



**St Bartholomew's Church,  
Otford Parish News**

**January 2018    [www.stbartholomews.co.uk](http://www.stbartholomews.co.uk)    60p**

## SERVICES AT ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

**Due to the reordering and redecoration of the church, all services from 7th January will be held in the Church Centre until mid April**

January	8am	10am		6.30pm
7 January 1st Sunday after Epiphany	Holy Communion	All Together Worship	-	Evensong
14 January 2nd Sunday after Epiphany	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	-	-
21st January 3rd Sunday after Epiphany	Holy Communion	Morning Worship	-	Christian Unity Service at Holy Trinity RC Church
28th January 4th Sunday after Epiphany	Holy Communion (BCP)	Holy Communion	Messy Church (3pm)	-

### SUNDAY CLUB (FOR AGES 0-14)

**INFANT: 3-7**

**JUNIOR: 8-11**

**SENIOR: 12-14**

**First Steps** for toddlers and their carers meets on alternate Wednesdays during term time. For more details please contact Najen Harris, 01959 522813.

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

**YOUNG PEOPLE'S FELLOWSHIP** meet every Sunday evening during term time in the Church Hall, 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.

**Vicar's off duty day:** Monday

Cover photo by Richard Worssam: Otford palace in the snow  
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## VICAR'S VIEWPOINT

One of the first tasks of the New Year is to ensure we've written our thank you cards. This is rightly part of Christmas courtesy. I remember from an early age my mother ensuring I had written cards to uncles and aunts and others who had kindly given me presents at Christmas. This has encouraged me to reflect a little more deeply on the theme of gratitude. It is linked closely with both contentment and happiness.



I recently came across this thought-provoking comment, "Those who forget the language of gratitude can never be on speaking terms with happiness." Gratitude ensures that we don't just take things for granted, but instead we are mindful of the blessings that each day brings.

Gratitude exposes a paradox at the heart of modern consumerism. Advertising holds out the promise that our happiness will be increased with the acquisition of the latest toy, gadget, computer, car or whatever. Yet at the same time it fosters a dissatisfaction with whatever it is we currently own as being insufficient. To put it another way, if we are not thankful for the good things we have, we will not be happy with what we wish we had. I remember seeing a seaside postcard with the motto, "Happiness is not having what you want, but wanting what you have". So gratitude for what we already have is clearly linked with contentment.

But gratitude runs on a much deeper level than our attitude towards material possessions. It is a fundamental habit of mind which has a bearing on all our relationships. It strengthens our sense of connectedness with those around us, helping us appreciate that we are not self-sufficient but rather, we are part of a web of interdependence, supporting and helping one another.

Closely linked to this is humility, with an honest recognition that whatever successes we may have achieved will be at least in part due to the actions of other people. We are to be grateful for those who have taught and nurtured us,

those who have encouraged us and opened doors of opportunity for us.

Gratitude is also an active rather than a passive emotion. It spurs us on to pass on to others the blessings that we have ourselves received from those who have cared for us.

Gratitude lies at the heart of Christian discipleship. St. Paul regularly began his letters by giving thanks for the friendship he shared with the congregations he was writing to e.g. his opening words to the Christians in Ephesus were, "I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers".

Paul also encouraged the practise of gratitude as a foundational attitude, underpinning our thoughts and actions. To the Christians at Colossae he wrote, "Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

Gratitude is central to the worship we offer to God. The service of Holy Communion is also known by the title "Eucharist". The root meaning of this word is "Thanksgiving" and every time we celebrate Communion this is brought out with the exhortation, "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God" with the response, "It is right to give thanks and praise."

So having written our thank you cards, as we begin this New Year may our worship inspire an outlook of gratitude to God and those around us.

Your friend and Vicar, *Richard*

## DIARY FOR JANUARY 2018

**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**

3      10.00 am      Holy Communion (BCP)    coffee afterwards

**7      The First Sunday after Epiphany**

**8.00 am      Holy Communion**

**10.00 am      All Together Worship**

**6.30 pm      Evensong**

8      7.45 pm      Homegroup (17 Leonard Avenue)

10      9.30 am      'First Steps' (Otford Methodist Church Hall)

10.00 am      Holy Communion (BCP)

8.00 pm      Contemplative Prayer (The Vicarage)

**Magazine material for the February edition by today, please, to the  
Church Office, [st.bartholomews@otford.net](mailto:st.bartholomews@otford.net)**

13      6.00 pm      EPIC (Church Centre)

**14      The Second Sunday after Epiphany**

**8.00 am      Holy Communion**

**10.00 am      Holy Communion**

15      12 noon      Soup Lunch (Church Centre) Speaker: Gordon Mungeam

7.45 pm      CAMEO (17 Leonard Avenue)

17      10.00 am      Holy Communion (BCP), refreshments afterwards

**21      The Third Sunday after Epiphany**

**8.00 am      Holy Communion**

**10.00 am      Morning Worship**

**6.30 pm      Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Service (Holy Trinity RC Church, Otford)**

22      7.45 pm      Homegroup (17 Leonard Avenue)

24      9.30 am      'First Steps' (Otford Methodist Church Hall)

10.00 am      Holy Communion (BCP)

7.45 pm      PCC meeting (Church Centre)

25      8.00 pm      Men's Curry night

27      7.00 pm      Burns Night Supper



**28 The Fourth Sunday after Epiphany**

**8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)**

**10.00 am Holy Communion**

**3.00 pm Messy Church (Church Centre)**

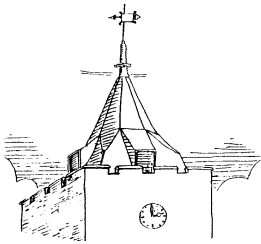
29 7.45 pm CAMEO (17 Leonard Avenue)

31 10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP), refreshments afterwards



"Given the state of our heating system,  
your name seemed rather appropriate."

## FROM ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH



### **WORSHIP SERVICE ARRANGEMENTS DURING THE RE-ORDERING AND REDECORATION**

The re-ordering and redecoration is due to start at the beginning of January. As from the first Sunday in January (7th Jan), all Sunday services and the Wednesday midweek communion will be held in the Church Centre.

The middle and senior Sunday Club groups will meet in the Vicarage and the junior Sunday Club group will meet in the Cranmer Room. On the 2nd & 4th Sundays where there is communion at the 10 am service, we ask that the children go straight to their groups and rejoin the adults towards the end of the service.

YPF will be held in the Church Hall.

There will inevitably be a degree of inconvenience while the work is going on, so thank you for your understanding and patience. The work is scheduled to be completed by mid-April, and we look forward to worshipping in our newly refurbished church.

### **CHRISTMAS MARKET 'THANK YOU'**

My sincere thanks to everyone who helped make the Christmas Market such a success, and especially to Santa's deputy, who did a great job greeting visitors and dispensing sweets, to the stallholders who worked so hard beforehand and on the day, to the kitchen staff who could show some high class places a thing

or two, and to all who sewed, knitted, baked, made sweets and preserves, turned wood, filled hampers, sold raffle tickets – and to everyone who came to support us. What more could we ask? A lovely day, the Church Centre with stalls laden with goodies and delicious refreshments, and lots of people creating a truly joyous atmosphere. The total raised was £2,325 – amazing! Well done, everyone!

*Sylvia Grafton*

### **OTFORD GUILD OF BELLRINGERS**

We thank our ringers for the committed work they put in over the year. Their AGM will be held on Thursday, 18th January at 9.00 pm.

### **MESSY CHURCH**

The next Messy Church event will take place on Sunday, 28th January at 3.00 pm. An enjoyable afternoon is promised for all who come. It is particularly suitable for families with children up to the age of 11.

### **WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY**

The service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will take place at Holy Trinity RC Church, Otford on Sunday, 21st January at 6.30 pm.

### **BURNS NIGHT SUPPER**

**Sat 27 Jan 2018 – Church Centre 7pm**

Do come along for a 3-course Scottish meal with traditional toasts, readings, songs and a table quiz. Make up a table of 8 or apply individually and we'll join you with others. Please bring your own drink and advise us of any dietary requirements. Tickets from Vicki Howie ([vickihowie@btopenworld.com](mailto:vickihowie@btopenworld.com) or 01959 522413.) Minimum donation on the night, £20 in aid of church funds.

*Please wear something Scottish – if only a token tartan ribbon!*

## 2018 DATES

### January

- 21 Jan Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Service (6.30pm Catholic Church)  
27 Jan Burns Night Supper

### February

- 14 Feb Ash Wednesday (8pm HC at St. Bart's)  
20 Feb 5-session Tuesday evening Lent course begins

### March

- 2 Mar Women's World Day of Prayer (2 pm at Catholic Church)  
3 Mar Wedding Preparation morning  
11 Mar Mothering Sunday  
25 Mar Palm Sunday Procession (10.45am at Methodist Church, 11am the Green)  
29 Mar Maundy Thursday Service (8pm at Otford Methodist Church)  
30 Mar Good Friday services

### April

- 1 Apr Easter Day services

### May

- 6 May Service to Commemorate Departed Loved Ones (3 pm)  
10 May Ascension Day  
13 May Civic Service (10 am)  
Christian Aid Week begins  
20 May Pentecost/Whit Sunday  
27 May Trinity Sunday  
28 May Village Fete/Bank Holiday

### June

- 16 Jun St. Bartholomew's Church Fair

### July

- 1 July Sunday Club Celebration Service & Parish BBQ in Vicarage garden  
Fri 7 -Sun 9<sup>th</sup> July Youth Weekend at Kench Hill

### August

- 24 Aug St. Bartholomew

### September

- 8 Sep Friends of Kent Churches  
Sponsored Ride and Stride  
16 Sep Stewardship Sunday  
30 Sep Harvest Services

### October

- 28 Oct Bible Sunday

### November

- 11 Nov Remembrance Sunday  
24 Nov Christmas Market

### December

- 2 Dec Advent Carol Service (6.30 pm)  
9 Dec Christingle (4 pm)  
16 Dec Nativity Play and Christmas Presentation (10 am)  
Choir Christmas Concert (7 pm)  
23 Dec Service of Nine Lessons and Carols (6.30 pm)  
Christmas Eve Crib Service (4 pm)  
Midnight Communion Service (11.30pm)  
Christmas Day Christmas Communion (9 am)  
All Together Christmas Worship (10.30 am)



## IN MEMORIAM



**Jim Steen, 1921-2017**

Jim was born in Gravesend on 24th September 1921. His father was a master carpenter and local builder, who unfortunately went bankrupt in the 1930's. The family then moved to Bexleyheath.

Jim showed promise in his academic studies at school but his family's economic situation meant he had to go out to work at 15. He began an engineering apprenticeship with Vickers Armstrong, and he also studied at Night School. Jim eventually qualified as a Chartered Mechanical Engineer, progressing to become a Draughtsman, then a Design Engineer.

In the 1940's Jim worked for Power Jets with Sir Frank Whittle. By the 1960's he was working for GEC Atomic Energy Division and he was sent out to Japan where they were building an Atomic Power Station.



In the 1970's Jim became a college lecturer at SE London Technical College until his retirement.

As a young engineer Jim was excused military service during the war as he was in a "Protected Occupation".

Whilst on a short holiday to Torquay in 1942, he met a young lady teacher, Mary Batey, who by co-incidence lived in Erith just a couple of miles from Bexleyheath. They met on 28th December 1942, they got engaged on 28th December 1944 and they got married 28th December 1946.

John, their only son, was born in 1950 and Lily, their grand daughter, was born in 2005.

Jim and Mary lived in Erith until 1975 when they moved to Otford, remaining here until Mary's death in 2012. They had been together for nearly 70 years.

Jim enjoyed his garden and always did the Daily Express crossword. He read widely, Thomas Hardy being a favourite. Otford Bridge Club became Jim and Mary's social life focus and they were active members until 2005.

Jim and Mary were devoted to family and home and they lived calm and happy lives.



## MISSION MATTERS ... SEVENOAKS AREA YOUTH TRUST

2017 kicked off with a bang. All involved in Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust were thankful for Angelique volunteering her time, thus allowing the detached work in Greatness and schools work to continue following the almost simultaneous resignations of Daren and Stephan the previous autumn.

Not deterred by this, the team kicked off a recruitment drive and a youth alpha course which was well attended and ran for the full number of sessions. The Thursday night detached Youth Bus continued to be well attended and to receive support from its loyal band of volunteers (augmented by the trustees) and fed by a loyal team of amazing cake makers. A particular highlight was the opportunity for conversations about love that were held around Valentine's Day with every visitor receiving, and accepting, a heart to remind them of God's love for them.

The beginning of March was marked by the closing of the recruitment round without any applications being received. The trustees decided that it was time to look for alternative approaches to recruiting the new youth worker. Meetings were held with local churches and Scripture Union in the middle of the year with the hope of providing a full time position and accessing a national recruitment and training resource.

In April an offer was received from Big Picture Charity Film to make a film about SAYT and what it achieves. Volunteers to appear on camera were easily found and two days of filming took place in May. The film was presented during SAYT's AGM at Hope Church in October and can now be found on their website [www.sayt.org.uk](http://www.sayt.org.uk). I'd truly encourage people take five minutes to watch it.

The summer was marked by a few highs and lows. The volunteers pulled together to allow the detached work to continue while Julie and Angelique took some well-deserved holiday time. However various external factors took hold and towards the beginning of the autumn the usual gang began to dissipate and numbers dwindled. Likewise the annual trip to Soul Survivor didn't receive the usual level of interest and was cancelled. Conversations were held about the future of the Greatness detached work and whether there were other locations that would provide better opportunities to achieve contact with young people.

By the middle of the new school term our prayers had been answered and the bus was back to full strength. The schools work and Knole Academy and Trinity were going well together with an ever growing relationship with House in the Basement (Youth Cafe at the Stag).

The end of the year has felt a bit like the last. A new recruitment campaign was commenced in October. Angelique decided to stand down and despite best efforts the detached work in Greatness has had to be halted until the New Year. As I write this the recruiting campaign has closed without any applications being received.

Despite all of this the team remain hopeful and upbeat. They ask for your prayers and thanks in the following areas:

- \* Wisdom for the trustees as they seek to steer SAYT to do God's work.
- \* The ability to recommence the detached work.
- \* Angelique and James and Abby as they move on to pastures new.

*Russell Edwards*

## FAITH IN THE FAMILY...

### January: First month, first miracle!

**Pause for thought:** Read the Bible story about Jesus at a wedding in Cana on p14. It was here that Jesus performed his first miracle, changing water into wine when supplies ran out.

In those days, wedding festivities often lasted a week, and it would have been a source of great shame for the bridegroom to have insufficient wine to serve his guests. Mary has great faith that her son will save the host (perhaps a family member or close friend) from embarrassment – although presumably she does not know how he will do so. At first sight, it may appear that Jesus is reluctant to be involved in “saving” the bridegroom from an awkward social situation. But perhaps he is trying to show his mother that his *real* mission, only just beginning, must now be to fulfill God’s purposes for him, rather than doing what she wishes at home. His journey will lead to the far more significant act of saving mankind by his eventual death on the Cross, when his blood will be poured out like red wine. But that time has not yet come.

As parents, we can encourage our children to put their faith in Jesus and to ask him for whatever they need, whether significant or small – for every aspect of our lives is important to him.

We want our children to grow up to be self-sufficient, but perhaps we also need to remind them that each of us is only human, and likely to run out of resources such as stamina, patience and joy at times. As Christians, however, we need not despair, for we can rely on Jesus to sustain us.

**There’s no more wine!** Read the Bible story together, perhaps just before a family meal.

Place glasses for each person, a jug of water and a bottle of blackcurrant squash on the table so that the children can follow “turn water into wine!!” Chat about the story:

Who’s been to a wedding? What was it like at the reception?

How do you think the wedding family in the story felt when they realized there was no more wine to serve their guests?

Who do you think had great faith in this story?

What do you think Jesus meant when he said that his time had not yet come?

**Half empty or half full?** Sometimes it can seem a bit of a struggle to get through January – in the very depths of winter. If family members are feeling low, half fill a jam jar and explain that it could be described as half empty or half full! On car journeys, etc, practise looking at things from a positive angle. For example:

It’s freezing outside . . . but that means we can toast crumpets on the fire!

Christmas is over . . . but

We’re back to school soon . . .



Chat about Jesus filling the huge water jars with the best red wine. Jesus was showing that he would bring God’s love and joy wherever he went.

**A family film:** If you know that the weather is going to be atrocious one January weekend, why not have a family film afternoon/evening. Get in some popcorn, close the curtains,

snuggle up together on the sofa and watch a family film with a wedding at the heart of it! This is a treat that children will remember and could become a family tradition once in a while!

### Wedding cake craft

*You will need: tissue paper in different colours, black and other coloured felt-tipped pens, white paper, glue*



Have a look at any celebration baking cake tins you may have that fit one inside the other. Look at any photos of a couple cutting a wedding cake.

Cut out rectangles of tissue, each one smaller than the last, and glue on to white paper to make five layers of cake.

Draw around each layer with the black pen and then decorate with patterns such as hearts, circles and wavy lines. Colour in the shapes.

You could draw a wedding couple decoration on top of the cake. Now that you have practiced this, why not make a wedding or anniversary card for someone you know on some folded white paper, using a similar method?

**Sensible drinking** It makes sense to talk to our children about the dangers of drinking too much alcohol – especially as they approach their teenage years.

The safe limits recommended by the Dept of Health are:

*Men* – No more than 14 units per week, no more than 4 units in any one day. Have at least 2 alcohol free days a week.

*Women*- as above, but no more than 3 units in any one day.

Binge drinking can be harmful, even though the weekly total may not seem too high.

It might be helpful to ask children to measure out water in a wine glass to see what one unit looks like. A small glass (125 ml) of ordinary strength wine (12% alcohol) is equivalent to one and a half units! Can they work out how many units there are in a 750ml bottle of wine? Would you be under or over the sensible limit if you drank two bottles in a week?

There is more information about sensible drinking on the website [www.patient.info](http://www.patient.info)



### Prayer

God is interested in every part of our lives and we can ask for his help in big and small ways. Write lots of prayers on colourful sticky notes and stick to a bedroom table or desk. If God answers the prayer, put the note in an empty jam jar beside your bed.

“You treat me to a feast while my enemies watch. You honour me as your guest and you fill my cup until it overflows.” Psalm 23.

*Vicki Howie*

## IN CONVERSATION WITH ...BERT AND LINDA DUNNING



### Londoners who love Otford!

Residents of Otford since October 1991, Bert and Linda Dunning relish village life. Linda is a long term member of the WI and recently signed up to the village art club. She also enjoys sewing and belongs to the Embroiderers' Guild. Both Bert and Linda like gardening and for many years Bert had a plot on the allotments. They are also members of the Historical Society and have a shared passion for dancing. They regularly attend Evensong at St Bart's and for at least ten years ran the bottle stall at the Church Fair. When I asked what had brought them to Otford, they explained that they had always loved country walks and, after twenty two years in Carshalton, made the decision to move to a more rural setting. They already knew Otford as Linda's sister lived in Evelyn Road. Linda added that Otford has given them 'everything we have ever wanted'.

The Dunnings describe themselves as 'Londoners' – London being where they were both born, grew up and spent the early years of married life. Linda was born in 1946 in Battersea SW11 and Bert in 1936 in Merton SW19. Bert was therefore just a small boy during the

Second World War and has vivid memories of that period including being evacuated with his mother and siblings on more than one occasion, not least once being billeted to Somerset to a grand house owned by a member of the Cow and Gate family – a wonderful place for fun and games!

Later in the war Bert's mother took the children back to London and, on Friday July 14<sup>th</sup>, 1944 at 9.44am, their house was completely destroyed by a V1 Flying Bomb. If it hadn't been for the steel frame of the Morrison shelter, in which Bert, his twin sister, one of his older brothers, his mother and his gran were taking refuge, they would all have died. Just before the bomb landed, Bert recalls his mother saying, 'This one is for us', as the engine of the Doodlebug cut out overhead. After this Bert's family had to leave London again although, as before, his father stayed behind to do bombing salvage work. Despite there being nothing left of the house, the family's animals, a rabbit and Jimmy the cat, survived the blast. Jimmy the cat continued to live in the road and was retrieved by the Dunnings when they returned to London (to Colliers Wood) from their billet in Nottingham in 1945. Bert was thrilled at this reunion as he has always loved animals, with cats being his absolute favourite.

Whilst Bert was one of five children, Linda had two older sisters (twins). As a post-war baby, she had a less eventful childhood than Bert, though she can well remember all the bomb sites around Battersea. The centre of social life for Linda and her sisters was the Methodist-run Battersea Central Mission which offered facilities for all ages including a youth club which the sisters liked attending. Linda also enjoyed singing in the church choir. At the time Battersea was hugely different to how it is now;



Linda said there were some six butcher's shops and four bakers within walking distance of their home.

Bert and Linda both left school at 15, Bert to pursue his longstanding interest in steam trains by training to be fireman (stoker) at Nine Elms, Battersea, and Linda to work in the post room of Rank Films in Wardour Street. Aged 15, to earn overtime, Bert and three others would often work on a Sunday, their task being to empty 13 tons of coal from a coal wagon by hand! Once his initial training was over Bert loved being on the footplate of a steam locomotive as part of the 'low gang' working the local lines. He has always regretted his decision to leave the railways, after two and a half years, to start an engineering job just before being called up for National Service. On completion of National Service he went back to engineering, making parts for aircraft, but it was not work he enjoyed so, in 1974, he left to become a city messenger for Nat West Bank – a position he much preferred. Meanwhile Linda's career included jobs with Schweppes at Marble Arch as a punch card operator and with Barclays Bank. Her favourite job was working for a property company where she was in charge of the rent roll for a large number of flats and offices across London.

Bert and Linda were brought together by their shared love of dancing, meeting at the popular Wimbledon Palais in the early 1960s. They married in 1965 at Christ Church, Battersea when Linda was 19 and honeymooned in Spain – the first time either of them had flown in a plane. They then rented a flat near Linda's mother in Battersea for the next four years. Linda said they 'went without a lot' as they saved every spare penny for the deposit on a house which they were eventually able to buy in Carshalton.

Although 52 years have passed since their wedding, Bert and Linda remain an admirably active couple. As well as the hobbies mentioned in the opening paragraph, they both love attending musicals in London, going on dance holidays, participating in tea dances, attending Evensong in cathedrals in different places, and taking coach trips and train holidays throughout Europe. This year they went on a Mediterranean cruise which they both thoroughly enjoyed.

*Christeen Malan*



## ANCIENT WISDOM - MODERN LIVES

### There's no more wine!

(John 2:1-12)

A mealtime story. You will need a jug of water, glasses for each person and a bottle of blackcurrant squash!

Soon after Jesus had chosen his disciples, they were all invited to a wedding in Cana, a small village just four miles from Nazareth. Jesus' mother Mary was invited as well. It must have been a grand wedding, because there were servants to wait on the guests and a master of the banquet who was in charge of all the food and drink.

The guests all smiled and enjoyed themselves at the feast, but the servants wore anxious frowns. The wine had run out! No more wine! What would happen when people wanted their cups refilled?

Mary must have noticed the worried faces. What an embarrassing situation for the bridegroom! He and his family would be in disgrace and all the joy of the celebrations spoiled! She couldn't put things right, but she was sure that Jesus would have the answer. Finding him, she touched his elbow and whispered in his ear, "They have no more wine!"

"My dear mother, why do you tell me this?" replied Jesus. "My time to act has not yet come!"

But Mary knew her son well. She went to the servants and told them quietly, "Do whatever Jesus tells you."

Six stone water jars stood nearby. They were huge, each one able to hold twenty to thirty gallons of water. The Jews washed their hands

over and over again before eating, because of their strict religious rules, and so now they stood empty.

Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled them to the brim. (Fill glasses with water.) Then he told a servant, "Pour some out and take it to the master of the banquet."

The servant began to draw the water, but his eyebrows shot up as he saw the cup he held fill with wine! (Add some blackcurrant squash!)

He watched carefully as the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realise where it had come from, although the servant knew - for he had filled the huge jar with water only a moment ago.

The master's face broke into a delighted smile as he called the bridegroom aside. "Most people serve the best wine first and leave the cheaper wine until everyone has had too much to drink; but you have saved the best until now!"

Jesus' disciples watched this miracle in wonder, and were full of amazement at the power of their new leader. Surely he would bring kindness and joy in place of all the strict rules of the Jewish religion.

*Vicki Howie*



## DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS

[www.sevenoaks.gov.uk](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk) [Cllr.Lowe@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Lowe@sevenoaks.gov.uk)  
<http://michellelowe.yourcllr.com>



In 2012 the village of Otford completed a parish plan – a vision for the future of the village. It had eight themes: pedestrian safety, a caring community, development and housing, maintaining an attractive village, encouraging a fitter community, business and transport, preparing for the future and young people of Otford. It was an ambitious document and largely the village has achieved almost all of your objectives under each of your eight themes. I hope that John and I as your district councillors have been able to help facilitate many of your achieved objectives.

I am very conscious as the Cabinet member for Housing and Health, as well as your local district councillor, that we have not achieved this objective under the heading of Caring Community: *The need for housing designed for older residents wishing to downsize and stay in the parish.* Indeed the comprehensive housing survey recently undertaken by the District Council reinforced the message that Otford needs more retirement accommodation to enable people to downsize without leaving their community, and to free up family-sized accommodation for families.

Although progress is slow, I want to reassure you that I have not forgotten this unachieved objective and that I am doing all I can to complete the Otford vision. The new housing strategy completely supports this objective. If we are able to identify a suitable site we will be able to build a retirement village along the Rockdale model that seems to be very popular amongst residents in the District.

The housing strategy also makes clear that Otford does not need any more 4 to 5 bedroom executive homes. The next time a planning application is submitted to build executive homes – the developer should be pushed back and asked to submit plans for smaller units designed to fit in with Otford's rural character. Instead of one five bedroom home we might be able to build four or six two bedroom flats, with a lift and communal gardens, which would be ideal for some of our older residents looking to down-size. They would not look like a block of flats from the outside – but would look like a large house. Being flexible they could also be suitable for young families.

Hopefully we will see the objectives of the Otford Parish Plan completed in the next few years – and that really is an amazing achievement for the people of Otford.

With best wishes,

Michelle

## CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF ORDAINED MINISTRY!

I recently clocked up 50 years of ordained ministry (or, as my family put it, "Dad's 50 years in showbiz"). I am asked to write a few lines in retrospect.

After a three year curacy I was incumbent of three parishes:

St Andrew's Bordesley BIRMINGHAM (1970-1980) was then a demolition area with men in prison and tough women bringing up large families singlehanded.

St Paul's Crofton ORPINGTON (1980-1998) is, of course, commuter land.

St Peter and St Paul YALDING (1998-2008) is a so called multi parish benefice with three villages, three churches and three church schools. I was also Rural Dean for part of the time and the challenge here was to keep all the balls in the air at the same time.

Since retirement from full-time ministry in 2008, it has been a privilege to be part of St Bartholomew's, Otford, and to offer cover here and at some of the surrounding churches. I was married to Betty for all except the first five and the last five of these 50 years.

Clergy sometimes think that the most important thing they did was to build something new or to set up some new organisation in the parish. However it is surely the involvement with people that counts most of all. It is very rewarding to be a part of some of the mileposts in people's lives – baptism, confirmation, wedding, sickness and bereavement. It is also a humbling privilege to conduct public worship and to attempt to expound the word of God.

I was trained to take Book of Common Prayer services and to carry out parish visiting. This "one man band" view of ministry has now given

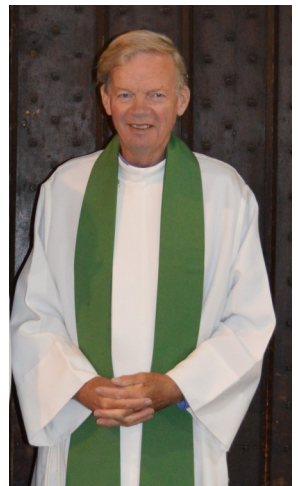
way to what is known as collaborative ministry. (No, I can't pronounce it either). Under this view the incumbent seeks to encourage and equip lay people to fulfil THEIR ministry.

The Church of England is a wonderful institution and together with the other denominations has made a greater contribution to the life of the nation than is generally realised. There are now only half the full-time clergy there were when I started but the same number of churches to serve. Resources are stretched. I think the future may lie in well trained self supporting ministers, certainly in the country areas. On one or two recent visits to theological colleges it has been encouraging to see some splendid and keen young people in training. The future will be in good hands and even though we are passing through a secular phase in our national life, God does not change. Nor does our need of him.

During my curacy years there was a much loved former vicar who had retired to the seaside. I went to see him once or twice and he said to me "at the age of 90 I don't sleep too well so I prop myself up in bed and pray for everyone I can think of".

Were I to reach such a venerable age I would like to think I could do the same!

*Chris Reed*







# Called together

## grow enrich resource

The Diocese of Rochester has recently launched a new five-year strategic framework with a shared vision for mission and ministry across the Diocese. It has three core components: growing disciples; enriching our communities; and resourcing our mission and ministry. Each of these components has four distinct areas of focus:

### **Growing Disciples**

#### *Growth*

To better live out the Great Commission, share the Good News, and see more people find faith.

#### *Discipleship*

To build confident disciples, who have deeper relationships with God and are more confident for evangelism and mission.

#### *Prayer*

To make prayer the fundamental basis for life in the Diocese, to harness the power of prayer to transform lives; to encourage every individual to pray for five people to come to faith.

#### *Children and Young People*

To offer life-enhancing encounters with Christ to children and young people.

### **Enriching our Communities**

#### *Community Initiatives*

Enrich every community through the activities of the local church.

#### *New and Re-missioned Places*

Establish and renew Christian presence in response to the significant predicted population growth over the next 30 years.

#### *Working with Schools*

Increase Christian influence in schools across the Diocese.

#### *Supporting Chaplaincy*

Encourage more people to consider chaplaincy and seek to create collaboratively energised ministries.

### **Resourcing our Mission and Ministry**

#### *Resilient Growing Churches*

Enable parishes to run efficiently and sustainably, so that they can focus more on ministry and mission.

#### *Administration & Support – ‘Making it Easier’*

Make it easier for parishes to work with the Diocese Office and legal requirements.

#### *Planning for Growth*

Enable parishes to establish local mission plans which give focus and energy to worshipping communities and achieve measurable outcomes.

#### *Project Initiation Support*

Enable, equip and support parishes to define and deliver major projects, such as property redevelopment or significant community projects.

Bishop James sums up this vision in these words: “God calls us together into a common endeavour of worship and of prayer, of proclamation and of service; God calls us to join with him in transforming the lives of individuals and communities; God calls us above all to show forth his character in acts and attitudes of grace and generosity.”

## OUT AND ABOUT



**OTFORD EVENING** WI meet on the 11th January at 7.30pm in the Club Room of the Memorial Hall to hear about The Barnardo's Children's Charity from Paul Beard. Subscriptions

are due at this meeting. For any further information, please contact 01959 524831.



**OTFORD AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY** Wednesday 17th January 2018 at 8.00pm.

*The story of 'Bat and Ball Station'. The first railway station in Sevenoaks.* Ed Thompson will

give an illustrated talk about the history of this station which was the first railway station to serve the town

### OTFORD-NEUFCHATEL-HARDELOT TWINNING



**ASSOCIATION** Our AGM will be held on Monday 15th January 2018 at 7.30pm at the Woodman Pub in Otford, to report on the activities of 2017

and to share our plans with you for 2018. We look forward to seeing you, both past, present and future members. You are all welcome. (Jane Lawrey)



## JANUARY PUZZLE

### THE WISE MEN

The story of the coming of the Magi grew in the telling. By the 6<sup>th</sup> century they had acquired names: Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. By medieval times they were considered to be kings. Whoever they were, they brought three gifts to Jesus. Gold was a gift given to kings. Frankincense was used in the Temple during the worship of God. Myrrh was a spice that the ancients used in preparing bodies for burial. So the Wise Men thus honoured Jesus with gold because he was King of the Jews, with frankincense because he was to be worshipped

as divine; and with myrrh, because he would also become a sacrifice and die for his people.

The Wise Men were the very first gentiles ever to worship Jesus. What faith they had! They travelled for months over difficult terrain, they never saw any evidence of Jesus' kingship, His divinity or His sacrificial death. They worshipped Him through faith in God's promises about Him. Isaiah foresaw this response to Jesus: 'Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.' The Magi's eyes of faith saw clearly and far into the future.



magi

Gaspar

Melchior

Balthasar

Three

gifts

gold

frankincense

myrrh

king

worship

sacrifice

die

people

gentiles

faith

terrain

promises

Isaiah

Response

Light

Dawn

Brightness

Saw

clearly

## SEAFOOD PASTA BAKE

(SERVES 4-6)

This makes a nice change from lasagne, it is very easy to make and the quantities do not need to be precise!

90 grams butter  
3 tablespoons flour  
1 large onion  
2 cloves garlic  
900 grams seafood (prawns, mussels, squid, scallops etc.)  
450 grams pasta (uncooked weight)  
1-1 ½ pints fish stock (stock cubes are fine)  
Black pepper  
3 slices white bread (crusts cut off)  
100 grams mature cheddar

Cook the onions in the butter until softened, add the garlic and cook for a couple of minutes more. Stir in the flour and mix to make a roux. Stir in the stock gradually to make a creamy sauce and add in the seafood. Season with pepper.

While this is being prepared bring a large saucepan of water to the boil and cook the pasta for around 8 minutes – it shouldn't be too soft. Stir into the seafood mixture and put into a baking dish.

Process the bread and cheese to make a savoury breadcrumb mixture, and spread over the pasta bake.

Bake at 150° for around 25 minutes, until the topping is golden brown and crunchy.

\*I use raw seafood (you can buy bags from the frozen fish counter at the supermarket but it needs to be defrosted first – either overnight in the fridge, or put in the microwave for a few minutes). The main reason is that the dish can then be safely frozen for later use.

*Hilary Fothergill*





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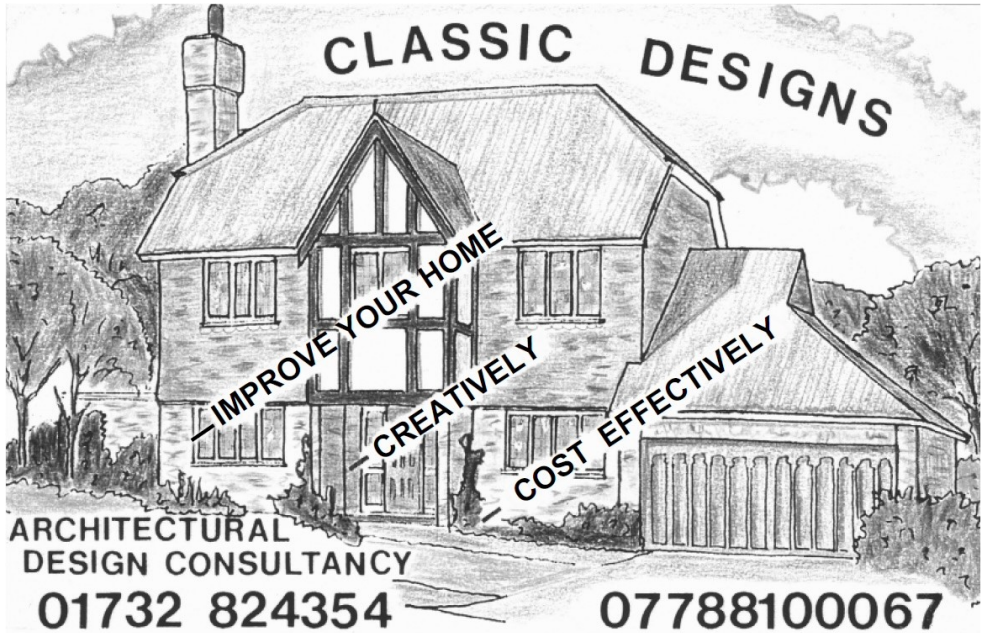
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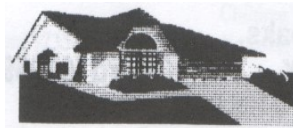
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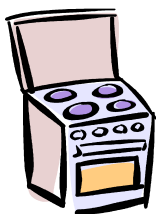
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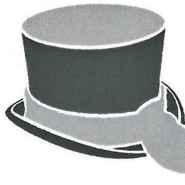
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<b>READERS:</b>	Dawn Hallam 01959 526865 Bill Lattimer 01959 522058 Margaret Lidbetter 01959 524831 Mags Southgate 01959 524720
<b>READER EMERITUS:</b>	Peter Downing 01959 522327
<b>PASTORAL ASSISTANTS:</b>	Susan Reid 01959 523234 Margaret Lidbetter 01959 524831 Donna Worssam 01959 523185
<b>HONORARY MINISTER:</b>	Chris Reed 01959 523439
<b>CHURCHWARDENS:</b>	Margaret Lidbetter 01959 524831 Russell Edwards 07933 352044
<b>ORGANIST AND CHOIRMASTER:</b>	Kevin Grafton 01732 452117
<b>SACRISTAN:</b>	Tony Grogan 01959 523649

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*Freewill Offering Sec:* Mervyn Harris 01959 522813  
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*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](mailto:st.bartholomews@otford.net)

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