receive Holy Communion to re-connect with God and with each other. That often happens in the context of Sunday worship, but it is so much more than that. The Eucharist shared at the heart of parish worship is also offered to those who are sick or housebound. In renewing our connection to God, the sacrament connects us to Christians around the world, throughout time and in eternity. We belong to each other through God's love.

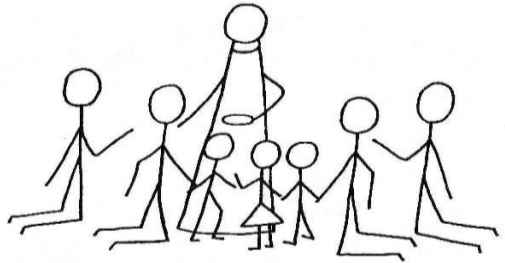


Our Churches have different traditions and expectations about how Holy Communion is ordered. Some of our services are formal, others much less so but what is vital, is the recognition that God is present and that, in our receiving communion we renew our Christian commitment to live a life transformed by God.

At a parish level, Holy Communion is very much a corporate activity. In it we recognise the importance of those words of Jesus that his friends should come together and remember him. In Holy Communion, heaven and earth are connected and we see a glimpse of heaven. And, whether we use rituals and structure or simplicity in our worship, the important thing is that the worship should help us to make that connection with God and with each other, to be caught up in the worship of heaven that shapes our life on earth.

The significance of this moment is why we are encouraged to keep a time of quiet reflection when we come into Church for Communion. It can be tempting to do all your catching up before the service begins, but it is so important to bring ourselves very consciously into God's presence. It also gives others the chance to experience that prayerful calm before we begin our worship. It's a bit like the difference between grabbing a meal on the go or taking time to set the table for your family and friends to show how special they are for you. A friend of mine has a sign in his Church as a gentle reminder that reads "Please talk to God before worship and to each other afterwards."

We receive Christ in this sacred moment and we do so in a very physical way, holding out our hands. This simple gesture reminds us of our own need of God and of our need to be open to receive. I was taught in my confirmation classes that you make a throne with your hands to welcome your Saviour. Perhaps one of the most profound moments is when we receive the bread and the wine and reply "Amen" to the Eucharistic minister who offers the sacrament to us. We take God into ourselves and say our "Yes" to all that that means.



So, I would encourage you to think and pray about what it means to you to receive Holy Communion, because this one moment, repeated throughout time and eternity is always a moment of both connection and transformation. At different times in our lives it can feel like a shelter from the storm or a challenge to make a change. There are some moments when you may find receiving Communion really hard. If that's you, then do seek out someone to talk to. Most of us will find that our understanding and experience of receiving Holy Communion will grow and change over the years.

As I give thanks for the communion that I have shared with all of you in the life of our Team Ministry and the wider community I find myself again saying "Amen". God's call for you may not mean moving to a new place – although it may! To receive God into our lives is to open ourselves to new joys and challenges and to remember that we belong to each other in earth and in heaven. Whatever your experience and whatever your church looks like or does, we receive at the Lord's table and his grace and love are sufficient for us all.

Mother Cate



Celebrating our Wild Churchyard



***Have you ever made a
wildflower seedbomb?***

The children - and a few adults, showed just how easy it is and made lots at our Environment Sunday event in June, "Celebrating our Wild Churchyard." They only got a little muddy! Despite the heat, the children had an energetic and informative game of Wildlife Bingo and were delighted by a close encounter with Phil - a resident pheasant showing off his beautiful plumage.

We had lots of visitors of all ages, many who had never visited the churchyard before and were delighted by the Tree Trail - at finding unusual species and how informative it was. There are printed copies of the Tree Trail in church or find it on All Saints website or scan the QR code here.



We joined in the national Nature Count organised by Caring for God's Acre – the conservation charity for burial grounds. People recorded hundreds of pieces of information about different species found in our churchyard - plants, insects, birds and animals. The data will be uploaded to the National Biodiversity Network Atlas. I was thrilled to spot a tree creeper bird for the first time; one visitor found a rare beetle and others identified unknown wild plants.

On top of all that we made well over £100 from plant sales and refreshments to go to church funds.

We've since had lots of positive feedback from people in the local community and lovely comments on social media include: "What a beautiful oasis of nature the churchyard is in the middle of our town."

Much of this is thanks to our dedicated team of gardeners who work so hard every week come rain or shine. A big thank you goes to all who helped with the event.

Katrina Grant

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