



St Hilda's  
Ashford

# St Hilda's News



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We are looking for more contributions from the St Hilda's community, if you would like to contribute, please either call, email or send an article to the Parish Office.

If you would like help or to speak to a member of the ministry team please contact:

- Parish Office      Tel - 01784 253525  
   Email - [office@sthilda.org](mailto:office@sthilda.org)
- Father Joseph can be contacted on 01784 254237

## Churches won't be impacted by new government lockdown rules

The Archbishop of Canterbury has confirmed that churches in England will not be affected by the government's decision to restrict social gatherings to a maximum of six people amid a steep rise in Covid-19 cases.

The latest changes, which were announced by the government late last night, will see a blanket ban on groups meeting anywhere socially indoors or outdoors. Those who fail to comply with the new rules can face a £100 fine, with the penalty doubling upon each recorded offence up to a maximum of £3,200. The new rules will come in to force on 14th September, but will not affect worship gatherings, as confirmed by Justin Welby this morning on Twitter.



A spokesperson for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government told Premier: "We can confirm that places of worship can stay open for services and communal prayer as is currently the case. This means they can host more than 6 people in total."

Exemptions will also apply to schools, workplaces, funerals, organised team sports and Covid-secure weddings.

Currently, the guidance stipulates that two households of any size are permitted to meet indoors or outdoors, and up to six people from different households outdoors. Prime Minister Boris Johnson is set to provide further details on the changes at a press conference on Wednesday afternoon.

"One of the pieces of feedback we had including from the police was that we needed the rules to be super simple so that everybody knows what they are," Health Secretary Matt Hancock said. "And now this will now be rigorously enforced by the police."

Previously, the police were unable to take action unless social gatherings exceeded 30 people.

God,  
We pray that you give wisdom to our government leaders at this complex time.  
Grant them clarity in their decision making, we pray.  
In Jesus' name,  
Amen

## Pandemic-inspired poetry: The moving finger writes . . . again

Pandemic-inspired poetry reworks a classic form to reflect the landscape of Covid-19.



*Artwork for the first section of The Quarantine Quatrains: A new Rubaiyat*

WHEN the limitations of the lockdown drove the Revd Dr Malcolm Guite to the comfort of old books, he was surprised to find that a translation of *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám* offered a framework for expressing his disorientation.

“Somehow this Mediaeval Persian reflection on life’s joys and sorrows, on how our mortal frailty intensifies our brief pleasures and deepens our love and intimacy, all seemed to speak immediately into our time,” he writes in the introduction to his new poetry booklet *The Quarantine Quatrains: A new Rubaiyat*, a limited print run of which is being sold to raise funds for charity.

“At first, there was a sense of time opening up,” Dr Guite said, of the early period of the pandemic. “I was fortunate to have a garden, and some of the early parts of my *Quarantine Quatrains* reflect the sense of the gift of time, the beauties of birdsong in the quiet skies, nature returning, and so forth.

“But then there was a sense, of course, of frailty: a renewed awareness of my own and other people’s mortality, and a deepening empathy for all those for whom this crisis was bringing real suffering, and, in some cases, death.”

Apart from the literary inspiration of the original poem, and the re-engagement with nature, he found that the practical adjustments — “the change in routines” — offered additional material: “the new technology, especially Zoom, which I felt deserved a whole section to itself. I also took up some of the poem’s other themes, but in my own context: the celebration of wine, love, and friendship.

“Finally, as I came to the close of the poem, I wanted to write an appreciation, an elegy, and a prayer for those nurses and care workers who had given their lives in this crisis to save the lives of others.”

AS HIS plans developed, he approached the artist Roger Wagner to visualise his words. He said: “Apart from the psalms, I’ve never before illustrated anyone else’s poetry; so, when Malcolm first raised the possibility, I wasn’t sure if I would be able to.” He found the offer “an irresistible challenge”, however, and was intrigued by the parallels in the original work.



*Artwork for the third section of The Quarantine Quatrains: A new Rubaiyat*

“When though I first read the *Quatrains*, I was captivated by the way they bring Khayyam’s *Rubáiyát* into the new landscape of Covid-19, and wondered whether I might be able to do the same with the Persian miniatures that were first used to illustrate the original poem.”

Guite explained how their respective methods worked together: “I chose to use the same ‘quatrain’ form, and the same metre and rhyme scheme that Fitzgerald had used in his great translation of the original poem. Roger responded by using the ‘miniature’ form, and some special Nepalese paper, of which he had just enough for the project. Both of us were endeavouring to respond to and update a classic form in our respective arts of poetry and painting.”

Mr Wagner writes in the introduction about the origins of his approach: “After travelling in Syria many years ago, I produced a series of paintings of the mountain where one of the Desert Fathers, Simeon Stylites, sat on his pillar. The pictures were painted on pieces of



*Artwork for the sixth section  
of The Quarantine Quatrains:*

handmade Nepalese paper whose rough colour and texture seemed to mirror the desert experience. The paper is no longer obtainable, but I had just enough scraps left for the seven groups of quatrains. Its torn and jagged edges somehow provided a reminder of the real life-and-death background of these poems.”

The pandemic had come close, he said, through the experiences of his family, although his own routine was largely unchanged. “In one sense, the lockdown has barely affected the rhythm of my working day. On the other hand, with one close family member effected with ‘long Covid’ fatigue, and a hospital social-worker wife bringing daily reports from the front line, the effects of the virus have been impossible to ignore.”

Dr Guite wrote about how his own feelings shifted as the death toll rose. “When I came to the last section of my quatrains, the elegiac note prevailed, and I found myself remembering and praying for all those whom we have lost. When I wrote the verse:

*All loved and loving, carried to the grave  
The ones whom every effort could not save,  
Amongst them all those carers whose strong love  
Bought life for others with the lives they gave.*

I knew that this special edition should be dedicated to those carers, and be sold to raise funds for CWC [The Care Workers Charity], the charity that is doing so much to look after them.”

The Quarantine Quatrains: A new Rubaiyat by *Malcolm Guite with illustrations by Roger Wagner* is published in a limited edition by the authors, all profits going to the Care Workers Charity. It is available for £15 including p&p from [rogerwagner.co.uk](http://rogerwagner.co.uk)

I

1

*Awake to what was once a busy day  
When you would rush and hurry on your way  
Snatch at your breakfast, start the grim commute  
But time and tide have turned another way.*

2

*For now, like you, the day is yawning wide  
And all its old events are set aside  
It opens gently for you, takes its time  
And holds for you — whatever you decide.*

3

*This morning's light is brighter than it seems  
Your room is rafted with its golden beams  
The bowl of night was richly filled with sleep  
And dawn's left hand is holding all your dreams*

4

*Your mantle clock still sounds its silver chime  
The empty page invites an idle rhyme  
This quarantine has taken many things  
But left you with the precious gift of time*

5

*Your time is all your own — yet not your own  
The rose may open, or be overblown  
So breathe in this day's fragrance whilst you may  
To each of us the date of death's unknown.*

6

*Then settle at your desk, uncap your pen  
And open the old manuscript again  
The empty hours may tease you out of thought  
Yet leave you with a poem now and then.*

III

13

*Some days I am diverted by a call:  
The soft computer chime that summons all  
To show a face to faces that we meet  
Mirages, empty mirrors on the wall.*

14

*Alas that all the friends we ever knew  
Whose lives were fragrant and whose touch was true  
Can only meet us on some little screen  
Then zoom away with scarcely an adieu.*

15

*We share with them the little that we know  
These galleries of ghosts set in a row  
They flicker on the screen of life awhile  
But some have left the meeting long ago.*

16

*We used to stroll together on the green  
Who now divide the squares upon the screen,  
The faces of our friends, so far apart  
Tease us with tenderness that might have been*

17

*Some day we'll break the bread, we'll pour the wine  
And meet and kiss and feast beneath the vine,  
Till then we'll sweeten solitude with verse  
And yearn through pain, and watch each day decline.*

VI

28

*They say the Lion and the Lizard keep  
The Courts where Jamshýd gloried and drank deep:  
But now in every corner of the world  
The wild things flourish whilst the cities sleep*

29

*For when they see our influence abate  
The banished creatures soon resume their state:  
Blithe dolphins sport along the grand canal,  
Coyotes call across the golden gate.*

30

*The grass grows green in every city square,  
The little foxes, once so shy and rare,  
Saunter our streets and boulevards by day  
Whilst birds and insects throng the cleaner air*

31

*How soon the tide of nature has returned  
How soon renew the forests that we burned  
How soon they seed and repossess our streets  
Those precious plants and animals we spurned.*

32

*Perhaps in all this crisis, all this pain,  
This reassessment of our loss and gain  
Nature rebukes our brief authority  
Yet offers us the chance to start again*

33

*And this time with a new humility,  
With chastened awe, and mutual courtesy;  
To re-accept the unearned gift of life  
With gratitude, with joy and charity.*

34

*Perhaps we'll learn to live without so much  
To nurture and to cherish, not to clutch,  
And, if I'm spared, I'll hold the years I'm given  
With gentler tenure and a lighter touch.*

## **Newest bishop in House of Lords defends role of clergy in UK Parliament**

The Bishop of Manchester, who joined the House of Lords on Monday, has talked about the importance of having a faith perspective in the governance of the UK.



In an interview, Rt Rev David Walker said despite continued calls from Humanists and others for bishops to be removed from the House of Lords, faith has always been an important part of conversations in Parliament.

"I know from my fellow bishops in the House of Lords, some who've been there for a long time, that we don't use those seats in a partisan way," he said.

"Often the strongest support we get is from other faith communities, Jewish and Muslims.

"It's about the ways in which we help ensure that faith is seen as part of the public agenda, because faith is at the heart of the majority of people's lives in this country, whatever that faith may happen to be.

"We can help establish that within those situations in which the big decisions about the future of our country are being taken."

Bishop David said he will take his passion for the homeless into his new role as a peer.

"I've been involved with various Christian and other homelessness charities for pretty well the whole of my adult life, since I first visited a church army hostel in Cambridge as a student to help with their Sunday morning services.

"I'm hoping to have some influence and some impact on how we make this country's housing policy better to meet the needs of the whole of the people who live here."

Because of the coronavirus pandemic and parliament's hybrid working arrangements, Bishop David's schedule involves less travel from Manchester to London than it normally would have.

He's asked Christians to keep him in prayer so he can be used by God in his new position.

"Please pray that I'll have discernment to know when I need to be part of the debate and when I need to leave other people to do that," Bishop David said.

"Pray that I know when to intervene, and how to intervene effectively so that I can be an ambassador for Christ in that context, but by being an ambassador for Christ, I can support people of all faiths and none, but who see that religion has an important part to play in the life of our nation."

## **'Incredibly important': Researchers uncover unique early church chalice in Northumberland**



Fragments from an ancient chalice etched with iconography from the early church have been discovered just south of Hadrian's Wall in Northumberland.

The pieces were discovered amongst the remains of the sixth-century Christian church at Vindolanda, and form part of an "incredibly rare lead Christian cup or chalice" according to the Vindolanda Charitable Trust.

Although in poor condition due to being close to the surface of the ground, lightly etched symbols could be observed, each of which represented "different forms of Christian iconography from the time."

"The combination of so many of these etchings and the context of the discovery makes this artefact one of the most important of its type to come from early Christianity in Western Europe," the trust announced. "It is the only surviving partial chalice from this period in Britain and the first such artefact to come from a fort on Hadrian's Wall."

The etchings comprise of several identifiable symbols from the early church including ships, crosses and *chi-rho*, fish, a whale, a happy bishop, angels, members of a congregation, letters in Latin, Greek and potentially Ogam.

The artefact is being analysed by a team led by post-Roman specialist Dr David Petts from Durham University.

Dr Petts said: "This is a really exciting find from a poorly understood period in the history of Britain. Its apparent connections with the early Christian church are incredibly important, and this curious vessel is unique in a British context. It is clear that further work on this discovery will tell us much about the development of early Christianity in beginning of the medieval period."

## St Hilda's Choir Returns – Live!

Last month, the Government published new guidelines for "Performing arts" allowing professional and amateur singers to perform in public under strictly controlled conditions. At first glance, it appeared that *amateur* performance might be bound by the same rules as domestic social gatherings, but, following further information from the Royal Society of Church Music, and careful scrutiny of the guidelines, it became apparent that choirs in places of worship could resume, providing that social distancing was observed and that a thorough risk assessment was carried out and followed. The number of participants could also be increased for a "COVID secure venue". St Hilda's church has already been adapted for COVID security (for example, one-way systems, barriers, mask-wearing, sanitiser stations etc.) so these principals have now been extended to the choir area. Thanks especially to Paula Gething for all her work on this.

So, with great excitement, nine members of the choir met last Wednesday evening to rehearse—six in the stalls (both sides, front and back rows) and three in front of the high altar. What a joy it was to sing with others again! It felt so strange after all these months. Up until the summer break, some of us had been contributing our individual voices by email to a weekly hymn, which was then mixed on a computer—very time-consuming and not very musically satisfying. How lovely to be together for the actual singing!—And even more so for those several members who had not been able to record themselves.

Of course, bringing live music back into church has also had its *technical* challenges: How would we be heard on the streamed service? What accompaniment would we have? To address these, we have placed two microphones high over the choir and we are presently following a recorded accompaniment from a portable player placed on the ground between the microphones. The microphones will also enable us to record ourselves and thereby invite recorded contributions from those unable to attend in person.

Well, I think the music sounded pretty good on Sunday, especially after such a long break. It was such a joy to see the smiles on the faces of choir members so long deprived of contributing to the worship through music. We thank God for this and hope and pray for its safe continuation. Thank you to everyone who worked so hard to make it possible.

*Chris Maddock*

*Editor: You are only allowed to sing in Church if you are part of the choir, therefore if you have a desire to join in with the hymns, then choir would welcome you.*

## Our Bees are back!

When you leave church from the door by the hall, look at the lawn on your left. If it is a sunny day you will see that the area just above the grass is alive with bees coming and going from their burrows. They first appeared here a few years ago, and have returned every autumn since. The area they use has been coned off to protect the bees: they will only sting if attacked - so don't tread on them with bare feet!



There are 276 species of bees in Britain, and most of them nest underground. However, only one species emerges at this time of year, so these must be Ivy bees (*colletes hederae*) which take most of their food from ivy flowers. They look similar to honey bees, being 10 - 13mm long with a striped abdomen and a hairy orangey-brown thorax. The females dig a burrow, fill a chamber with ivy pollen and nectar, lay an egg, seal the chamber, and repeat the process with other chambers. Because each female builds her own nest they are classed as solitary bees, but they are quite happy living together in the same area where conditions are suitable. The males patrol above the burrows looking for females to mate with.

You can see them on ivy flowers on the slope of Stanwell Road railway bridge, where they compete with the larger, more aggressive wasps.

Ivy bees were only described as a separate species in 1993, and were first recorded in the UK in 2001, so they are recent immigrants taking advantage of our warming climate. They are now found in southern England and Wales and in the Channel Islands.

The eggs hatch in the borrow and stay there to pupate, feeding on the stored pollen and nectar. They emerge as adults the following autumn - so most of this year's bees have actually been with us all year, hidden underground.

*Rosemary Greenwood*

## St Hilda's is Open

Over the last few weeks we have welcomed many people back to the Church services, whilst those who continue to self-isolate join the worship via Facebook live.

In the last week, there were 40 people on Sunday and 12 for the Wednesday service. We would like to welcome you all back, but only after you have carefully thought about your own personal situation.

We can assure you that the church is as Covid friendly as possible with clear segregation, hand sanitiser availability, as well as the requirement for all to wear facemasks during their time in the building apart from when receiving communion.

If after considering this, you feel you are still not ready to return for any reason, please remember the ministry team are still here for you, and if you wish to speak to Fr Joseph, please either contact him direct or call the Parish Office and Denise will pass on your message.

## St Hilda's Parish News

### The Great Ashford Jumble Trail

Following the great success of the Ashford Jumble Trail, another is being arranged

Put the date in your diary – Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> October

St Hilda's will again be participating and will be appealing to you all for:

1. Help on the day and beforehand (collecting, sorting etc.)
2. Any donations
  - a. Clothes
  - b. Toys and Games
  - c. Ornaments
  - d. Toiletries
  - e. Anything else!

Please contact the Parish office if you are either able to help out, have donations you require collecting or whether you have questions.

### Pilgrimage

The pilgrimage to the Holy Land that was planned for this November has unfortunately been postponed to March 2022.

Those who have booked this, will shortly be contacted by McCabe with your options, which will be either your booking will be carried forward, or you can cancel and your deposit will be refunded.

### Appeal

We have been contacted by a local community project for any unwanted embroidery thread, cotton, wool, or other sewing threads. This includes wool, but no fabrics please. If you have any that you would like to donate, please either contact the Parish Office or leave in the box at the back of the church. Thank you

### Ask the Vicar

Fr. Joseph would like to start a new section in the Newsletter titled 'Ask the Vicar', anyone can ask Fr. Joseph any questions where you would like some clarification. It could be faith related, theological, Biblical, doctrinal, or Christian life in general. Fr. Joseph's replies will then be published in the Newsletter.

NB we will anonymise any names to respect confidentiality.

To ask a question, either send direct to Fr. Joseph or in a sealed envelope to the Parish Office marked 'Ask the Vicar'.

So, if you have any burning questions you now have the opportunity to raise them!.



## Tea and Chat after Sunday Service

We would like to invite you to join us for a virtual Tea and Chat after the service on **Sunday 13 September 2020 at 11.15am**. See below on how to join. Any queries please call the Parish Office.

The meeting is hosted by Zoom.

There are 2 ways in which you can join the Tea and Chat session



1. Join via a computer or tablet, for a video style experience (like Skype)

- Download the Zoom app – [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us)
- Click – Join a Meeting
- Enter the Meeting id – **940 4790 2409**
- Enter password – **879757**

2. Join via telephone – cost of a local call.

- Dial – 0203 051 2874
- Enter Meeting Id – **940 4790 2409** – and follow instructions (you will be asked to press # and 1)
- Password – **879757**

## More Tea ... – Weekday Tea and Chat

The second of the weekly Tea and chat sessions where you are able to 'meet up' over a cuppa. In this weekly session, we have introduced a topic for discussion – this week's topic is '**a favourite poem**'.

If you haven't yet joined one of these sessions – give it a try, you can connect either on-line or via the telephone, we would like to see or hear as many of you as possible and encourage you to join us. We encourage all those who haven't yet joined one of the sessions to do so, and if you have any apprehension in doing so, please call the Parish Office and Denise will guide you through the process – it is quite simple once you've done it once.

This week the Tea and Chat will be held on **Tuesday 15 September @ 10.30am**

The codes are as per the following, to join follow the instructions above

- Meeting id – **990 1083 2854**
- Password – **533659**

**Canaan Ministries** have re-opened, and are following the latest government legislation in relation to the current guidelines on social distancing.

Opening times - Monday to Saturday 10am – 5pm (closing during lunchtime 1pm – 2pm), so there will be plenty of time to see and serve everyone. **Free local home delivery is also possible.**

We would like to thank you all for your continued support, and we hope, your much needed support in the future.

### Psalm 28:7

The Lord is my strength and  
my shield;  
in him my heart trusts;  
so I am helped, and my heart  
exults, and with my song I  
give thanks to him.

### Crossroads

Please email Rosemary at [crossroads\\_ashford@hotmail.com](mailto:crossroads_ashford@hotmail.com) if you have anything to be included in the parish magazine. The September edition is now available on our website.

## This weeks services

### Sunday Eucharist – 13 September @ 9.30am

This service can be viewed via our Facebook page, our new YouTube channel (St Hilda's Ashford), and Twitter for those of you who are unable to attend in person.

### Wednesday Eucharist – 16 September @ 9.45am

To attend either service please book a ticket on Eventbrite (link on the website), or call the Parish Office. Please remember that face coverings are mandatory in Church.

Please see our website ([www.sthilda.org](http://www.sthilda.org)) for updates and the weekly service sheet.



*Happy anniversary to  
Fr. Joseph and family as  
they celebrate 2  
years as part of  
the family of St Hilda's.  
13<sup>th</sup> September 2018*



Please hold in your prayers and thoughts this week those who are affected by the Corona Virus as well as the family and friends of those below.

### The Sick

James Bedford	Jim Hennessey	Riley Shaw	Peter Wilson
Pamela Claridge	Libby Mills	Anne Shenton	Jo Wood
Robb Clarke	Raymond Nation	Elsie Stone	Nic
Rebecca Cohen	June Prentice	Roy Stone	Martyn
Ann Considine	John Radford	Sandra Swain	Joey
Chris Davenport	Elizabeth Savill-Burgess	Rev. Peter Taylor	
Michael Dixon	Delphine Scrivener	Chick Wilson	

### The Recently Departed

Christopher Court	Cyril Winter	Shirley Warrender
Michael O'Hagan	Audrey Cummins	

### **Prayer**

Almighty God,

who called your Church to bear witness  
that you were in Christ reconciling the world to  
yourself:

help us to proclaim the good news of your love,  
that all who hear it may be drawn to you;  
through him who was lifted up on the cross,  
and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

Amen

