

Notes from around the Parishes, June 2021

For Great Massingham, Little Massingham & Harpley

Vicar's message:

June is burstin' out all over our benefice - forty square miles of prime west Norfolk countryside!

I'd like to start by thanking all those who attended the recent Plant Sale at St. Nicholas' Church, Gayton - and to all of you who support, year after year, our church/village fundraising events across the benefice. We **do value** the energy and commitment of volunteers, and money raised helps support our work in many ways. **St. Nicholas' Church** is now open, having been closed so long for building works and at last we are able to see inside - very different, I think you'd agree! I hope you liked what you saw. This work is the enduring legacy of my late colleague, Reverend Jane Holmes, who worked tirelessly for many years, fundraising for and overseeing this major project - but sadly did not live to see it completed.

I think the church looks wonderful. There is a huge new carpet, new upholstered movable chairs and the dilapidated pews have been removed - apart from a couple of paupers' pews conserved by the North Door - and the whole church is light, spacious and flexible. We look forward to welcoming people back into all our churches as soon as the restrictions due to the pandemic are eased (hopefully!)

Building and renovation works are taking place in other churches in our group (of ten). It is a huge responsibility to look after our built heritage of amazing mediæval buildings. But these churches are important: they hold the collective memory of our village communities over many centuries: graves, war memorials, christening and marriage registers; and, while the buildings are not always ideally suited to modern purposes (eg. no toilet or kitchen facilities!), they are craftsmen-built sacred spaces to the glory of God, signs of God's Kingdom, hallowed places for prayer, praise and worship.

It would make a huge difference if we didn't have these magnificent buildings at the heart of our communities. I believe they are valued by churchgoers and non-churchgoers alike - and the church continues to be there for **everyone** in their time of need.

We continue to evaluate how we can engage with our communities, reach out to everyone in the best way possible while being challenged by dwindling resources and especially personnel. Long gone are the days when one vicar had a single parish to focus on. To put this in today's context, whereas Jane and I, along with our valued and essential Ministry Team, shared the ministry for the ten churches in our group, I and the team, including my newly licensed ordained colleague Rev'd Sue Martin, now have responsibility (with 10 PCCs) for all 10 churches. So if you don't see me as often as you would like, please be patient. I promise to do my very best to serve you all with hope in my heart for the future and in God's strength alone.

With my blessings for a great late Spring/early Summer - we'll get **all the Fêtes and Summer Fayres** back next year!

Judith x

Services in Church

The Rev'd Dr Brendan McCarthy, the Church of England's advisor on medical ethics and health policy described the changes in guidance as we moved into Step three on 17th May as 'a relatively modest step along the road of easing restrictions affecting places of worship...' At the moment:

*** * *** Remember: - when in church masks are still needed. *** * ***
Keep a 2m distance; use the hand sanitiser provided

We now await the government's announcement on 14th June when it will become clear how much the Covid prevention measures will change from 21st. We pray that it will be possible to include services in our smaller churches from July and, with this in mind, Rev'd Judith hopes to introduce a new service rota that will mark a new beginning for our group of churches after nearly two difficult years.

A Prayer for new beginnings

Heavenly Father,
we turn to you in time of change.
Lead us, we pray,
to a future full of hope, joy and love.
Help us to recognise
and grasp new opportunities
as we face the future
with faith and courage.

Amen

Services & Meetings via Zoom

Zoom services will still be on offer on some Sundays at 11am with an email invitation sent out at 1050. On alternate Wednesday afternoons at 3pm there is Bible Study (Lectio Divina) or a Celtic Service. **All Welcome!**

Contact Steve Williamson if you would like an invitation:

01553 636 413 or stephenwilliamson001@gmail.com

Please direct all enquiries on church matters
(Baptisms, Marriages, Funerals or requests for pastoral visits)
to our Acting Team Rector: **The Rev'd Judith Pollard,**
The Rectory, Grimston 01485 601251
Check out our website: www.ggmbenefice.co.uk

SERVICES FOR THE GROUP in June

Sunday 30th May - Trinity Sunday

9am Holy Communion St Botolph's, Grimston

11am Zoom Holy Communion

Thursday 3 June

9am Holy Communion in Harpley

Corpus Christi - Day of Thanksgiving for Holy Communion

Sunday 6th June - 1st Sunday after Trinity

0930 Lay-led Family Service St Lawrence's, Harpley

0930 Holy Communion St Andrew's, Little Mass

11am Zoom Holy Communion

Wednesday 9th June

3pm Lectio Divina via Zoom

Sunday 13th June - 2nd Sunday after Trinity

1030 Holy Communion St Mary's, Gt M

0930 Lay-led Morning Prayer St Andrew's, Little Mass

Wednesday 16th June

9am Holy Communion in Grimston

Sunday 20th June - 3rd Sunday after Trinity

0930 Lay-led Family Service St Mary's, Gt Massingham

0930 Lay-led Morning Prayer St Andrew's, Little Mass

11am Zoom Holy Communion

Wednesday 23rd June

3pm Celtic Service via Zoom

Sunday 27th June - 4th Sunday after Trinity

0900 Sung Holy Communion St Lawrence's, Harpley

0930 Lay-led Morning Prayer St Andrew's, Little Mass

1030 Holy Communion St Botolph's, Grimston

3pm Celtic Service St Mary's, Gayton Thorpe

Sunday 4th July - 5th Sunday after Trinity

0830 Holy Communion St Andrew's, Congham

0930 Lay-led Family Service St Lawrence's, Harpley

0930 Holy Communion St Andrew's, Little Mass

1030 Holy Communion St Nicholas', Gayton

Wednesday 7th July

9am Holy Communion in Harpley

Churches open daily in daylight hours, until about 6pm:



All Saints', Ashwicken
St Mary's, Gayton Thorpe
St Lawrence's, Harpley
St Botolph's, Grimston now open 10am to 3pm

St Mary's, East Walton
St Mary's, Gt Massingham
St Andrew's, Congham



From the Registers:

14th May funeral of (John) Niven Duncan at St Andrew's, Lt Mass

Annual Parochial Church Meetings have been held. At these meetings Churchwardens and Deanery Synod representatives are elected.

Churchwardens are: Lucy Brown for St Lawrence's
Judy Collett for St Andrew's
Stephen Hudson for St Mary's

Your Deanery Synod representatives are Rosemary Mehers, Eric Bothamley & Kim Fraser. They serve for three years while wardens are elected annually.

HARPLEY OPEN GARDENS

***** A date for your diary *****

The congregation of St Lawrence's church, Harpley invites you to tour Harpley and visit 6 splendid gardens during the weekend of **June 26th & 27th 2021**

Plants for sale * * Raffle * * Garden Teas
Pop-up Café in the church serving:
real coffee, proper lunches and delicious afternoon teas

Tickets £4 available from the church children free
Sat 26th ~ 10am to 5pm; Sun 27th ~ 10am to 5pm
Why not join us for our service at 9am on 27th before you explore Harpley and sample our refreshments.

Please send items for inclusion in the July issue of the 'Parish Notes' to the editor by 20th June. An extended version of these 'Notes' is available on the web-site or, contact the editor, if you wish to receive them by email.

Rosemary Mehers 01485 521866 or rosemarymehers@hotmail.com

Check the Group website for the most up to date information:

www.ggmbenefice.co.uk

Poems from the pen of Malcolm Guite

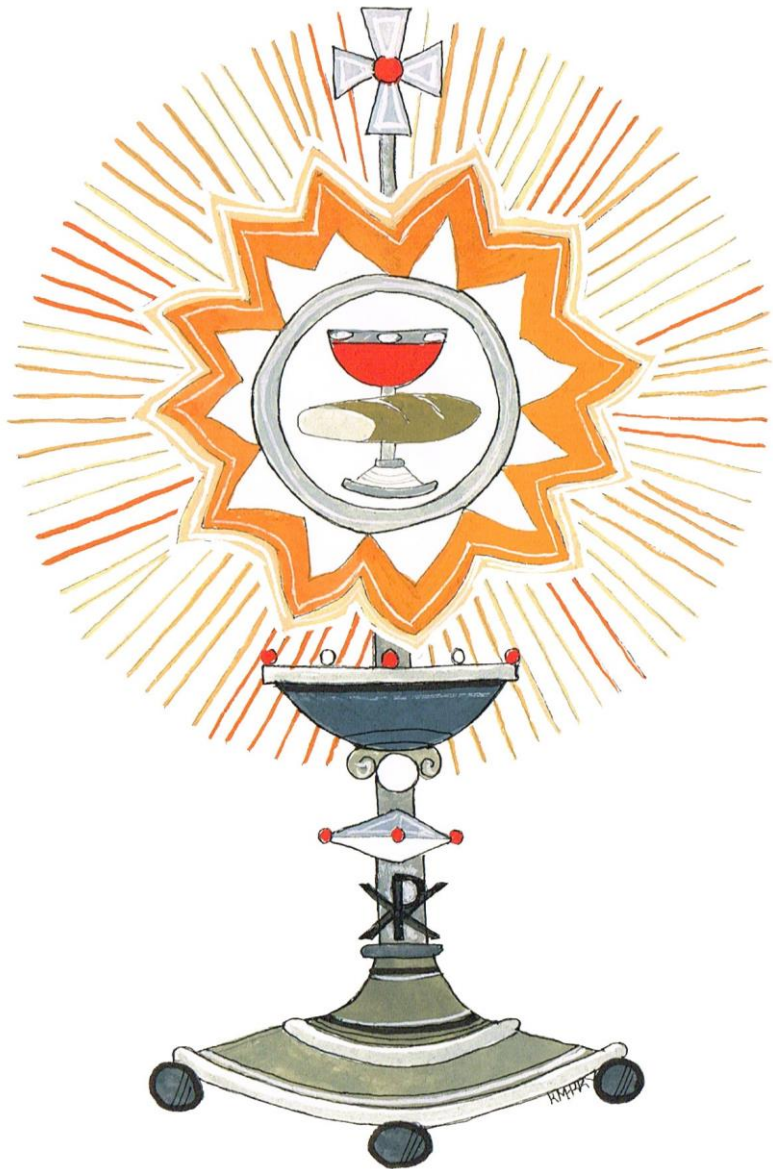
Hide and seek

Ready or not, you tell me, here I come!
And so I know I'm hiding, and I know
My hiding-place is useless. You will come
And find me. You are searching high and low.
Today I'm hiding low, down here, below,
Below the sunlit surface others see.
Oh find me quickly, quickly come to me.
And here you come and here I come to you.
I come to you because you come to me.
You know my hiding places. I know you,
I reach you through your hiding-places too;
Touching the slender thread, but now I see –
Even in darkness I can see you shine,
Risen in bread, and revelling in wine.

This Table

The centuries have settled on this table
Deepened the grain beneath a clean white cloth
Which bears afresh our changing elements.
Year after year of prayer, in hope and trouble,
Were poured out here and blessed and broken, both
In aching absence and in absent presence.
This table too the earth herself has given
And human hands have made. Where candle-flame
At corners burns and turns the air to light
The oak once held its branches up to heaven,
Blessing the elements which it became,
Rooting the dew and rain, branching the light.

Because another tree can bear, unbearable,
For us, the weight of Love, so can this table



In mediaeval times there used to be wonderful processions in which the consecrated elements were taken out of the church on this day and processed on the streets, showing that the Word made flesh was not just in a box labelled 'church' but in our midst, just as He was on the streets of Nazareth and Jerusalem. Rebecca Merry's lovely art work (opposite) has the feel of those mediaeval 'showings' on Corpus Christi.

'Hide and seek' is the second of three sonnets Malcolm Guite has written on the theme of Corpus Christi. The first, Love's Choice, was printed in the 'Notes' in June 2020; both come from his book- Sounding the Seasons: Seventy Sonnets for the Christian Year. The third, 'This Table' is included in his book of poems entitled ' The Singing Bowl'

He also writes a daily blog where you can read more poems and also hear him read them

<https://malcolmguite.wordpress.com/?s=Corpus+Christi>

<https://malcolmguite.wordpress.com/2020/06/29/>

June 29th is St Peter's Day

St. Peter's day, when we remember the disciple who, for all his many mistakes, knew how to recover and hold on, who, for all his waverings was called by Jesus 'the rock', who learned the threefold lesson that every betrayal can ultimately be restored by love. It is fitting therefore that it is at Petertide that new priests and deacons are ordained, on the day they remember a man whose recovery from mistakes and openness to love can give them courage.

This year, in a few weeks' time, Rev'd Judith will celebrate the tenth anniversary of her ordination - and Rev'd Julian Thomson his fiftieth.

St Peter

Impulsive master of misunderstanding
You comfort me with all your big mistakes;
Jumping the ship before you make the landing,
Placing the bet before you know the stakes.
I love the way you step out without knowing,
The way you sometimes speak before you think,
The way your broken faith is always growing,
The way he holds you even when you sink.
Born to a world that always tried to shame you,
Your shaky ego vulnerable to shame,
I love the way that Jesus chose to name you,
Before you knew how to deserve that name.
And in the end your Saviour let you prove
That each denial is undone by love.