

CHRIST CHURCH NEWS

JUNE 2024



CALENDAR

Sunday 2nd June

The First Sunday after Trinity

10am Parish Eucharist followed by refreshments
God's Gang meets during the service
6pm Choral Evensong and licensing of the Revd Christopher Winter

Wednesday 5th June

10am Holy Communion
5pm Evening Prayer
7pm-9pm Remembering DDay Short service at 8pm

Saturday 8th June

9.30am Working Party We need help in the church and the garden- cleaning, weeding, something for everyone! There's plenty to do, especially getting ready for the Summer Fete.

Sunday 9th June Second Sunday after Trinity

8am Holy Communion
10am Parish Eucharist followed by refreshments
12noon and 1pm Holy Baptism

Tuesday 11th June

10am Mothers Union : A Day out at Aylesford Friary

Wednesday 12th June

10am Holy Communion
2pm First Steps service. If you are a family with pre-school children, please come and join in the fun.
5pm Evening Prayer

Thursday 13th June

10am Pilgrim Group **Paul in Corinth Acts 18**

Saturday 15th June

2.30pm Summer Fete

Sunday 16th June

Third Sunday after Trinity

8am Holy Communion
10am Parish Eucharist followed by refreshments
God's Gang meets during the service

Wednesday 19th June

10am Holy Communion
5pm Evening Prayer

Thursday 20th June

2.30-4pm Mustard Seed

Saturday 22nd June

Alban Pilgrimage

Sunday 23rd June

Fourth Sunday after Trinity:

8am Holy Communion
10am Parish Eucharist followed by refreshments

Wednesday 26th June

10am Holy Communion
5pm Evening Prayer

Thursday 27th June

10am Pilgrim Group **Paul in Ephesus Acts 19**

Sunday 30th June

Fifth Sunday after Trinity

8am Holy Communion
10am Parish Eucharist followed by refreshments

Wednesday 3rd July

10am Holy Communion

Morning Prayer Monday Tuesday Thursday and Friday 8.30am join us in church or on line
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82117921556> Please check the weekly sheet for any changes.

Saturday 15th June at 2.30p.m.

SUMMER FETE

Please try to fill a jar or two for our tombola stall with absolutely anything that will fit in a jar!

Cotton wool balls, wrapped sweets, crayons, stickers, pickled onions ANYTHING!

There are empty jars at the back of church, please help yourself and return to the other box when full.

We are also collecting for all the usual stalls and donations of books, puzzles, unwanted gifts, bottles(full!), ornaments, crockery, glassware, pictures can also be left at the back of church. Sorry no knives or anything electrical.

Many thanks, Sheila

July and August dates

6th July Sponsored walk for St John's Eye Hospital, Jerusalem (ask Alison for details)

13th July MU Wave of Prayer

14th July Sea Sunday 6pm Evensong

18th July over 80s and Mustard Seed

Summer Tea Party

4th August BBQ

21st August T@3

MOTHERS' UNION



Members of Christ Church Mothers' Union welcomed Vickie Clarke from the Gravesend Daytime Hub to our meeting in May. Vickie shared with us her work and experiences with those whom the Hub support - their 'guests', mostly all of whom are homeless and/or suffer with addiction in some form or another. Vickie's talk was extremely moving and really brought home the harsh reality of the people who use their service. The Hub's KCC funding has been cut and they are relying on voluntary contributions. We have, therefore, decided to continue our collection of underwear, socks, new clothing, toiletries and breakfast goods. If you wish to donate anything there is a box near our table in church. Many thanks.

Looking forward to the Alban Pilgrimage.

On 22nd June we will travel to St Alban's to take part in the pilgrimage honouring the first saint and martyr of the British Isles. The Cathedral in



St Alban's is built around the saint's shrine. A more recent addition are a set of statues on the choir screen where Alban stands surrounded by other martyrs, some local to the diocese, others recent to our times including Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Oscar Romero. All witnesses, martyrs for the faith of Jesus Christ.

In the early fourth century, during the persecution inaugurated the Emperor Diocletian Alban was brought to faith when he offered sanctuary to a priest, fleeing the persecution, who impressed him through conversation, prayer

and holiness When the Roman police came to arrest the priest Alban dressed in the man's vestments met them at his door and was led away bound to the magistrate. The magistrate demanded to know who Alban was and why he had abandoned his pagan ways. The martyr replied - I am Alban - and I worship and adore the true and living God, who created all things. After torture Alban was executed on the hill where St Alban's Abbey now stands.

Alban is the first recorded Christian who forfeited his life for his faith in these islands. Our proto- or first – martyr. One of the hymns we sing on the day puts these words to a well known tune.

*I worship and adore the true and living God,
he said,
As the darkening world of evil raged in torment
round his head;
In the strength of Christ he trod,
as he to martyrdom was led:*



At the Cathedral we will hear Bishop Guli of Chelmsford preach. Her father was Bishop of Iran, and her brother was killed during the Iranian revolution in the 1970s.

More than ever we are aware of the danger facing those who profess to be Christians in many countries round our world. The attacks on Coptic Christians in Egypt seem to be escalating Following a recent attack on pilgrims in upper Egypt Bishop Angelos (the Coptic Bishop in London) wrote:

Transformation is core to the Christian message for throughout history we have seen many transformed from being those who persecuted Christ Himself and

Christians, to those who went on to live with grace. We believe in transformation because, on a daily basis, we are personally transformed from a life of human weakness and sinfulness to a life of power and righteousness. We believe in transformation because the whole message of the Cross and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is to take humanity from the bonds of sin and death to a liberation in goodness and everlasting life. Our world is certainly suffering from the brokenness of our humanity, but it is our responsibility, personally and collectively, to encourage and inspire ourselves, and all those whom we meet along our path, to a life of virtue and holiness, and the love and forgiveness of all.

-It is unlikely that we will find ourselves in the predicament faced by Alban and others. But we will never be far from some who have.



We are aware that Christian face persecution in our world today. Persecution is not about feeling awkward because there are people of other faith groups about, it's not about wearing crosses at work or it is about life and death choices. Jesus does not promise no harm will come but affirms God's presence and care whatever happens.

Jonathan Swift, the author of Gulliver's Travels , once wrote: There is enough religion in our world to make us hate each other but not enough to make us love one another. Religious discord has indeed been the source of conflict and violence. We need urgently to find way to stand alongside each other and work for a world where religion is respected because people of religion make a difference, make the world a better place.

Celebrating 30 years...with Jacqueline

(This is an extended version of the interview that appeared in the diocese magazine)

This year marks the 30th anniversary of women being admitted to the priesthood in the Church of England. In 1994, the Rev Jacqueline Littlewood was one of the first women in the Diocese of Rochester to be ordained a priest. In this anniversary year, we asked her about her reflections on her ministry and of that historic occasion.



When did you start to sense a calling to the ministry?

In 1970 I had a conversation about the possibility of training for licensed lay ministry in the Church Army but the thought of a vocation and full-time training at theological college did not fully germinate until later on in the 1970s.

What happened?

Well, I really think the Holy Spirit was moving during 1970-77, waiting for me to answer the call and not letting me go. In January 1977 I attended an ACCM three-day residential conference where the selection panel conducted interviews. This

appraised the different forms of ministry available to laity along with call and experience. It was recommended that I should train from August 1977 for three years to become a licensed Parish Worker. Whilst in residential training at Lincoln Theological College the Church of England made it possible for a woman to become a Deaconess at the end of her course/training This enabled me with support from my sponsoring Bishop the Right Reverend David Say and Diocese to be licensed as a Deaconess during the 22nd June 1980 Ordination service in Rochester Cathedral. I was the only woman to be licensed that day when the men were ordained as priests and deacons.

What was it like being a woman in ministry in the Church then?

Elizabeth Ferard, the first deaconess in England, received her licence from Bishop Tait of London on 18th July 1862 and a community of deaconesses which was also a religious sisterhood, the (Deaconess) Community of St Andrew was founded. Many deaconesses ministered within parish communities throughout the following years in England. It was a time of change as congregations experienced the ways in which licensed women could serve, but after 100 years many parishes were still to experience women's licensed ministry. Deaconesses were still pioneering the way forward.

Your vocation journey continued and you went on to be ordained as Deacon in 1987. What is a Deacon?

A Deacon is the foundation of all ordained ministry. For most clergy, after a year, they will be ordained as priest. For me as a woman at the time, it was as far as I was able to go.

Was it still pretty rare for a woman to be a Deacon?

Yes. In Rochester Cathedral on 15th March, I remember getting robed for the service. It was the first time that women were allowed to wear a dog collar, not wearing a blue cassock and Deaconess cross and chain. We would now be called Reverend. There was a real feeling of the power of the Holy Spirit moving within the

service, and there was tremendous prayerful support from the congregation.

What was it like for you to be a Deacon then?

I was able to fulfil the roll of deacon during a Eucharist but unable to pronounce absolution, consecrate the bread and wine or give a blessing. If an ordained parish priest/curate wasn't available a visiting priest would come to officiate and sometimes they arrived as the Peace was being offered if they'd travelled from an earlier service.

There were men and women who were point blank in their opposition to women's ministry. This included refusing to receive the chalice I was administering which they also did when women chalice assistants were administering. It was a different type of rejection and exclusion to that I had experienced in previous years. It was not easy. But that was my calling, my cross so to speak.

Then, in 1992, General Synod - the decision-making body of the Church of England - voted for women to be admitted to the priesthood.

Yes. It followed years of countless debate and votes on whether women should be ordained as Priests, but the vote felt spirit-led to me.

You were one of the first women to be ordained a priest in Rochester Cathedral in 1994. What was that like?

Being ordained a priest on 28th May was such an affirming experience and full of joy.

On reflection it was a day when I felt both humbled and privileged that I would now be able to preside at the Eucharist, give a blessing and lay hands on other women and men at their ordination as priests. I was also aware that it would herald new challenges, particularly if someone refused my ministry when I was presiding at the Eucharist and other sacraments of the church, and opposition from Forward in Faith parishes.

At the end of the service we could see people with banners outside the west door and I and others in the procession wondered if they were protestors – we were greatly relieved to find they were members of the Catholic Women's Ordination Group who had come to support us. Sadly, this was in complete contrast to some members of the Cathedral Choir and Bellringers

who refused to participate on that Saturday and the Sunday when more women were ordained priest .

How did that affect you?

It hurt, but I had to carry on. I suppose it was breaking new ground, so to speak, and some women and men just needed more time than others, and still do, to acclimatise to change. There still continue to be differences of opinion on women's ministry and their holding positions of authority.



What would you say to those exploring ordained and lay ministry today?

Remember that there are many different ways of being able to serve. Take time to seek clarity about your own calling and, If appropriate, ask for support/help/advice from those with relevant experience.

Often those called to ordination feel so confused, unprepared, or unworthy but God often uses the weakest, most vulnerable or broken to contribute to His purposes and the building up of His Kingdom. Look at the first disciples and their human frailties - Thomas doubting, Peter's denial, impulsiveness and running away; and Paul's conversion from being a persecutor of Christians. Keep the faith, although the journey may not always be easy or as speedy as you may wish. Make time for spiritual reading and prayer and ensure that you rest and recharge your batteries - an empty vessel is unable to give out.

Steadfastness and faithfulness hopefully bound together within a prayerful reciprocal relationship! Again a focus on time spent with God. Some people might regard this as wasting time in these days of instant and immediate

wants and needs but prayer often requires patience.



You have received a number of honours in recognition of your ministry.

Yes, and these include when I was kindly invited to a Buckingham Palace Garden Party in 2016 in recognition of my chaplaincy

ministry and service. Then last year, I was presented with the Royal Maundy Money by King Charles III in York Minster in recognition of my

Christian service. Both events were so unexpected but so joyful and such amazing privileges.

What has sustained you?

Making time for spiritual reading, private prayer, visiting places and doing things that will be enjoyed.

Jesus has been my focus and strength, my rock along with dear family and friends, many who have sadly died, who have accompanied me along the Way. I might also have been assisted with, as my friends say, a distinct blast of stubbornness, grim determination and having an indomitable spirit!!!!

Remembering DDay

Peter Read outlines the story of the 48s and their connection with Christ Church

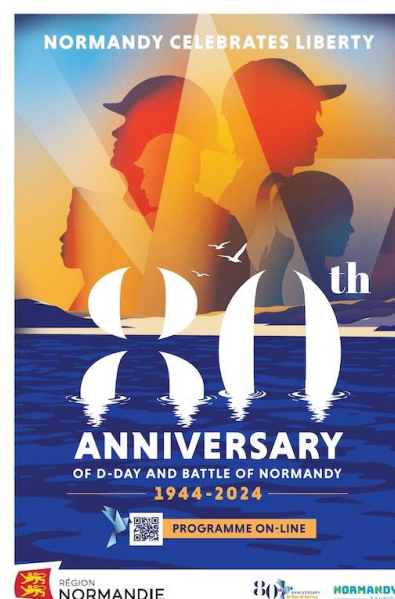


48 (Royal Marines) Commando was the last WW2 Commando unit to be raised. The planning for D-Day required one additional Commando unit and it was decided to use the 7th Battalion, Royal Marines, for this purpose, with any shortfall in numbers to be filled by Marines serving in 2nd Mobile Naval Base Defence Organisation, Royal Marines. Both these units returned from overseas deployments and disembarked in the Clyde 10 February 1944. 48 Royal Marine Commando, Royal Marines, was raised at Deal between 2–13 March 1944 under the command of Lt Col James Louis Moulton, RM. The Commando immediately moved to Achnacarry in the Scottish Highlands for intensive Commando training. The course ended on 3rd April 1944 after which the Commando moved to billets in Gravesend to train using the Cliffe Marshes as firing ranges in preparation for D-Day, although they did not know this at the time. Christ Church became their

Garrison Church and on their last Sunday there was a parade service where *'a fighting sermon was preached'* by the senior chaplain of the Commando Group, Rev John Armstrong, who later became Bishop of Bermuda, and the commandos sang what was to become their pre-battle hymn *'Stand up, stand up for Jesus'*. The Unit was then taken by train from Gravesend to Southampton the following Thursday, five days before D-Day, to a camp which was guarded by Americans. On the 5th June they boarded six wooden landing craft and sailed for France during the night. These were essentially raiding craft capable of transporting 90 men but without the element of surprise they were very vulnerable. None of the Commando had helmets only their green berets.

48 RM Commando was to land on Nan Red Sector of Juno Beach after the 8th Canadian Infantry Brigade, which should

have cleared the beach defences. It was then to move eastwards to clear the strongpoint at Langrune sur Mer



before joining up with 41 RM Commando which had landed on Sword.

On the run in it seemed that the landing would be unopposed but as the craft approached the beach, they met machine gun fire from the St. Aubin strongpoint which was almost opposite the landing point. They were also fired on from mortars and artillery.



One landing craft carrying 'Z' troop was hit by shellfire. It then hit an obstacle and was unable to beach. Some Commandos attempted to swim ashore. Some succeeded but others were drowned in the strong undertow. The troop then managed to transfer to other

larger landing craft and thus some forty men were able to get ashore.

The landing craft carrying 'Y' troop also hit an obstacle and was unable to beach. The Commandos on this craft also transferred to another larger landing craft. However, disembarking was slow and casualties were mounting so the landing craft withdrew with some 50 Commandos still on board. These were taken back to UK.

'A', 'B' and 'X' troops were able to wade ashore through some three feet of water, the bicycles causing some problems. They first sheltered under low earth cliffs and sea wall until an exit could be found. By 0900 hours these troops plus Headquarters Troop were ashore and at the Assembly Area at La Rive, some 200 yards inland. At 1030 hours, 48 Commando was ready to move to Langrune sur Mer.

It was already considerably weakened as 'A', 'B' and 'X' troops each had some fifty to fifty five men, whilst 'Y' and 'Z' troops had only some forty five men between them and casualties included most of the Troop Commanders. Headquarters had lost some twenty

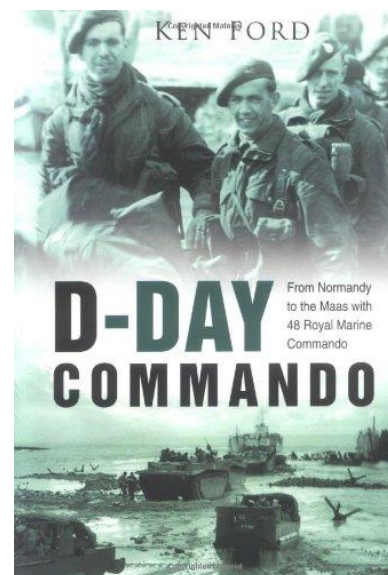
men and the support troop had only one 3" mortar and one Bren team.

Langrune-sur-Mer was then liberated after heavy fighting and severe losses, with 25% casualties on the way.

48 Commando was disbanded on 31st January 1946. A memorial service was held in March 1946, with the same preacher who sent them on their way to Southampton and Normandy and, to quote Major-General Moulton who led 48 Commando into Normandy:

*When duty calls or danger
Be never wanting there.*

In October 1946 a memorial plaque for the fallen of 48 Commando was dedicated in the Warrior Chapel. For many years, the landing of 48 Commando on Juno beach was commemorated on the morning of June 6th, on the seashore, led by Revd Joe King accompanied by veterans and several members of Christ Church congregation.



If you are interested, I am happy to lend out my copy of Haste to the Battle, subtitled A Marine Commando at War, by Major General Moulton, who commanded 48 Commando on D Day, and D-Day Commando, a personal reminiscence by Ken Ford a 48 RM commando, on request.

Christ Church will be open from 7pm on Wednesday 5th June. There will be a short service at 8pm remembering all who took part in the D-DAY landings, particularly 48 Royal Marine Commando who were garrisoned in Gravesend and gathered at Christ Church before crossing the Channel. There will be a civic commemoration at Clarence Place on the evening of Thursday 6th June.



THE MEMORIAL PLAQUE, CHRIST CHURCH, GRAVESEND

Christ Church Echo Square SUMMER FETE 2024

Saturday 15th June
at 2.30pm

Entry £1
Children Free



PARIS 2024



Charity Number: 1130741

🏆 Stalls 🏆 Refreshments 🏆 Raffle Prizes 🏆 Mini Olympics 🏆

PRAYER CALENDAR

	THE COMMUNITY	CHURCH
1	The Elderly	Those who use our hall
2	Those with poor mental health	Our preschool
3	The armed services	Our clergy
4	GPs and community health workers	Our Churchwarden Our Parochial Church Council
5	Schools	The children in our church God's Gang and First Steps
6	Young people at university & college, or in work or apprenticeships	For vocations in the church, and those in training for ordained and lay ministry
7	The unemployed	Street Pastors
8	Our parliament and MP	Churches Together in Gravesend
9	Our emergency services	Our companion dioceses in Estonia, Zimbabwe and Tanzania
10	Social workers	Neighbouring Parishes
11	Children	Our lay ministers
12	Prisoners and prison staff	Prison chaplains
13	The victims of racism and discrimination	Christian Aid
14	Those who support people in the workplace	Our Bishops and Archdeacon
15	Our neighbours of other faiths	Those who are new in our church
16	Our local hospitals	Hospital chaplains
17	All who work with young people School pastors	Inclusive Church and all who work for inclusion and equality
18	Those living with dementia	Our safeguarding team
19	Musicians and artists	Our organist, choir & Semiquavers
20	Family life	Our Mothers Union
21	Our councillors and council	Those who are persecuted for their faith
22	All involved in the production and distribution of food	Mustard Seed
23	All who work on the river RNLI	Those preparing for marriage
24	Victims of domestic abuse	Those who care for our buildings
25	Those who care for green spaces	That we may be more aware of our impact on our planet
26	Those who are affected by modern day slavery	Baptism families
27	Foodbanks and those who use them The homeless	Those who prepare our notice sheet and communications
28	Local businesses	The bereaved
29	Those fighting addictions	Uniformed organisations
30	Refugees and asylum seekers	Those who are housebound or isolated
31	Those who live and work in our local Care Homes	Give thanks for our diversity