



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

REFOCUSSED

THE PARISH MAGAZINE OF
ST ETHELDREDA'S CHURCH
WITH ST LUKE'S CHURCH

February 2020



BISHOP'S
HATFIELD

Letter to the parish

from the Rev Andy Gardner, Vicar: St John's Church, Hatfield

February is a bit of a strange month! Christmas is a distant memory; New Year's resolutions have been made (and probably broken), the days are normally pretty chilly, and the promise of warmer spring weather is still tantalisingly out of reach. Because of these and other factors, people working in health-care tell us that February is one of the worst months in the year for illness and mortality.

In the Church calendar, February is important because it normally marks the beginning of Lent (Ash Wednesday is on the 26th this year). 'Oh wonderful!' I hear people say, 'on top of all February's winter gloom, we also have to give up eating chocolate!' (or some other little pleasure). February in general, and Lent in particular, seems to have a bit of an image problem.

Now I'm a Vicar and having been through quite a few Lents in my time, I'd like to suggest that it's helpful to think about it slightly differently. Since nearly the beginning of the church almost two thousand years ago, Christians have felt that because the Easter celebration of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection was so important, there needed to be a period of preparation beforehand. This preparation involved them prioritising personal reflection and spiritual renewal which meant that instead of seeing Lent as a time of giving things

up and feeling miserable, Lent was used as a time where people could do something positive for themselves in terms of spiritual wellbeing and flourishing.

For us, with all the demands of modern life when time is so often at a premium, how can we also do something intentional? Isn't it easier just to give up chocolate cake for a few weeks? In the New Testament the apostle James wrote, 'Draw near to God and He'll draw near to you,' and the author of Hebrews similarly encouraged us to 'Draw near.' But what does it mean in 2020 to 'draw near' to God?

A helpful picture came to me one holiday in North Devon whilst watching some surfers. I asked one cool dude with dreadlocks what the secret of surfing was he replied, *it's easy mate, all you need to do is lie on your surfboard and put yourself in the way of a wave!*

Letter continues inside on page 3 ...

ASH WEDNESDAY, WATERCOLOUR BY JULIAN FABR (1853-1929)



Parish of Bishop's Hatfield St Etheldreda with St Luke

St Etheldreda's Church Services

SUNDAY: 8^{am} Holy Communion BCP
9.30^{am} Holy Communion with Sunday School

3RD SUNDAY OF MONTH:

9.30^{am} All age Eucharist

TUESDAY: 9^{am} Morning Prayer

WEDNESDAY: 10^{am} Holy Communion

THURSDAY: 9^{am} Morning Prayer

7^{pm} Holy Communion or Compline

FRIDAY: 9^{am} Morning Prayer

St Luke's Church Service

SUNDAY: 11.30^{am} Holy Communion with Hymns

**CHILDREN'S
SUNDAY SCHOOL**

meets at 9.20^{am} on Sundays in term time
at 12 Fore Street (STEPS office)

February Weddings: None

February Baptisms: 1st February, Marcus Lee Palmer

Please contact Fr Darren to book your Wedding or Baptism t: 01707 256638 e: frdarren@yahoo.co.uk

What's on in February

1st, 2pm—Prayer Walk everyone in the team is welcome

2nd, 4pm— **CONFIRMATION SERVICE** St Mary's Church North Mymms

8th, 7pm—Diadem Vocal Duo – Amy Beth Smith & Marika Rauscher

11th, 2.30pm—Friendship Teas, St John's Church Lemsford, Annexe

21st, 2.30-4pm - Poetry Group at St Mary's Church North Mymms

26th, 8pm— **ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE** St Etheldreda's Church

29th, 7pm—Concert St Albans Abbey Choir, St Etheldreda's Church

Regular social events

8am 1st Saturday of month
Men's Breakfast Club
at St Michaels Church

2pm every Thursday at
Angies Deli, the Broadway
Thursday Tea Break

Ever thought of coming to church? It can sometimes seem daunting to take those first steps whether for the first time, or returning to church. We are happy to offer friendly encouragement.

If you would like to find out more about St Etheldreda's or St Luke's, please contact:

Thomas Walters on 07971 513021

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Letter to the Parish, continued from page 1

Drawing near, like with my surfer friend, means to be intentional about putting ourselves 'in God's way' God delights to draw near to us, but usually He waits for us to make the first move. Practically, we can do this in a number of ways. If you have been around the church for a while, it may be a case of setting aside some extra time to read and pray. There are some fantastic resources available that can help us with this. If you are less familiar or feel like some additional help would be useful, a good option could be to join a 'Lent course' at one of the local churches where we can learn together how to draw near to the God who loves us.

So, if the prospect of February in general and Lent in particular is leaving you feeling less than thrilled, why not decide to do something positive for your spiritual journey this year?

My own experience, having been a Christian for nearly forty years, is that when I take the time to draw near and put myself in God's way, I'm seldom disappointed because He is faithful in his promise of drawing near to me.



*A deacon burning palm fronds
from the previous Palm Sunday,
for Ash Wednesday*

What's On at Hatfield House in February



Hatfield House, Gardens, Park & Woodland Walks are now closed

We look forward to welcoming you for the start of a new season on Saturday 4th April 2020.

However, the restaurant will re-open on Saturday 18th February, and Hatfield Park Farm looks forward to welcoming you on Sunday 31st March, for the start of the 2020 season



For more information on all events at Hatfield House

www.hatfield-house.co.uk/events t: 01707 287010 e: visitors@hatfield-house.co.uk

Bishop Alan's New Year Message, 2nd January 2020



I guess all of us have hopes and fears for the coming year. Like many others I'll be making some New Year Resolutions for myself, but I also have a wish list for 2020. Here are my five top wishes. You might want to add your own.

After a pretty bruising general election, I suggest we stop blaming politicians for everything that's wrong and take some responsibility to change our communities ourselves. After all, where on earth did the notion come from that politicians and lawyers know best? Though they've got an important role to play, many of the greatest things in the world have come from ordinary people working at grassroots. For example, much of the provision for homeless people on the streets is run by voluntary groups, such as the churches. Community organising and tackling problems together is a proven way of making improvements to the lives of ordinary folk, whether it's addressing poverty or mental health or the growing disparity between the haves and have nots. Let's find new ways to solve problems together.

Then there's social media which has promised so much but is now being dominated by trolls and commercial concerns trying to manipulate us. So the second item on

my wish list is: we stop using social media to insult or manipulate. Instead, let's use it to help others. How about each one of us sending a daily email or tweet to affirm someone or something? If enough of us do it, we can outnumber the trolls.

Linked to this is my third wish. Why can't we learn to enjoy living in a society which has free speech? Instead of trying to silence people who don't agree with us, why can't we simply find it fascinating that different people have different ideas? Communities all over the world have to live far greater differences than we do in the United Kingdom. So in 2020 why not be content to disagree well and get on with our lives?

With floods across Britain and raging fires devastating parts of Australia, we are facing some pretty stark choices about climate change and the environment. There's often a feeling that we can't do enough because of a 'lack of political will' but the simple answer to that is for each one of us to change our lifestyle and demand that those in leadership follow our example.

One final wish: we are one of the wealthiest countries in the world with a wonderful history, a rich culture and stunning countryside. Wouldn't it be refreshing if we put into practise each day the old lessons of thankfulness and joy and throw in a bit more generosity at the same time?

May God give you a joy full and blessed 2020. Happy New Year! + Alan St Albans

February Brings The Rain (*and melts the frozen lake again*), Jo Roscoe

Climate change notwithstanding, February is generally a grey and gloomy month – daffodils not quite in bloom, Christmas lights and decorations a thing of the past, Easter eggs ages away!

But Christian tradition provides us with two events to lighten the gloom.

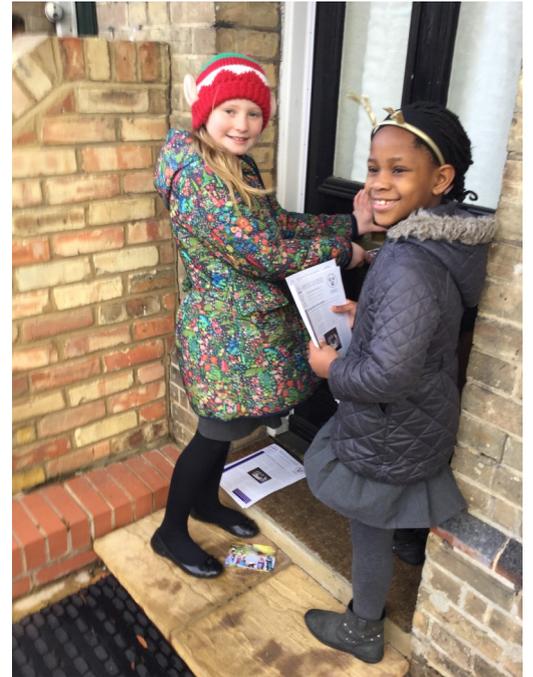
The first is Candlemas, one of the oldest traditional festivals of the Church. Held on 2 February – 40 days after Jesus' birth – it commemorates the formal presentation of the baby in the Temple. Luke 2.2 gives the story of Simeon recognising the baby as the awaited Christ child and of his profound and moving prayer: 'Lettest now thy servant, Lord, depart in peace...'

The old man recognised that a new light had come into the world. The significance of Candlemas is light, light that shines in the darkness.

Traditionally, all the candles to be used during the church year are blessed on that day.

As the month proceeds the skies begin to lighten, the daffodil buds begin to yellow and another important Church marker is reached.

Shrove Tuesday – more often referred to outside the church as Pancake Tuesday or in the more Catholic tradition as Mardi Gras (fat Tuesday). It marks the last day before the commencement of Lent (see below) and has two main elements, the feasting and rich food – such as eggs, butter and milk, hence the pancakes and the absolution of confessed sins – hence the old English word Shrivven or Shrove – before facing the fasting and self-imposed strictures of the 40 day period of Lent, which begins the following day on 26 February and is of course Ash Wednesday.



A new group of children have been elected as the Make Believers for the academic year 2019-2020 at Countess Anne School.

These children, who are from Years 2-6, were chosen as part of a democratic process at the school in October 2019.

Included in the Make Believers are also the Head Boy and Head Girl, who made a separate campaign

to secure their titles and were also chosen through a democratic whole-school vote.

The Make Believers will be striving to have a meaningful impact on their community.

Currently, they are working on a project in which they are raising money to help fund the building of flushing toilets in parts of the world where not all people have access to something that many of us

take for granted. It is a project set up by the charity Toilet Twinning.

The Make Believers are also making book-marks which they will sell.

In December these children helped to deliver the Refocused magazine to the homes surrounding the school.

Hopefully you saw some of the children out and about in their purple uniforms.



This September, I started as a probationary chorister at St. John's College School in Cambridge.

I arrived at the boarding house on the first day and unpacked my bag and got into my dorm. My bed was on the bottom of the bunk bed. That was fun!

Each day, I get up at 6.45am and I need to have my teeth brushed and my school uniform on by 7am. My next job is to go down stairs and then we walk over to senior house to breakfast. Breakfast starts at 7.05am and finishes at 7.30am. I walk over to my music room after breakfast and have half an hour of instrumental practice to 8am before choir practice. Choir practice lasts for one hour (8am to 9am). At this time I also do theory with the organ scholars. Then I get taken to school. So a lot has happened early in the morning!

Music doesn't stop there! On Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays I watch the choir sing evensong and the rehearsal before. As well as learning the piano I will start playing the bassoon in January. I have also enjoyed the sport on the fabulous field especially rugby.

This year two of the six probationers will be 'made up' on the first of March which means singing with the choir all the time. One of these will be me! I am very excited to be going to America and Jersey in 2020.

I am overwhelmed by how exciting all this has been and I am full of mystery to see what will happen next term!



Jill Knight, Choir Director and Organist
e: jill.jkmusic@gmail.com

St Eth's and St Luke's Top Ten Carols

On the Saturday before Christmas 70+ people squeezed into St Luke's to hear if their favourite Christmas carol was in the top ten, as voted for by the congregations of St. Luke's and St. Eth's churches. They were:

10. We three kings: written by John Henry Hopkins Jr. in 1857, a rector of Christ Episcopal church in Pennsylvania. He wrote the carol for a Christmas pageant in New York City.

9. It came upon the midnight clear: another with American origins written in 1849 by Rev. Edmund Hamilton Sears from Massachusetts – whilst recuperating after long illness on very cold, snowy December day.

8. God rest ye merry gentlemen: the only carol mentioned in Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol", unusual because of its minor key and mention of Satan.

7. In the bleak midwinter: words from a poem by Christina Rossetti's, set to a melody by Gustav Holst called "Cranham" after the Gloucestershire village where he wrote it in 1906.

6. Hark the herald angels sing: five different artists were involved in this very well-known carol, including Charles Wesley and Felix Mendelssohn

Music at St Etheldreda's Hatfield January-July 2020

CHORAL EVENSONG

Saturday January 25th—4pm

Tea and cakes to follow

DIADEM AMYBETH SMITH & MARIKA RAUSCHER

Saturday February 8th—7pm

Diadem, classical crossover with a difference! With a deep love for their classical roots, this duo also performs songs from musicals and harmonises popular favourites that will have you humming and singing along.

ST. ALBANS CATHEDRAL CHOIR

Saturday February 29th—7pm

St. Albans Cathedral Choir in concert at St. Eth's, directed by Andrew Lucas, Master of the Music with Tom Winpenny, Assistant Organist. This concert is sponsored by St. Albans Cathedral Music Trust.

JILL KNIGHT PUPILS' CONCERT

Sunday March 15th—3pm

An informal concert from the pupils of our Director of Music. Tea and cakes to follow.

CHORAL EVENSONG

Sunday April 5th—4pm with tea and cakes to follow.

ST. ETH'S CHOIR AT ST. ALBANS CATHEDRAL

Sunday April 26th—6.30pm

St Eth's Choir has been invited to sing Choral Evensong at St. Albans Cathedral. Please come and support them and our historic cathedral.

WELWYN GARDEN CITY BAND

Saturday May 2nd—7.30pm

A brass band concert with British music at its best

Y.E.S! (Young Eth's Singers) Sunday June 14th 3pm

A wonderful selection of music from our highly regarded junior choir. Tea and cakes to follow.

CHORAL EVENSONG

Sunday June 21st—6pm

Tea and cakes to follow

MID HERTS MUSIC CENTRE SUMMER CONCERT

Saturday June 27th. 7pm

A summer concert by the Mid Herts Music Centre to include the young musicians from the String Orchestra, Youth Orchestra Soloists, Senior Wind Ensemble, String Quartets and Senior Guitar Group.

HATFIELD CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Sunday July 12th—7pm

Not to be missed! A much anticipated return visit from this amazing orchestra.

There will also be music on-going throughout the summer on an ad hoc basis from our Director of Music, Organ Scholars, various ensembles and soloists. St Albans Cathedral Choir Diadem Vocal Duo Welwyn Garden City Band Y.E.S! (Young Eth's Singers)

St Eth's and St Luke's Top Ten Carols (continued)

5. O little town of Bethlehem: a Victorian carol inspired by middle eastern scene when in 1865 Pastor Philip Brooks travelled to Holy Land.

4. Once in royal David's city: words by a bishop's wife, Cecil Frances Alexander, it was first published in 1848 and intended as an educational verse for young children, with simple direct language.

3. O come, all ye faithful: is a Christmas carol that has been attributed to various authors, We know it today in an arrangement by Sir David Willcocks with a magnificent descant, made popular whilst he was Director of Music at King's College Chapel, Cambridge.

2. Away in a manger: was first published in 1884 as "Luther's cradle song" – but was not actually written by Luther. Today it is mostly sung to melody by William James Kirkpatrick, a Pennsylvanian school teacher.

1. Silent night, holy night: first performed in 1818 in the tiny church of St. Nikola in Oberndorf, Austria. Written by Franz Gruber and priest, Josef Mohr it has a gentle lilting melody and has been the nation's favourite carol for many years. In World War 1 it was sung in the trenches by German troops on Christmas Eve 1914.

History evolving in our midst ... Mary Rathbone

Passers by on Park Street during 2019, will have observed dozens and dozens of skips being filled with the inner contents of what was at one time, the Jaipur restaurant. It seemed to be being completely gutted and then rebuilt with only the original outer shell remaining.



Locals watched in fascination as the work developed into what we now understand are four apartments. Then the name WALBY appeared over the front door—see photo on back page. The penny dropped when we learnt the premises, at one time, were owned by WALBY THE BUTCHERS, a thriving butchers business which traded for many years.

The first record of the Walby family in Hatfield was in 1684 when William Walby, a Butcher, lived in Duck Lane, later to be called Park Street. From this time various generations of the family carried on the butchers business. By 1838 a George Walby had

* www.ourhatfield.org.uk/content/topics/shops-trades/shops_and_shopping/old_hatfield_shops-2/walby_the_butchers

moved to the opposite side of Park Street to the corner with Arm and Sword Yard. The business carried on there until 1935 when it then moved to premises on the Great North Road.*

I can remember a time (1985) when the premises were used as a wine bar called Corks and Crumbs with a marketing agency operating, independently, from the rooms above. It would be interesting to know if any of our readers know of other companies operating from there between 1935 and 1985.

We would be delighted to discover more, so if you can remember anything from those days, and would like to share your memories with our readers, then please send them to: maryrathbone@icloud.com

Pancakes! ... Jo Roscoe

‘Why do I have to wait all year for a pancake?’ my father used to ask. Because in my family Pancake Tuesday – Shrove Tuesday – was a calendar event of the year and was the only day on which my mother made pancakes.

It was also the only day of the year when we children were allowed to leave the table before the end of the meal! Not that we were a terribly formal family, but unruly behaviour at the table was just not countenanced! Pancake Day was the exception – not that decorum did not still prevail, but it went something like this.

Mix a Pancake, A poem by Christina Rossetti

Mix a pancake,
Stir a pancake,
Pop it in the pan;
Fry the pancake,
Toss the pancake -
Catch it if you can.

One child would be at my mother’s side as she made the first pancake; this was carried to my father and, as he ate, the second, third, fourth and so on pancakes would be served in turn to each of the others. By this time my father’s second pancake would be ready and served, then the server would take their pancake to the table.

After which each child would carry their plate to the kitchen for their second pancake. We added sugar, squeezed lemons or poured syrup according to taste.

A talkative family, and encouraged to debate or discuss a topic during our evening meal, silence prevailed while pancakes were consumed, anxious that we did not interrupt the flow from kitchen to table.

Strange thing is, I don’t remember my mother ever joining us for pancakes. But I know that I as a wife and mother never seemed to make enough batter for me to have a second pancake. And apparently that is not an uncommon experience among mothers of boys!

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Lent 2020

February 26th—April 11th

Holy Week 2020

April 5—April 11th

Easter Sunday 2020

April 12th

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Walby the butchers c.1930 next door to the Horse & Groom pub, and Walby the apartment block 90 years later in 2020. Read more about this inside on page 8.

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