

The year 2020 seemed to get off to a very shaky start. What with the killing of an Iranian general by the United States in Iraq, the civilian plane being brought down in the region, the horrendous fires continuing in Australia, the floods in Indonesia and, much closer to home, the horrible bug that is going around and flooring so many people. We could put ourselves into quarantine to avoid the bug, but that doesn't really help us socially, and I guess that most of us feel completely helpless when we consider the big issues on the world-stage and think, "I can't do anything."

Perhaps we can't globally; but we can each make a difference locally. We can each help make a difference to another individual's life by building relationships, by caring, by being interested in others and their needs.

We've also got some things that we can look forward to through February. Right at the end of January and into the start of February we've got the Benenden pantomime to look forward to! Go along and support those who put so much hard work into making a great community event happen (and have a laugh at the same time - laughing is proven to be good for us). For rugby fans we've got the Six Nations kicking off; in our household, on the 8th, we'll be enjoying the Calcutta Cup match - or, at least, one of us will! Also on the 8th is the second "Hello. How are you? club." Go along, have a chat, meet new people. You could make a difference to someone's life just by taking an interest in what they are doing.

For the romantics amongst us, there is Valentine's Day to look forward to on the 14th (sorry, you now haven't got the excuse of forgetting it). For those who like to get stuck into something, the fete committee are looking for many volunteers to help on the day and in the run-up to the big event. Could that be you this year? If so, let me know, by the 18th if possible - the date of our next fete meeting.

Looking further ahead there is Shrove Tuesday - which means pancakes - so the 25th is something to look forward to. The following day is Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent, and if you would like something quieter and more reflective, there is a service at St George's at 7.30pm. And, of course, it's a leap year - maybe there's a secret proposal being planned. Oh, and if you hadn't heard, 27 February is International Polar Bear Day.

Lots of things to look forward to; lots of things to get involved in; lots of opportunities to meet with others in the village and to make a difference in someone's life. Most of us can't make much of an impact on the world stage, but we can each make a difference here.

Revd David Commander, Rector