

St Bartholomew's Church, Oxford Parish News



SERVICES AT ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

| April | 8.00am | 10.00am | 3.00pm | 6.30pm |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--|----------|
| 3rd April 2nd Sunday of Easter | Holy Communion | All Together Worship | - | Evensong |
| 10th April 3rd Sunday of Easter | Holy Communion | Holy Communion | - | - |
| 17th April 4th Sunday of Easter | Holy Communion | Morning Worship | - | Evensong |
| 24th April 5th Sunday of Easter | Holy Communion | Holy Communion | Commemoration of Departed Loved Ones | - |

SUNDAY CLUB (FOR AGES 0-14)

Crèche: 0-2 years Infant: 3-7 Junior: 8-11 Senior: 12-14

These groups meet in the Church Centre during the 10.00 am service, except on the first Sunday when in Church for All Together Worship. Crèche is available every Sunday.

EPIC (for school year 5-7) meets on the 2nd Saturday in the month, 6-8pm in the Church Centre.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FELLOWSHIP meet every Sunday evening during term time in the Church Centre, 6.30 - 8.00 pm.

HOLY COMMUNION Every Wednesday 10.00 am (Book of Common Prayer)

If you would like to book a baptism or wedding, please contact the Church Office 01959 523185.

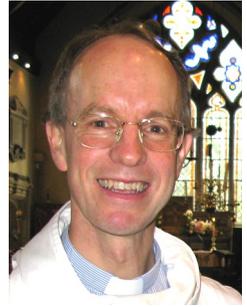
Cover Photograph: "Messy Church" photo taken by Richard Worssam

Magazine printed by Silver Pines Services (see page 37)

Magazine No. 04 Volume 86

VICAR'S VIEWPOINT

Starting on 1st May, I'll be taking an Extended Ministerial Development Leave (or sabbatical, as it used to be called). I'm very grateful to the parish and to the diocese for making it possible for me to do so. An EMDL has three parts: a substantial period of study; a significant period of spiritual renewal (sometimes spoken of as "retreat"); and a time of holiday and refreshment.



My last EMDL was ten years ago, in 2006. I used the time then to research and write up a dissertation for an MA in Christian Spirituality (which otherwise would have taken a whole year if I had done it part-time); I also spent a month travelling round Tanzania, visiting our two link dioceses of Mpwapwa and Kondoa; and I enjoyed an extended time with the family in America, including leading a parish exchange with the episcopal church in Holland, Michigan.

This time I'll be using the EMDL to follow up some reading in Theology and Spirituality, building on the earlier work I've done; in particular, I'll be looking at engaging with emerging trends of spirituality in our contemporary society.

I'll also be spending time visiting various religious communities and retreat houses. I begin with a week with the Anglican Franciscans at their monastery in rural Worcestershire where my younger brother is the Guardian. It will be good to simply share in the rhythm of their life of prayer, study and work. Then I'll have a week with the Society of Mary and Martha near Exeter. This is a community which has been established to offer space for rest and reflection for those who are actively engaged in Christian ministry. The retreat leader that week will be Margaret Silf who has written a number of books on Christian spirituality.

Then, at the invitation of the Bishop, I'll be taking part in a "mid-ministry" programme organised by the Diocese at a retreat house

near Horsham in West Sussex. This programme brings together those who have been ordained for twenty years or so, that we might learn from and encourage one another.

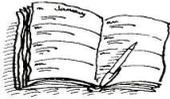
In June I'll be spending a week with the Iona Community in Scotland. This is a place I've been wanting to visit for many years. Historically it has played a major part in the establishment of Christianity in these Isles since St. Columba first settled there in 563 AD. The current ecumenical community was founded in 1938 and its core values are working for peace and social justice, the rebuilding of community and the renewal of worship.

In July I'll be attending a conference at High Leigh in Hertfordshire with the theme of Shakespeare and Theology (this year being the 400th anniversary of the death of Shakespeare), with Rowan Williams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, as the keynote speaker.

Then in August I'll be having an extended holiday with the family in the States, including a visit to Yellowstone National Park and the Grand Tetons. (My younger brother, Nick, will be staying at the Vicarage for those weeks.)

I'm very grateful to the Wardens, Readers, Parish Office, Chris Reed and visiting ministers who'll be covering for me while I'm away. I'll have much to share with you on my return in September!

Your friend and Vicar, *Richard*



DIARY FOR APRIL 2016

**Morning Prayer will be said in church on Tuesdays and Thursdays each week
at 9.00 am and on Fridays in the Cranmer Room at 9.00 am**

- 2 9.00 am Churchyard Working Party
 6.00 pm Talk by John Suchet on 'The Last Waltz' (in church)

3 The Second Sunday of Easter

- 8.00 am Holy Communion (Rev. Chris Johnson)**
 10.00 am All Together Worship
 6.30 pm Evensong

- 4 7.45 pm Homegroup (17 Leonard Avenue)
6 10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) (Rev. Chris Reed)
9 6.00 pm EPIC (Church Centre)

10 The Third Sunday of Easter

- 8.00 am Holy Communion**
 10.00 am Holy Communion
 12 noon Baptism of Jimmy Ashby, Freddie Ashby and Henry Ashby

**Magazine material for the May edition by today, please, to the Church Office,
st.bartholomews@otford.net**

- 11 7.45 pm Coffee and chat (17 Leonard Avenue)
13 9.30 am 'First Steps' (Otford Methodist Church Hall)
 10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
16 8.00 am Readers and Revs at Riverside House, Shoreham
 10.30 am Sunday Club Leaders' Meeting (The Vicarage)
 1.00 pm Wedding of Terry Symes and Carly Stewart

17 The Fourth Sunday of Easter

- 8.00 am Holy Communion**
 10.00 am Morning Worship
 11.30 am Annual Parochial Church Meeting (Church Centre)
 3.00 pm Baptism of Henry Sargent
 6.30 pm Evensong

- 18 7.45 pm Homegroup (17 Leonard Avenue)
 8.00 pm St. Bartholomew's Fair Committee (5 Colets Orchard)
20 10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
23 2.00 pm Wedding of Joseph Hanger and Anna Purdy

- 24 **The Fifth Sunday of Easter**
8.00 am **Holy Communion**
10.00 am **Holy Communion**
3.00 pm **Commemoration of Departed Loved Ones (in church)**
- 25 Homegroup visit to Scarborough
- 27 9.30 am 'First Steps' (Otford Methodist Church Hall)
10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) coffee afterwards
8.00 pm Finance & Standing Committee (Church Centre)



Registers



BAPTISM

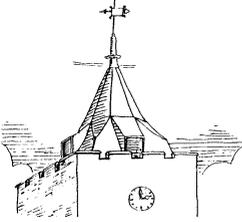
(Our Welcome)

13th March William John Antony **Hiam**
13th March Elise Caroline Evelyn **Hiam**



*...and when it comes to 'the peace' I want all
those who want to stay in Europe to shake hands
with all those who want to leave...*

FROM ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH



CHURCHYARD WORKING PARTY

This will take place on Saturday, 2nd April at 9.00 am. We are desperately short of helpers so if you could come for one hour it would make a difference. Come and join in the fun and bring some useful tools, too!

JOHN SUCHET 'THE LAST WALTZ'

John Suchet, presenter of Classic FM's flagship morning programme and formerly one of the country's best loved television newscasters, is returning to give a talk on 'The Last Waltz—the Strauss Dynasty'. Tickets are £10 and available from Sevenoaks Bookshop, Otford Parish Council offices and Otford Library.

REDECORATION AND RE-ORDERING

A huge thank you to everyone who has taken part in the renewed appeal for the redecoration and re-ordering through the "Pass It On" and postal schemes. Thank you so much for your generosity. Thank you, also, to all those who took part in the Antiques and Collectibles event - a whole range of items were brought for inspection and some turned out to be quite valuable! The event raised £850. At the time of writing, we still have the Gift Day on Easter Monday and we are still applying to some trusts for further funding. We are planning for the work to start in January 2017 and for it to be complete by Easter.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

The APCM will be held after the morning service on Sunday, 17th April at 11.30 am in the Church Centre. At this meeting we will be presenting the Annual Report and Accounts and also electing new members of the PCC. We do hope you will join us as we look back with thanksgiving and forward with hope.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH FAIR

This will be held on Saturday 18th June from 2.00 pm. Please put the date in your diary so that you can join us on The Green and surrounding area for the annual Church Fair.

COMMEMORATION OF DEPARTED LOVED ONES

The annual service to commemorate departed loved ones will take place in church on Sunday, 24th April at 3.00 pm.

CIVIC SERVICE

The date of the annual Civic Service is Sunday, 12th June at 10.00 am at St. Bartholomew's as the country celebrates HM Queen Elizabeth's 90th birthday. We warmly invite you to join us at this service.

PHILIP BOWCOCK'S MEMOIRS

Many congratulations to Philip Bowcock whose book *Last Guardians*, published by IB Taurus, was launched at an event at a crowded Sevenoaks Bookshop one evening in December. Philip's children had encouraged him to write his memoirs for the benefit of posterity for family members because of the interesting and varied life he has led. The result is a very readable personal account of a life often lived in circumstances that Britons today would not be able to replicate, or in many cases imagine. His children, on reading the memoirs, encouraged him to publish them for a wider audience.

Last Guardians offers a reflection on social matters both in the UK and some of its former African territories during the middle third of the 20th century and reflects on whether the many changes in accepted orthodoxies which have occurred since then have necessarily always been for the better. From early life on a farm in the period around the second world war, having to live away from home to attend the local grammar school and then meeting a young Margaret Thatcher (néé Roberts) during their student days at Oxford, he moved on to work in different Crown services. He studied Arabic in Beirut, and one of the posts he held was as the last colonial District Officer in the region occupied by the Nuer Tribe in the swamps of the upper Nile, southern Sudan. In this remote area he met and married a nurse who had gone to Sudan seeking travel and adventure. During his career he saw at first hand aspects of the creation of three new independent nation states, Sudan, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In the case of Zimbabwe, this involvement was some twenty years after he had left Crown service in Africa and brought his family (three then relatively young children) to the UK where, aged about 40, he trained as a solicitor and became a partner in a firm in Leek, Staffordshire. When the first elections

after independence were arranged in Zimbabwe, his took leave from his legal practice to be one of the observers of the conduct of the first post independence elections in part of Zimbabwe.

I had the privilege of reading this book while flying over the vast land mass of Sudan and then to finish it while visiting family in what in Philip's youth had been colonial East Africa. In some places it is still possible to imagine that the local white District Commissioner might have only moved out last week rather than over 50 years ago, elsewhere no doubt the former administrators would not recognise their former district or country at all.

The book offers an affectionate recollection of a bygone era, tempered by a tinge of disappointment that some of the better features of the colonial government such as the rule of law and general lack of corruption have not always been well respected since independence. Philip is not afraid to express his opinions in the book and, where they are at odds with the received wisdom of our age, he sets out spirited arguments in support of his view. The title is apt because the content reflects the paternal bond that officers in the Colonial Service often had with many of the people they interacted with in the areas they governed.

Douglas Howie





DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS

Telephone: 01732 227000 www.sevenoaks.gov.uk

Cllr.Lowe@sevenoaks.gov.uk <http://michellelowe.yourcldr.com>

Living in a safe district is a key priority for our residents. Sevenoaks District Council works closely with various partners including the Police, Housing Associations and Social Services to tackle crime and help prevent anti-social behaviour. Together we review our Community Safety Action Plan annually to target crime trends and address your concerns.

Over the past year we have improved parking enforcement arrangements, including the ability to issue 'warning notices' without a fine. We have developed community flood plans with parish councils, and we continue to develop proposals for a combined CCTV control room based at Sevenoaks to keep us, and the residents of Tonbridge & Malling and Tunbridge Wells Borough Councils, safe. A joint CCTV control room would not only save costs but would provide a much better service with enhanced technology.

Over the same period our Environmental Health team inspected 840 food premises, we agreed with Motor Sports Vision a noise management plan to help reduce noise around the Brands Hatch motor racing circuit – which you can even hear from the Otford Hills - and we discovered £321,000 of overpaid housing benefit and £40,000 of overpaid council tax benefit.

Also over the last year our dog warden has collected 418 stray dogs, and for dog owners amongst you, the government have introduced a new law that all dogs over the age of 8 weeks need to be microchipped by 6 April this year. To help you comply with the new law SDC are offering free micro chipping with chips donated by Dogs Trust. Dog owners who fail to get their

dog microchipped under the new law could face a fine of £500. For more information about compulsory microchipping, or to arrange for your pet to be microchipped, visit www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/animalwelfare or call 01732 227000.

Although we work hard with our partners to help keep you safe, obviously the Police are the lead agent when it comes to fighting crime and anti-social behaviour. As you know you have your chance to hold the police to account by voting in the Police and Crime Commissioner elections on Thursday 5 May – the same day as the London Mayoral elections.

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Kent and Medway is the most powerful elected politician in the county. They aim to cut crime and deliver an effective and efficient police service within their force area. Once elected by the public our PCC holds the Chief Constables and the force to account, effectively making the police answerable to the communities they serve.

With the PCC elections on 5 May and the EU Referendum on 23 June – make sure you are on the electoral register and, if you plan to be away, please sort out a postal or proxy vote by visiting <https://www.gov.uk/browse/citizenship/voting> or calling SDC on 01732 227000.

If you have any questions about how we try to keep residents safe, or about postal or proxy voting – please contact me.

With best wishes,
Michelle



LYRICS AND LIVES: HYMN WRITERS ACROSS THE CENTURIES

Mary, Eleanor and Percy

Poetry and music has always been an essential part of life in the Hebrides, an accompaniment to spinning, weaving, milking, rowing, waulking and walking! In days gone by, the rhythm of the words and music helped to speed the routine tasks and foster the community spirit. **Mary MacDonald** was born into this heritage on Mull in 1789. A farmer's daughter married to a crofter, she was well known locally as a poetess creating verses, in Gaelic of course, whilst she went about her daily tasks. A strict Baptist, her hymns were used in the local chapel but only one has come down to us. It was translated into English by MacBean as ***Child in the manger*** and so came to the attention of audiences outside Mary's community.

A century later and in the opposite corner of these islands, **Eleanor Farjeon** was born. She came from a well-to-do home where she received a good education. Her father was a writer and her mother was from a family of American actors. She was a quiet, shy, poorly child but her father encouraged her to write which she did from childhood. Children's stories, books of poetry and plays were penned by her and she was rewarded later in life for her labours when she was the recipient of awards such as the Carnegie Medal.

Much of her life Eleanor lived in Hampstead. She had a wide circle of acquaintances including writers, artists and musicians and thus she came to know **Percy Dearmer**, the Vicar of St Mary's Primrose Hill. Percy was a

multitalented man from an artistic London family. He was a socialist. He had been a Red Cross Chaplain in Serbia in WWI, a Professor at King's College, London and written a guide to the liturgy. However his biggest effect on the Church of England was his involvement in compiling books of hymns and carols, including some he had translated. He became an editor for the English Hymnal in 1906, Songs of Praise in 1925 and the Oxford book of Carols in 1928, the revised editions of which we still use today.

And the link between Mary, Eleanor and Percy?

Percy was compiling a book of prayers and hymns for use by children. He asked Eleanor to contribute and she wrote ***Morning has broken***. It was set to the traditional Gaelic folk tune **Bunessen**, the tune that had been used for Mary MacDonald's ***Child in the Manger***, and of course Bunessen is the village close to Mary's croft, her Baptist chapel and the Iona ferry.

Cat Stevens made a popular recording of Eleanor's song. Surely Eleanor, Mary and Percy would have been amazed at the fame their words and music have attained from such obscure beginnings.

Gillian Shilling



FAITH IN THE FAMILY...

April: Growing in Faith

Pause for thought: The Bible story on p.15 tells the story of “Doubting Thomas”. He had not been there when the Risen Christ appeared to the disciples gathered together in a locked room on that first resurrection Sunday. When they later told Thomas, “We have seen the Lord”, he could not believe it – until a week later when Jesus came to them all and, addressing Thomas, said, “Stop doubting and believe”. Thomas believes because he sees Jesus with his own eyes. The passage ends with a special blessing for all those people to come who will put their trust in Jesus although they have never seen him.

As our children grow up, they are bound to have doubts. This is no bad thing, as doubting can lead us to ask questions, discover the truth and therefore deepen our faith. When the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem after the Passover festival, his worried parents found him in the Temple, sitting with the teachers, listening to them and asking questions.

How can we encourage our children to explore the Christian Faith? How do we deal with our own doubts? As adults, perhaps we can learn much from the simple faith of young children.

Twenty questions: It’s good to ask!

Play a game of twenty questions on a long journey or walk. Each person pretends to be a famous person from today or from history. The others try to guess who that person is by asking up to twenty questions (in all) to which the answer is either “yes” or “no”. You could choose to be Jesus. Point out the value of

asking questions, especially about things we are having trouble understanding.

Prayer journal

Share any ways that you deal with your own doubts.

You could start a family prayer

journal in which you each write down questions that you would like to ask God. As time goes by, everyone stays alert to how God might be answering their questions, perhaps in the words of a friend, in a magazine article, a picture, etc. Enter these ideas in the journal beneath each question. Notice how God speaks to each person. Is it via something or someone that is special to them, such as a favourite pastime?



It’s curry night!

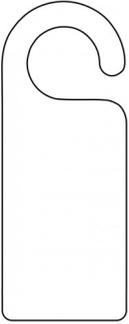
Encourage older children to discover as much as they can about Thomas in books or on the computer while you make a favourite curry to celebrate his work in India.

Table Talk: Tell the story of “Doubting Thomas” in your own words. What does everyone think their own reaction would have been to the disciples’ news, “We have seen the Lord”? You could take turns at pretending to be the disciples and Thomas, and improvise the conversation!

Can you think of things that we all believe exist, although we cannot see them? (Examples might include the wind, love, a relative living abroad . . .)

What did everyone find out about Thomas? Do they think he should be called *Doubting* or *Believing* Thomas?

A place of my/our own: make a room sign



You will need white card cut into the shape of a door sign that would hang on the handle; crayons, felt-tipped pens; glitter or stickers

Look up John 14:1-14. Jesus, predicting his death on the cross, has just told his disciples

that he must leave them to go and prepare a place for them in his Father's house. "In my Father's house are many rooms." What question does Thomas ask and what is the answer?

Invite everyone to have fun decorating a door sign with their own name/s to hang on their bedroom doors.

A Bible verse to display and learn in April:

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." (Matthew 7:7)

Bedtime story: Can I see God?

In your own words, tell a story about Teddy's day along the following lines:

Mrs Bear wakes Teddy up when she pulls the curtains and the sun streams in. It makes Teddy sneeze.

"Uh – uh –uh pchoooooo!"

"Bless you!" says Mrs Bear.

"Who made the sun?" asks Teddy, sitting up in bed.

"God did!" answers Mrs Bear.

"Where is God?" asks Teddy. "Can I see him?"

"God is everywhere," explains Mrs Bear. "You can't see him. But if you go out into the garden, you can see all the beautiful things that he has made."

Continue the story with Teddy going out and climbing a big tree, smelling the Spring flowers, seeing/hearing a bird singing, stroking a cat, watching the clouds, running back indoors out of an April hailstorm, eating a crisp apple for his tea.

Mrs Bear asks if he had a lovely time in the garden. "Yes," says Teddy. "I didn't see God, but I felt his warm sunshine all over my furry face! I climbed his big tree, I smelled his Spring flowers, I heard his birds singing, etc, etc."

"And now I can see his beautiful moon!" says Mrs Bear as she closes the curtains. "So that means it must be nearly bedtime!"

Young children love going over their day as a bedtime story. "First Emma jumped out of bed, and then she . . . etc." Ask them when they saw God during their day and you will be amazed at their mature answers!

Vicki Howie



IN CONVERSATION WITH...

... a stalwart member of St Bart's choir - David Runting

David must be unique in being able to claim that he has sung in our church choir as a treble, countertenor and tenor. Since the age of ten the choir has been an important part of his life, even when he was also singing in the City of London Choir (at major venues such as the Royal Albert Hall, the Barbican and the Festival Hall). He loves the range of music sung by our choir as well as the camaraderie within the group (two choir members share his interest in steam trains!).



Quite unusually nowadays, David still lives in the house where he was born in 1946. His parents had moved out of South East London in the early part of the war and, for six hundred pounds, had bought one of the first houses

built in Well Road. The third of three children in a churchgoing family, David was baptised at St Bartholomew's by the Reverend Elder. Early memories include his time as a pupil at Otford Primary School, and shopping in the village with his mother when ration books were still in issue. He would accompany her to buy the weekly joint from Groves the butcher, from where they would go on to Lowries – the general store.

Having passed his eleven plus, David attended Sevenoaks School though freely admits that his most successful academic achievements were already behind him. There seem to have been

rather a lot of 'could do betters' in his reports. Nevertheless he stayed on till eighteen and sat his A Levels but was happy to find employment, through a contact of his father's, at Gestetner, a large reprographic company. David told me it was quite a change suddenly to switch from being a rule bound schoolboy to commuting up to London in the fully adult world. For a short while he did analytical work in the statistical department but then was asked to join the newly formed computer department.

At that time no-one at the company really knew what to expect from computers so David's first few weeks were spent playing cards with colleagues whilst the manager investigated what needed to be done. Soon David was sent off on computer related courses; an experience which marked the beginning of a whole career in IT. David stayed with Gestetner for the rest of his working life; it ultimately became an international company and was bought out by Ricoh of Japan. He says he loved his work which he described as 'ultimately providing companies with software solutions'. It was through work that David met his wife Debbie. They married in 1996 and before long completed their family with two children, Alexander and Stephanie.

In 2007 David suffered a major health crisis which was to see him spending seven and a half months in hospital. In November of that year his mother had died and a week later David became seriously ill. He had contracted a flu bug which, possibly due to his low immune system, turned into pneumococcal septicaemia. David's memories of this period are tinged with a sense of unreality but, suffice to say, he was close to death and suffered the loss of several fingers and of his lower legs. What pulled him through was the unfailing love and support of

his family who never gave up in their efforts to encourage him – Debbie visited every day and was always there to fight his corner. The whole experience strengthened David’s faith – he was conscious of the power of prayer in aiding his recovery. So many people were praying for him; St Bartholomew’s, St Thomas’ (Debbie’s church), the pupils and staff of St Thomas’ School (where Debbie works) to name but a few.

David spoke of the pleasure and challenges of returning home thereafter – to a house that had had to be specially adapted to his needs. He remembers the joy of returning to church and of being wheeled in to his first choir practice. He spoke warmly of the wonderful physiotherapists who have helped him so much.

Alongside his interests in music, IT, model railways, heritage railways and armchair sports, David enthusiastically supports his family’s passion for bell ringing. Both Alexander (18) and Stephanie (15) absolutely love ringing and are really keen to encourage other young people to get involved. David taxi drives for his own children and would be willing to pick up other youngsters if they would like to give it a go! Debbie is a great enthusiast too. Interestingly, one of the bells has David’s father’s name on it because he was churchwarden at the time it was recast.

Christeen Malan





IN MEMORIAM



Joyce Stepney, 1931-2016

Joyce was born on 13th September 1931 at Teynham, near Faversham. She also spent some of her childhood at Chartham Hatch, near Canterbury. Her father was a farm worker. Joyce was the second child in her family, with one older brother and four younger brothers.

On leaving school she worked as a domestic help. Joyce met her husband, Mike, on top of a double-decker bus! They got chatting and kept in contact. Mike was a farm worker who lived in Harbledown, a village to the west of Canterbury, just 2 miles away from Chartham Hatch.

Joyce and Mike got married on 17th May 1952 at Chartham Hatch church – Joyce was 20 and Mike was 31. After getting married, they lived on a farm in Harbledown. They soon started a family, which grew to include four sons and two daughters.

Over the years they lived on a number of farms in various locations including Seven Mile Lane, Longfield, and Eynsford. Latterly they lived at Castle Farm in Shoreham where they stayed for twenty five years. Joyce did hop training and picking, pruning fruit trees, picking apples, cultivating runner beans and also looking after cows.

When Mike retired from farming in 1985, he and Joyce came to live in Otford, in Telston Lane. Joyce was just 54 at the time and she soon became involved in village life. She worked as a cleaner in various homes, including at the Vicarage for Pat Hopkins. She also worked at Sevenoaks School and at Hodder and Stoughton when they were based at Dunton Green.

As the family life developed, Joyce became a grandmother, with sixteen grandchildren, and

then later, a great grandmother, with twenty four great grandchildren! Joyce always enjoyed having a house full of children. To her grandchildren she was known as “Nanny Shoreham” and to her great grandchildren she was known as “Nanny Bus” – this was because she liked taking the bus into Sevenoaks and spending time visiting the shops.

Joyce also enjoyed going on coach trips to such places as the Isle of Wight, Blackpool, and Great Yarmouth. At home, Joyce enjoyed her gardening – she had green fingers and was good at making her plants grow. Joyce also enjoyed listening to music – one of her favourite singers was Daniel O’Donnell - and going to musicals such as Mary Poppins and Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.

Six years ago Joyce had her first battle with cancer. She recovered from her operation and continued to make the most of life until the cancer returned. Her memory will be cherished by all her family and friends.



ANCIENT WISDOM - MODERN LIVES

My Lord and my God

The others all wanted to be together. It was a natural instinct, I suppose.

For me it was different. I needed time to think. Events had happened at bewildering speed. A few days earlier he'd entered the city to great acclaim. We felt ourselves on the verge of a new order. Then only days later he was executed. What made it harder to bear was that we all let him down. We ran away.

I went walking. Life was going on all around me, but I saw nothing. I was thinking about the future. What next? Could I resume my old occupation?

As I got back to our lodgings, I met two of the old gang - Bartholomew and Andrew, I think.

"We've seen him!" they shouted.

"Seen who?"

"The Lord, you idiot!"

My first thought was that their minds had given way under the strain. Clearly they believed it. Their eyes shone. I hesitated. The trouble with me is that I can't separate my mind and my heart. However appealing the idea, I can't in all honesty subscribe when my mind tells me it's not possible.

"Unless I see for myself, and unless I touch the wounds of the nails, I will not believe," I said.

Some days later we were all gathered together. That is except for Judas, poor man. Suddenly the Lord was standing amongst us! He went around and greeted everyone in turn. Last of all he came to me. We looked at each

other. I suppose if we'd been in a play in the amphitheatre in Caesarea, our encounter would have been high drama. But this was real life!

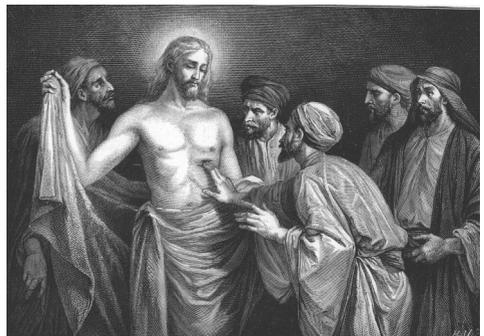
I shall never forget what happened next. He held out his hand and invited me, yes invited me to touch the places where the nails had torn and where the Roman soldier had thrust his spear. I fell at his feet. "Because you have seen, you have believed," he said. This was true. I saw that he had made a special gesture to my sceptical nature.

"Blessed are those who have NOT seen," he continued, "and yet have believed." I realised that he was now addressing not me but others who might grapple with issues of faith, maybe even people in ages to come.

All this happened long ago, or so it seems. I am writing this from India. I came out here to share the faith with another nation. If you are a believer, pray for me, that blessing may result and that the folk here might turn to the Saviour.

Thomas

Rev'd Chris Reed



MISSION MATTERS...WORLDWIDE SILVER LINING

Taken from the February 2016 Newsletter

We wanted to write to thank you for your support in 2015 and to let you know that both Magnet School and the MAPED Massai school continue to do well, despite limited resources and the daily challenges that face people in Sub-Saharan Africa. 2015 was another year of activity, with Magnet School taking in more poor and orphaned children, continued its building programme and ran a youth conference at Easter which 300 young people attended.

A highlight of the year was the team from Dulwich College visiting in July. Fifteen boys and two staff went out to both projects and immensely enjoyed interacting and working with the young people.



MAPED were extremely fortunate to receive a grant of £3,000 from Skyward Solutions towards a maize grinder to allow the school to produce its own food, and Dulwich College donated £500 of their contingency money to the purchase of books so needed at MAPED along with a further £1,000 to Magnet School for new school furniture.



Over the year, we were able to make grants of around £8,000 to Magnet and £1,500 to MAPED, excluding the money for the maize grinder. Your donations really help make this possible, although we continue to be concerned about dwindling reserves. As a charity, we absorb the small costs ourselves so that all the money donated reaches the places it is needed most. Our reserves are down to around £4,000, although the emergency repairs to Magnet's borehole pump reduced this figure further.



Magnet receives support from the USA, but is not able to match the monthly grants of around £500-£900 a month that WWSL has been able to make. This figure has varied because of emergency needs to keep the school running, although we try to give at least £500 a month to Magnet which helps with running costs and wages—however you will appreciate this is not much for a school of 300 children. MAPED receive grants from us from time to time, and we tend to direct these towards specific needs.

I leave you with gratitude for your support and in hope that you will be able to continue to support us and spread the word.

Revd Stephen Padfield
Chair WWSL



THE NIGHT SKY IN OTFORD



The planet Jupiter is becoming more obvious in the evening skies as soon as darkness has fallen. At the start of April it is nearly forty degrees high in the south east at 9pm and is so bright it is impossible

to confuse it with anything else in the area.

Despite having made such a rash statement, I have included a map that, assuming you can find the Plough which is nearly overhead in the evenings at the moment, will assist in locating the planet. Use the two rear stars in the “bucket” of the plough and draw a line through them and down towards the southern horizon. The line will meet the “Sickle of Leo” which is a group of stars that look like a back to front question mark. Once you have found that, you can quickly locate the rest of the celestial lion and the planet Jupiter that lies just below Leo’s belly.

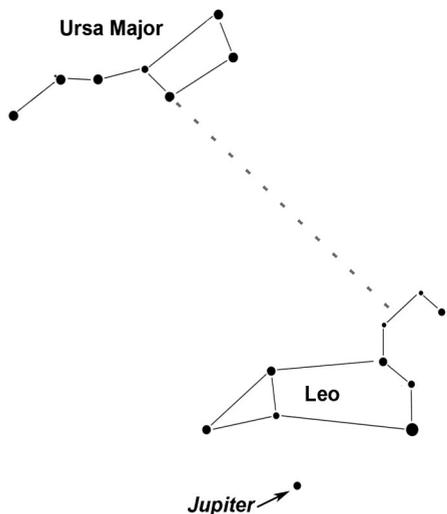
Once you have found it, take a look at it if you have binoculars and see how many moons you can find. The astronomer Galileo found four with his primitive telescope in 1610, the largest of which, Ganymede, is larger than the planet Mercury. These moons were dubbed the Galilean moons after their discoverer and were of some significance because these were the first objects to be found that did not orbit around either the Earth or the Sun. Apart from those four bodies, Jupiter has 63 other natural satellites, plus a faint ring system made up from dust particles as opposed to the ice that comprises Saturn’s rings.

Jupiter is the largest body in the solar system after the Sun and is so big that 1,300 globes the

size of the Earth could easily fit inside it. It is, however, not a solid rocky body like the Earth although it is likely that it does have a small rocky core. It is composed in the main of hydrogen and helium and has clouds of ammonia crystals that are in the order of 50km thick. When we look at Jupiter, we are not looking at its surface, for it does not have one in the conventional sense, but instead at the top of these layers of cloud that are in constant movement. The clouds are arranged in bands or belts by latitude and are continually interacting with their neighbours to cause giant storms, some of which have lightning associated with them.

Next month we are treated to a comparatively rare event when a transit of Mercury takes place. The planet will be seen to pass in front of the Sun, a process that on this occasion will take around seven and a half hours. I will discuss this more next month.

Brian Mill FRAS



OUT AND ABOUT...



OTFORD EVENING W.I. Will celebrate our Birthday meeting on Thursday the 14th of April with a performance by Tony Harris of Henry VIII.

We will meet in the Main Hall of the Otford Memorial Hall at 7pm for 7.30pm for a buffet meal. Tickets available from Chris Bourne (01959 522485).



OTFORD-NEUFCHATEL-HARDELOT TWINNING

Our French Twins are visiting Eltham Palace on a coach trip on Saturday 23 April and will be in Otford in the Club Room of the Otford Village Memorial Hall for tea and cake from approximately 4.00 pm. Do come and meet them. Offers of cakes will be most welcome. Please contact Jane Lawrey via the Parish Council Office. Twinning subscriptions only £5 per adult, £10 per family.

OTFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sports for schools visit

On the 11th of February 2016, Otford Primary School was visited by Sports for Schools (an organisation that gives children an opportunity to have fun through sports).

Joseph Ikhinmwin – a Team GB basketball player – visited our school with a handful of fun, athletic activities which included: spotty dogs, leg drives, push ups and star jumps.

One of the favourite activities were the spotty dogs, where you have to put one arm in front of the other and the opposite leg in front of the other and then change the position of the leg at the front to the back and the same with the arms and repeat.

Many of the children agree that it was a challenging but fun day, even the teachers agree that it was an awesome event; everyone learnt something from the amazing GB athlete, someone the children (younger and older) can look up to.

Captain of The London Lions, Joe Ikhinmwin is an amazingly talented Basketball player with plenty of experience and awesome skills with the ball. Even though leading a whole school assembly can sometimes be tricky, Joe handled it with ease telling us his epic life-story and playing awesome games too!

Thank you Sports for Schools and thank you Joe.

By Thomas Scandling and Josephine Harrison



PUZZLE PAGE

St George of the Golden Legend

St George is Patron Saint of England, but he never actually came here. He was a Christian officer in the Roman army under Diocletian, who refused to abandon his faith during the Terror. George was therefore martyred in Palestine about 300 AD. His courage became legendary, and St George became the example of a Christian fighting-man, a powerful helper against evil powers affecting individual lives. He was the soldier-hero of the Middle Ages. In the Golden Legend of the 13th century, Jacobus de Voragine tells the story of how St George helped rescue the people of Sylene in Lybia from a dragon, especially the princess, who had been offered to the dragon as a sacrifice. With the dragon dead, and the princess returned to her father the King, the people of Sylene converted to Christianity.



George
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Saint
England
Officer
Roman
Army
Diocletian

Terror
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Oven: 150C / Gas 3 AGA: Grid shelf on floor of Baking Oven + cold shelf

Equipment: 8 x 250 ml ramekins

Makes: 8 – 10 (depending on size)

200g White Chocolate
6 large Egg Yolks
75g Caster Sugar
½ tsp Vanilla Bean Paste
600ml Double Cream
250g Fresh Raspberries
8 – 10 tsp Granulated Sugar
Mint leaves for garnish – optional
Fresh Raspberries to serve

Place the broken up chocolate along with 150ml of the cream in a heatproof bowl sitting over a saucepan of barely simmering water, making sure the bowl doesn't touch

the water. Allow the chocolate to melt slowly – it should take about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and give it a good stir until it's smooth and glossy. Allow to cool slightly.

In a large bowl beat the egg yolks with the caster sugar and vanilla bean paste until pale and fluffy.

Bring the remaining cream to just below boiling point and pour over the egg mixture whisking continuously until thickened – this indicates that the eggs have begun to cook slightly. Whisk in the melted chocolate mixture.

Place the ramekins in a large roasting tin and put about 5 raspberries in the base of each one. Carefully pour the chocolate custard over the raspberries in each ramekin. Pour enough hot water into the roasting tin to come halfway up the sides.

Bake in the oven for about 25 minutes or until just set but still a bit wobbly in the middle. Remove the ramekins from the water and set aside to cool. Chill until required. They will set more whilst chilling.

When ready to serve, sprinkle one teaspoon of the granulated sugar over the surface of each crème brûlée and place under a very hot grill until the sugar melts and caramelizes to a rich golden colour – approximately 5 minutes. Watch carefully as it burns very quickly. The caramel will harden as it cools. Serve immediately with fresh raspberries and some mint leaves.

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| Clean Gutter Company | 36 | The Bull Hotel, Wrotham | 34 |
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| Chimney Sweep | | Silver Pines Services | 37 |
| David Fairman | 27 | Scouts | |
| Computers | | 15th Sevenoaks (Otford) Scouts | 22 |
| Need help with your computer (Prosphero) | 32 | Taxi | |
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| Russell House School | 30 | Watch and Clock | |
| St Michael's School | 30 | MJ Leach | 27 |
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| Ibbett Mosely | 31 | Softflo Water Softeners | 39 |
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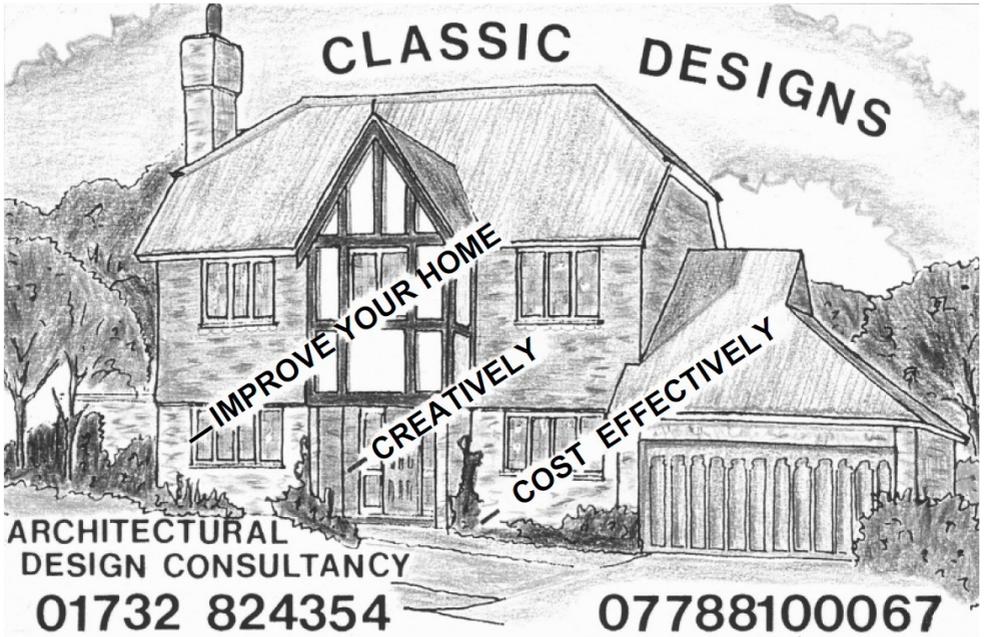
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Monday to Friday 10.00am-12.00pm:

Susan Reid,

Clive Southgate

01959 523185

Email: st.bartholomews@otford.net

CHURCH HALL

Manager and Booking Sec: Robert Hunt 01959 523820

MAGAZINE

Editorial team: 01959 523185 Vicki Howie,
Christeen Malan, Clive Southgate, Richard Worssam

Advertisements: Deborah Vigis 01959 523331
st.bartholomews@otford.net

YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S WORK

'First Steps' (for parents and pre-schoolchildren)

Contact: Najen Harris 01959 522813

SUNDAY CLUB

 (Sundays at 10.00am)

Infants (3-7s)

Juniors (8-11s)

Seniors (12-14)

For all groups contact Donna Worssam 01959 523185

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FELLOWSHIP

Contact: Dawn Hallam 01959 526865

OUTREACH

Chairman of Mission Links:

Andrew Hill 01732 469538

BELLRINGERS

The Tower Captain: Bobbie Fairclough 01959 522696

Secretary: Janet Whitehead 01959 524088 Practice
night: Thursday 7.45-9.15pm

CHOIR

Choirmaster: Kevin Grafton 01732 452117 Practice
night: Friday 8.00-9.30pm New members always
welcome

CHURCH COUNCIL The Vicar and the Churchwardens Margaret Lidbetter* and Russell Edwards, Samantha Barnett, Joan Beacom, Cindy Davies, Dawn Hallam*, Andrew Hill, Mark Holmes, Vicki Howie, Janet Hunt*, Mike Jones, Bill Lattimer, Nick Page, Derek Shilling#, Mags Southgate, Anne Stevens, Mark Tierney

Ex-Officio (Diocesan Synod) * Ex-Officio (Deanery Synod)