

KEYNOTES

Now these three continue . . .



Of these, the greatest is . . . 1 Cor 13:13

February 2024

£1.00

**THE PARISH CHURCH OF
ST PETER'S, WEST BLATCHINGTON**

Rector **The Reverend Tim Gage**
The Rectory
23 Windmill Close
Hove, BN3 7LJ
Tel : 01273 270427
Email: rector.westblatchington@gmail.com

Thursday is ordinarily the Rector's rest day; however please do not hesitate to contact him in the event of a pastoral emergency. Please refer all other urgent matters to the Churchwardens.

CURATE **Rev Jan Butter** **Tel: 07889 400889**
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 David Keeling **Tel: 501504**

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PARISH EVENTS DIARY

The following events taking place in February and March as notified are:

**Friday 16th February - 1.10pm - Free lunchtime concert -
Sussex Camerata - string quartet**

Saturday 24th February - 7.30pm - Karaoke evening

**Saturday 9th March - 10am - Blue Jeans Saturday -
bi-annual Churchyard tidy up and Church spring clean**

**Saturday 23rd March - Free lunchtime concert -
Rachel Smith and Paul Gregory - flute and guitar**

Please continue to keep us informed of events that you have planned or know about by sending a message to our email address which is stpetersadmin@zoho.com

The deadline for the March 2024 issue is
8th February



... I haven't the heart to tell Noah I think he's got the plans upside down!

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the first Keynotes edition of 2024.

We hope you had a wonderful Christmas and we wish you all a very happy, healthy and blessed new year.

December was a very busy month with lots of events happening in the lead up to Christmas. At the beginning of the month we had our Christmas Tree Festival with the theme 'hobbies'. It was a team effort and was visited by many. What a joyous occasion it was. Our Lessons and Carols service on the 3rd December was well attended and it was lovely to worship amongst the Christmas Trees. The Christingle and Crib service on Christmas Eve was extremely popular this year with 190 attendees, Midnight Mass attracted 25 people and the Christmas Day family service was attended by 34 people. All services were different, but equally enjoyable.

The free Friday lunchtime concerts will continue again this year with the next one on the 16th of this month when we welcome back Sussex Camerata, a string quartet. Hopefully the one by Rev Michael Maine in January was well attended. The concerts start at 1.10pm and refreshments are provided. Donations welcome to support future concerts.

We have lots of other social and fundraising events planned for this year which appeared in the last edition of Keynotes or can be found on our website. Please put the dates in your diary so you don't miss out! January saw our first ever St Peter's Bake Off which we are sure was a great success and on the 24th of this month we have a Karaoke evening.

We would be delighted if you would join our Church electoral role if you have been coming to St Peter's for over six months. This allows you to vote at our Annual Parochial Church Meeting which takes place in April. There are forms at the back of Church or you can ask Pam Miles our Electoral Officer for a form.

If you haven't already done so, please will you consider renewing your subscription to Keynotes for 2024. The price remains at £8 for ten copies in the year. Please hand your subscription to a member of the Editorial Committee.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our advertisers for their continued support. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you or a friend would be interested in advertising in Keynotes.

Thank you for your continued support.

Editorial Team



God's army

Dewey was in front of me coming out of church one day, and the minister was standing at the door, as he always is, to shake hands. Suddenly he grabbed Dewey by the hand and pulled him aside. The minister said sternly, "Dewey, you need to join the Army of the Lord!"

Dewey replied, "I'm already in the Army of the Lord, Pastor."

The minister retorted: "Then how come I don't see you except at Christmas and Easter?"

Dewey replied in a whisper: "Well, I'm in the secret service."

Rectors Ramblings

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. Hebrews 10:24-25

A couple of years ago I was sat in a hotel in Leeds surrounded by hundreds of different people. We were each at different stages of having our breakfast and chatting to one another. But as we exchanged names and ate our croissants I could see a few people in this room eyeing us all with suspicion, what would bring together such a range of people? Work? No. Family? No. Then what?

Well, I was attending a Christian conference that brought together all sorts of people, who shared this one thing: their desire to love and follow Christ.

When believers gather for worship and fellowship it is a wonderful thing. It is a powerful signpost to the reality of the Kingdom of Heaven amongst us. Whether this is at a packed-out Christingle service, a solemn funeral for a Christian brother or sister or just 2 or 3 gathering to read the Bible and pray for each other.

Over the past few months we have been considering how we may best use our resources to provide opportunities to meet for worship, fellowship and fun without over stretching our resources.

As we head into a new year this means several things:

- We are working on equipping and growing our Sunday School leaders to support them in the amazing work that they do.
- We are seeing how we can support and train our sidespeople to ensure an excellent welcome every Sunday.
- We are listening to feedback and aiming to improve the consistency of our online services.
- We are pausing our St. Peter's @4 service. With the desire to restart it or something similar later in the year.
- We are starting a new monthly Eucharist on the Third Wednesday of the month at 7.45pm.

Wherever and however you join us I hope you can pray that 2024 is a year when we grow in our desire to worship God with all our hearts, minds, souls and strength - together! By prioritising meeting together as disciples of Jesus in West Blatchington and beyond.

Every blessing

Rev Tim, Rector

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Learning to drive

As a learner driver in London, I was taking the road test for my driver's license. When someone cut me off, I held my temper so I wouldn't look out of control. "You have a lot to learn," said the inspector.

Then at a red light, the car behind me tapped my bumper. I still remained calm, but the inspector shook his head. When the light turned, I accelerated, but the car behind me then sped up and cut me off. That did it! I hit the horn as hard as I could.

The inspector turned to me, smiled, and said, "Now you're getting the hang of it."

WOMEN'S SOCIAL

Members were all very saddened by the death of our dear friend, Michael Gough on 13th November last year. He and Jane have been great supporters of St Peter's for many years and he will be greatly missed.

Several members of the group worked very hard to produce the decorations for our tree as part of the Christmas Tree Festival and many of us were very busy during the event itself which was a great success.

Chairman Moz and Reverend Tim lead a very moving Preparation for Christmas service which, as always, was an oasis of calm in the hectic days leading up to Christmas.

On the 8th February we will be meeting for fish and chips at Bankers, Western Road, Brighton and on 22nd February we will be at the Rectory for coffee. Our AGM will take place in church on 14th March.

Maggie Keeling



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Father Tim blesses HADO England Player for the World Championships in Japan

By Eliot Flackhill

'HADO' is a relatively new sport, an 'augmented reality' version of dodgeball, where players compete to score points with, and dodge virtual 'energy balls' fired at each other. HADO Brighton now has a special centre locally in the Knoll Business Estate, but prior to that operated out of Bishop Hannington Church and other churches. Brighton is a hotbed of HADO talent, with players from the Brighton Centre competing both nationally and internationally over the last few years.

Seb has been playing for a couple of years, originally as part of a team made up of his school friends. Although the coach has regularly commented on what a good player Seb is, it was still a shock when we got an email telling us that he had been selected as part of the England squad to compete in the World Championships in Tokyo!

As part of his preparations, the week before we went to Tokyo, Seb was keen to get Father Tim to give him a blessing and to pray that everything went well. Tim also gave Seb a Jerusalem cross, which he carried with him at all times on the trip to Japan.

We arrived in Japan on Thursday, with the main competition being on the Sunday, and some training and warm-up games on the Saturday, meaning we had the Friday free for some sightseeing. Seb chose to visit the Tokyo Skytree – a 350m tall viewing platform – as well as Senso-ji, the oldest temple in Tokyo, and the world's most visited spiritual site.

On Saturday, after training, there was a team tactics discussion that ran into the evening, after we had seen the other teams form and been given more detail about the format and timings of the main matches. As Seb was a relatively junior member (most of the rest of the team were part of the team that won the European Cup the previous year), he was not expected to play a major part – his role was as a reserve, to come on in the event of injury or tiredness to one of the core members of the team.

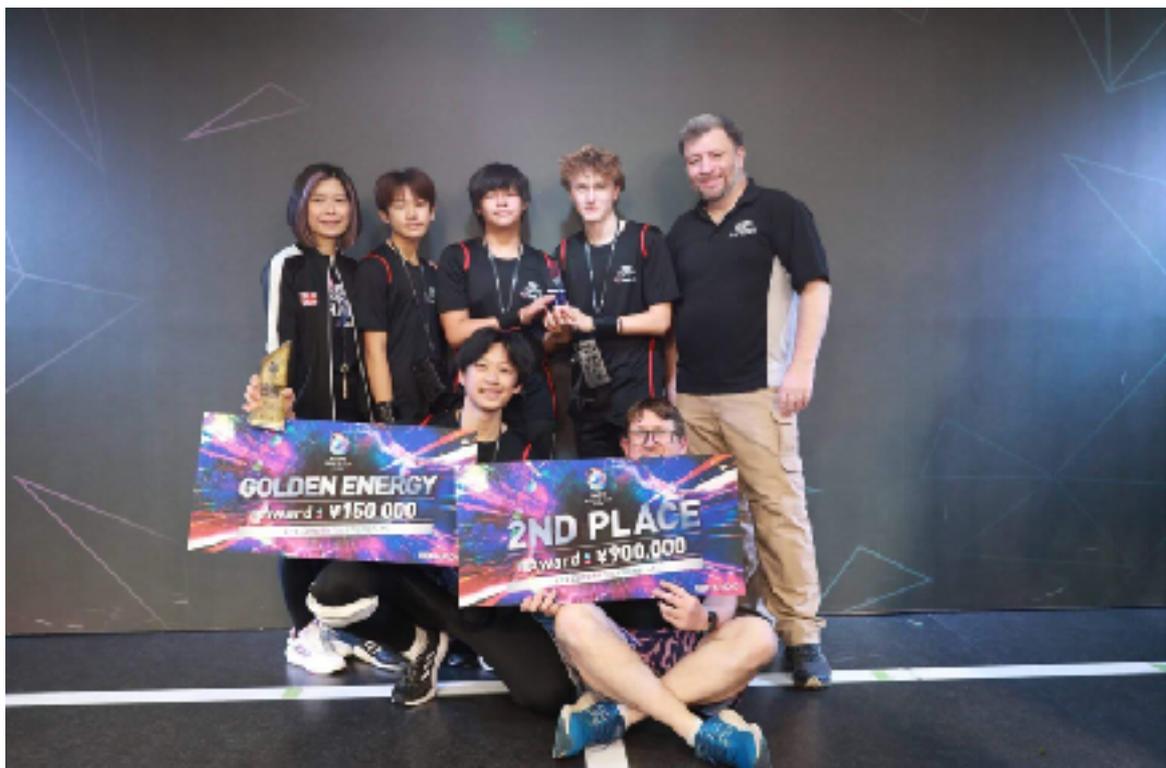
On the Sunday we had an early start, as there was a long day's competition ahead – each of the 11 national teams attending would play each other once, after which the top 8 teams would qualify for the knockout stages. Seb played in 3 of these elimination games, and acquitted himself well. The England team were very pleased to

finish 2nd overall – just behind Japan, putting them into a great position in the knockout stages.

When the England team came on for their first quarter final – against France – I got a shock when Seb was the first player to emerge – I hadn't expected him to play at this stage. One of the coaching staff told me that one of the other players, Kaywing, had cramp and couldn't go on, so Seb had been drafted in at the last minute.

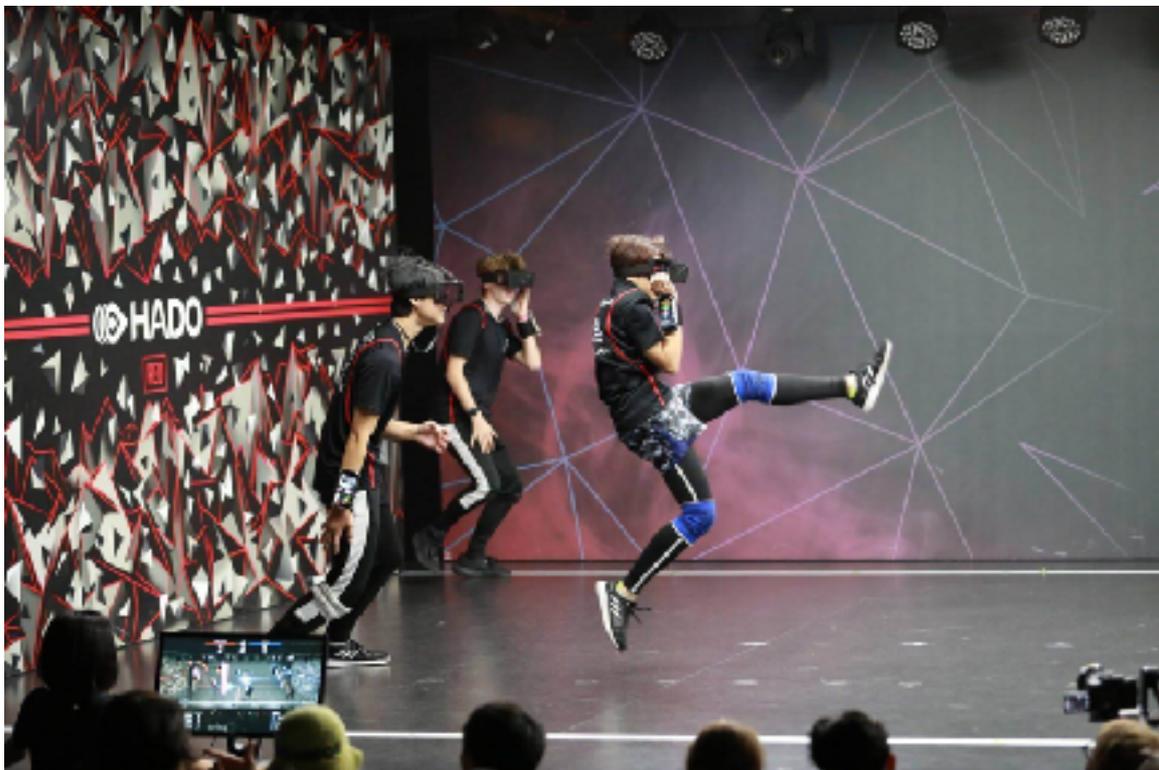
England had already beaten France in the round robin, and were able to repeat this in the quarter-finals – earning themselves a place in the semi-final against China. This was quite a daunting prospect, as China were very strong, and had beaten England in the earlier stages. China had also beaten a very Strong Greece side in their quarter final. This also meant that England were the last remaining European team in the competition.

All eyes were on Kaywing, who was receiving attention from the Physio – but it soon became clear that he wasn't going to be ready for this one, either – at least Seb had a bit more notice this time! I didn't have too many expectations – but it all came together brilliantly, England ended up beating China, with Seb scoring some key points. When the whistle blew for the end of the match with England winning 7-5, the players and coaching staff rushed to congratulate Seb on his match-winning performance!



England had made it to the Final, against Japan. The England coach had no hesitation in selecting Seb again for the Final – and he once again performed superbly: although England lost the final, Seb scored highest out of the England team.

On the way back to our Hotel, Seb confided that all his hopes and wishes for the tournament had come true. Although England hadn't actually won the World Championship, he had started as a reserve player, not guaranteed any matches, and ended up playing himself into the team, getting to play against the best players in the World, and playing a key role in the World Cup final. We are very grateful to Father Tim for his special blessing and the Jerusalem cross.



Philippians 4:6-7

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

CONSIDERATE PARKING

We are fortunate at St Peter's to have unrestricted parking so close to our church even though we have to share that space with many residents who are not members of our congregation. As someone who is rarely early for the Sunday morning service I can always count on finding a convenient space, which is a blessing. As Christians we have a duty to be and, for the sake of good community relations, be seen to be acting considerately in the way we use the available space.

Most of us, in order to allow ample space for cars to pass notwithstanding parked cars on both sides of the road, tend to park partly on the pavement and, although this is technically illegal, the police turn a blind eye precisely for that reason. The problem with this, however, is that in so doing we reduce the amount of space for pedestrians to pass and there has been the occasional complaint about this. In the dry weather that is not a problem because they can walk on the grass but when it is wet that is not an attractive solution. This becomes especially difficult for parents with pushchairs and wheelchair users. May I suggest, therefore, that where we find it necessary to park partly on the pavement we try to park using no more than the stone kerb? That will still leave sufficient space for cars to pass while leaving adequate space for the people for whom the pavement is designed.

Also, if you manage to find a large parking space, please do your best to park at one end of that space in order to leave the possibility of a space for someone else to park there as well.

Some of us park occasionally on the windmill side of the island in Holmes Avenue, again partly on the pavement. Sometimes there is no other choice and, if done carefully, can leave sufficient space both for passing traffic and (admittedly with some difficulty) pavement users. It would help ease any potential congestion if traffic was only one-way round that island and I can see no logical reason why the Council should not make that so. I have written more than once to the Highways Department about this but they have never responded. Dare I suggest that if a number of us were to write suggesting this they might be forced to listen?

Jonathan Cooke

Our charity for February is The Martlets



Martlets is a charity that cares for people living through a terminal illness in and around Brighton & Hove

The hospice plays a vital role in helping people to live life as fully as they can, right up until the end. Through expert clinical care provided by highly skilled and experienced doctors and nurses, they ensure that wherever possible peace, respect and dignity is retained – it is a very simple and very human ethos.

Martlets opened in 1997. The staff and services were formed from the merger of three separate charities: Coppercliff Hospice, Turner and MacMillan Day Hospice. Across the hospice services, more than 25,000 local people have been supported and cared for since 1997.

Most people receive care from us in their own homes. Outpatients also visit our hospice for pain relief, physiotherapy, counselling, welfare advice and social activities. Others choose to spend their final days here, or to join us as inpatients for respite care or symptom management. The Martlets Hospice cares for people affected by life limiting illness living in and around Brighton & Hove.

Please support them if you can.

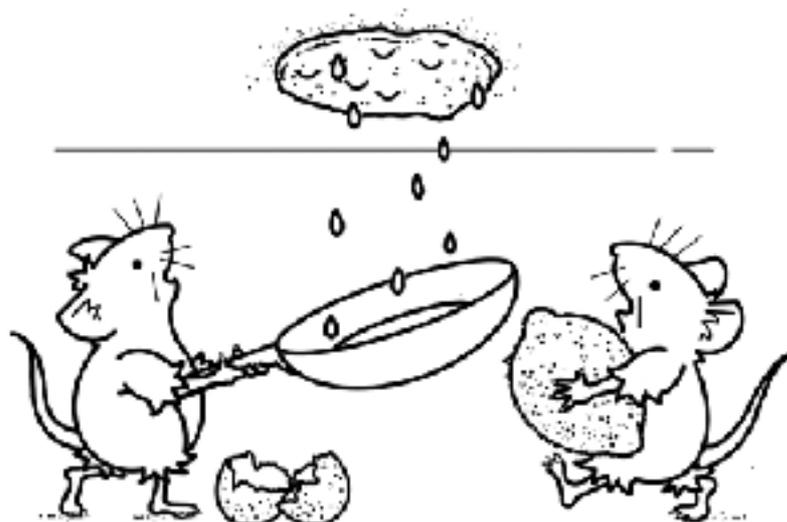
Crib and Christingle Service on December 24th 2023

This service was a huge success with the church absolutely packed with children, parents, grandparents and friends. Children as they arrived were offered the chance to dress up as a character from the Christmas story and many did so. Reverend Tim told the Christmas story in rhyme and there were lots of opportunities for congregation participation and lots of Carols which were sung with great enthusiasm accompanied by piano, guitar, baritone and recorder. The younger children delighted in coming to the front during the Carols and “dancing” or jumping around with obvious joy and were a great pleasure to watch. The children who had dressed up took part in the story at the front and the “star” was particularly impressive.

Reverend Tim then explained the story of Christingles and each child came up to collect one followed by quite a few adults as well. One hundred Christingles had been made the previous day by a team of helpers (many, many thanks to them) and there was not a single one left. The lights were dimmed, and the Christingle glow sticks lit up, it was magical.

The retiring collection for the Children’s Society raised £130.31 and with other donations £169.74 was sent to the Children’s Society. Many thanks to all those involved for making this such a lovely, fun time and for all those who donated to the Children’s Society.

Christine James



Toad-in-the-hole by Michael Blencowe for Sussex Wildlife Trust

Once upon a time, the British people were divided. Impassioned debates raged throughout the land, truth and common sense became distorted, and the public rose up and demanded an answer. How did that toad get inside that rock?

In 1898, two burly workmen in a chalk quarry near Lewes cracked open a hollow chunk of flint. The solid rock, formed 85 million years ago, split open to reveal an airtight cavity at its core. To the quarrymen's amazement, entombed within the ancient flint was a dead toad.

'Toad-in-the-hole' hysteria soon hit the headlines. It seemed like every month the newspapers reported how someone had split open a rock and found a toad inside. Some of these toads had already croaked but others would inexplicably still be alive and hopping. The Victorian world was thrown into theological and philosophical panic. Clergymen preached that the Creator had placed the eternal amphibians in rocks at the dawn of time. Subscribers to Darwin's new theory of evolution were perplexed. Charles Dickens wrote of his bewilderment, while others believed it was simply sorcery. Scientists began burying living toads in sealed boxes to investigate the unfortunate animal's longevity.

The Lewes toad of 1898 is the world's only surviving artefact of the entombed toad craze. It now resides in Brighton's incredible Booth Museum of Natural History – one of my favourite places in the whole world. Amongst the many awe-inspiring exhibits at The Booth, you'll find a special cabinet dedicated to curiosities. In it, lying reverentially on a bed of maroon felt, there is 'Probably the most famous toad in the world'. Admittedly when it comes to world-famous toads it's not a particularly crowded field, with only Toad of Toad Hall to contest the title. Alongside the original oval of cleft flint sits the shrivelled body of the infamous amphibian. The whole surreal exhibit is like a Kinder Surprise designed by Hieronymus Bosch.

But this cracked up flint isn't all it's cracked up to be. The Lewes toad was originally presented to the Brighton and Hove Natural History and Philosophical Society by Charles Dawson. That's the same Charles Dawson who would soon be sticking some Orangutan teeth on a human skull and declaring he had discovered the 'missing link' at Piltdown, near Uckfield. In 1953, Dawson would be unmasked as a

fraudster and the whole 'toad-in-the-hole' phenomenon would come crashing down, dismissed as poppycock.



Sussex Wildlife Trust is a conservation charity for everyone who cares about nature in Sussex. Founded in 1961, we have worked with local people for over half a century to make Sussex richer in wildlife.

We rely on the support of our members. Please consider joining us. Your membership will help us challenge decisions that threaten wildlife, care for more than 30 nature reserves, and inspire the next generation about the wonders of the natural world. It's easy to join online at sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/join

Matthew 11:28

**Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest.**

Prayer List Requests

Each Sunday we pray for people in any kind of need.

These may be the names of people on the prayer list which is printed in the Pew Sheet each week. The names are not read out individually during Sunday Intercessions, but are prayed for individually at the monthly Wednesday Prayer Together Service.

This is a lovely, peaceful, prayerful time in The Old Church. Please join us.

The Prayer Together Services are always on the first Wednesday of each month at 7.45pm.



St Peter's Pastoral Care Group

Our Pastoral Care Group exists to offer entirely confidential help and support on any pastoral matter.

Perhaps you would like a friendly visitor for a good chat now and then, help with transport, a name included in our prayer list at Church, some professional advice which we can help find, or an offer of Communion at home?

Please contact, in the first instance, Carol Gander on 01273 555414.

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People and Places of the Bible

Sosthenes

Sosthenes, a figure mentioned in both the First Epistle to the Corinthians and the Acts of the Apostles, emerges as a significant character in the early Christian narrative. In Corinthians, he is identified as a "fellow worker" with the apostle Paul, implying a shared commitment to the Christian mission. This collaboration is evident in the opening greeting of the letter addressed to the church in Corinth, where Sosthenes is mentioned alongside Paul.

Moreover, Acts 18 sheds additional light on Sosthenes' role within the early Christian movement. In this account, Sosthenes is portrayed in a different context, not as a co-author but as a prominent figure facing persecution. The passage recounts an incident in Corinth where certain Jews, displeased with Paul's teachings, bring him before the judgment seat. Sosthenes, identified as the ruler of the synagogue, is subjected to physical abuse by the crowd.

Interestingly, Luke, the author of Acts, does not specify the reasons behind the attack on Sosthenes or the identity of the assailants. The ambiguity surrounding this incident adds an element of intrigue, leaving room for speculation on the motives behind the persecution. Nevertheless, the subsequent positive mention of Sosthenes in the letter to the Corinthians underscores the resilience and transformative power of faith within the context of early Christian communities.

Sosthenes' dual portrayal in Corinthians and Acts encapsulates the complex dynamics of the early Christian movement, where individuals like him navigated both collaborative efforts in spreading the Gospel and challenges from external opposition. His story adds depth to the understanding of the diverse experiences within the burgeoning Christian communities of the first century.

Capernaum

Capernaum, nestled on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee, played a pivotal role in biblical times, earning its significance through numerous mentions in the New Testament. Believed to be the

hometown of several apostles, including Peter, Andrew, James, and John, Capernaum served as a central hub for Jesus' ministry.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Capernaum is described as the place where Jesus chose to reside after leaving Nazareth. The town witnessed remarkable events, such as the healing of the centurion's servant and the miraculous catch of fish.

The town's synagogue, a focal point of religious and communal life, is famously associated with Jesus' teachings. It was in this synagogue that he delivered powerful sermons and performed notable miracles, including the exorcism of an unclean spirit. The people of Capernaum were astonished by his authority, marking the town as a witness to the profound nature of Jesus' ministry.

However, despite being a witness to extraordinary events, Capernaum also bore witness to Jesus' warnings. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus pronounced woes upon the town, criticizing its lack of faith despite the miracles performed in its midst. This serves as a poignant reminder of the responsibility that accompanies divine revelation.

Today, the ruins of ancient Capernaum stand as a testament to its historical and spiritual significance. Pilgrims and scholars alike explore the archaeological remains, including the partially reconstructed synagogue and the dwelling believed to be Peter's house. Capernaum, with its rich biblical legacy, continues to draw visitors seeking to connect with the profound events that unfolded on its shores more than two millennia ago.

William Holden

WANTED FOR THE SUMMER FAIR

If anyone has any large unwanted pots/containers that can be planted up to sell at our summer fair, please speak / contact Barry Ward on 01273 774848. Can collect.

Small Donations Scheme

We have reintroduced the above scheme, or SDS, which ran very successfully up to several years ago. The idea is to give people the opportunity to make a donation towards the cost of items which are one-off purchases or materials which we use. These donations are not regular but are on an “as and when able” basis which may be something in which they are interested.

The next edition of Keynotes will then contain a “thank you” notice for the gift which can be anonymous or include the sponsor’s name.

Mandy has produced a list of items which may appeal to the congregation and any discussion can be held in confidence with her. This list includes the following;

Pew sheet printing costs	£ 274.96
New wicks for the candles	£ 8.82
Envelopes and paper	£ 54.82
Livestreaming licence	£ 109.00
New gutter brackets for Church	£ 112.50
New Church keys	£ 31.99
Sunday School supplies	£ 87.35
New Church security light	£ 72.00

Thank you for your sponsorship

Our grateful thanks go to the person who wishing to remain anonymous, very kindly donated the cost of the Christingles for the crib service on Christmas Eve.

If you would like to make a donation to help with the funding of some of the items of expenditure in and around our Church then please contact Mandy Gander, our Treasurer.

Nigel Beeton writes: '11th February is 'Transfiguration Sunday.' We have a window in St Mary's Church, Bury St Edmunds which depicts the Transfiguration, and I always find it really inspiring. It was a breath-taking moment, and we can scarcely imagine the impact it had on the watching Peter, James, and John.'

Transfiguration

Reveal Thyself to me,
Transfigured shining Son!
Thy Holy radiance may I see
God's own anointed One.

The prophets there with Thee
What stories do they tell?
What holy words of mystery?
What glories do they spell?

Then, God's own mighty voice
Rolling through shrouding cloud;
Must make the hardest heart rejoice
To hear Him clear and loud:

"This, my beloved Son!
"Listen to what He says
"Know that He is the chosen One
"And follow Him all thy days!"

(Tune: Trentham)

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." ~ Philippians 4:6

REGULAR WEEKLY SERVICES

10.00 am Sunday Parish Eucharist with Sunday School in term time (except third Sunday of the month)

10.00 am All-Age Worship on the third Sunday of the month

1st Wednesday of the month at 7.45 pm -
Prayer Together

3rd Wednesday of the month at 7.45pm -
Shorter Eucharist Service

10.00 am Online service via Youtube



The Rector is always available for spiritual counsel and healing prayer

**FRIDAYS AT ST PETER'S
St Peter's 'Open Church' drop-in**

**The First Friday of each month
10.30am – 12noon**

For coffee, conversation and companionship.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR GARDEN?

- 1) Blitz perennial weeds in your beds. Dig them up roots and all before the weather warms up.
- 2) Take notice of your climbers (such as Clematis) as some may need pruning before the end of the month.
- 3) Cut back shrubs such as Cornus and Salix cultivars (grown for their colourful winter stems) down to the bases.
- 4) Cut back the old foliage from ornamental grasses before growth begins. Clip them to within a few centimeters of the ground.
- 5) Prune over-wintered Fuschias back to one or two buds on each shoot.
- 6) Prune winter-flowering Jasmine after flowering to encourage new growth for next years blooms.
- 7) Prune winter-flowering shrubs such as Mahonia and Viburnum once their colourful display has finished.
- 8) Remove faded flowers from winter Pansies to stop them setting seed. This will encourage a flush of new flowers when the weather warms up.
- 9) Lift and divide Snowdrops still "in the green" if you want to move them or create more plants.
- 10) Cut back vines such as Ivy, Virginia Creeper and Boston Ivy. Doing this now helps keep windows, gutters and roof tiles.
- 11) Remember, keep off the grass when there is a frost as the blades are more susceptible to damage.

Greenfingers



COME INTO MY KITCHEN.....

I hope you all enjoyed the Christmas season and would like to wish you all a very Happy New Year.

My first recipe this year is one that elevates a mid-week staple to supper party status!

LAMB SHANK SHEPHERD'S PIE

SERVES 4-6

2tbsp sunflower oil
4 small lamb shanks, seasoned well
1 onion
2 celery sticks, finely chopped
2 carrots, finely chopped
2 bay leaves
3 garlic cloves finely chopped
1tbsp plain flour
400g tin chopped tomatoes
750ml chicken stock
2tbsp Worcestershire sauce
4 rosemary sprigs, needles picked and chopped
800g potatoes, cut into chunks
50g unsalted butter
green vegetables, steamed and buttered, to serve

Heat 1tbsp of the oil in a large casserole over a medium-high heat and brown the lamb shanks, in batches, for 2-3 minutes on each side until well coloured. Remove to a plate.

Add the remaining oil, the onion, celery, carrots, bay and a pinch of salt to the pan, cover with a lid and cook for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables have started to soften.

Uncover, add the garlic and cook for a minute more, then tip in the flour and cook, stirring, for a further minute. Tip in the tomatoes,

stock, Worcestershire sauce and rosemary. Season well, bring to a simmer, then return the lamb shanks to the pan.

Cover with the lid, reduce the heat to a gentle simmer and cook for another 1-2 hours, or until the lamb shanks are meltingly tender. Remove the shanks to a board, shred using 2 forks, then stir the meat back into the sauce. Season to taste. (You can keep the lamb mixture frozen in an airtight container for up to three months once completely cooled.)

Heat the oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Tip the lamb mixture into a deep 20cm x 30cm baking dish. Cook the potatoes in a large pan of boiling, salted water for 15-20 minutes, or until really soft. Drain well then return to the same pan. Season, add the butter and mash until mostly smooth.

Spoon the buttery mash over the lamb mixture in the baking dish, then gently smooth using the back of the spoon so the filling is completely covered. Drag a fork over the mash to decorate.

Bake for 25-30 minutes or until the mash is golden and the filling is bubbling at the edges.

Serve with the buttered steamed green veg.

And to follow? This easy dessert can be made up to 2 days ahead.

POACHED PEARS IN RED WINE

SERVES 6

1 vanilla pod

1 bottle red wine

225g caster sugar

1 cinnamon stick, halved

fresh thyme sprig, plus sprigs to serve

6 pears, peeled, but kept whole with the stalk intact

Halve the vanilla pod lengthways, scrape out the black seeds and put in a large saucepan with the wine, sugar, cinnamon and thyme. Cut each piece of pod into three long strips, add to the pan, then lower in the pears.

Poach the pears, covered, for 20-30 minutes, making sure they are covered in the wine. The cooking time will very much depend on the ripeness of the pears – they should be tender all the way through when pierced with a cocktail stick. You can make these up to 2 days ahead and chill.

Take the pears from the pan, then boil the liquid to reduce it by half so that it's syrupy.

Serve each pear with the cooled syrup, a strip of vanilla piece of cinnamon and a small thyme sprig.

Maggie



"Next Sunday I think I'll do a new take on the Parable of the Virgins and the Oil."



*The Parish Church of St. Peter
West Blatchington*

FREE LUNCHTIME CONCERT SERIES

Our afternoon concert series continues with

Sussex Camerata - String Quartet

1.10 p.m. on Friday 16th February

The Recital is for approximately 40 minutes

Refreshments provided.

**There is no admission charge, but donations to fund
future concerts will be gratefully accepted.**

All welcome!



Wordsearch

February is the month of romance. Millions of Valentine cards will be sent in the next week or two, as we celebrate our romantic love for that special person in our lives. But there are other kinds of love to celebrate: and on Candlemas we remember Mary and Joseph taking their baby son to the temple to present Him to God. Jesus' whole life was a loving present to us from God. Through His death for us on the cross, and His resurrection, His love can now transform anyone's life. Romances can die, but God's love for us is always there. But it won't do us much good – unless we accept it!

Valentine

Rose

Romance

Love

Present

Restaurant

Hearts

Kiss

hug

girlfriend

boyfriend

fiance

worship

repentance

angels

baby

temple

Mary

Candlemas

presentation



THE CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

The first weekend in December saw the church transformed into a beautiful, magical trail around 18, all totally differently decorated, Christmas trees. The theme of the trail was “Hobbies” and this provided some very imaginative and diverse decorations. Visitors were warmly greeted at the door and were given information about the trail, forms to vote for their favourite adult and children tree decorations and a “mouse hunt” for the children.



There was also a large craft table selling many hand made gifts and other items in time for Christmas and a lovely seating area where the delicious homemade cakes, biscuits and scones on sale could be enjoyed with a hot or cold drink.

Raffle tickets were on sale and the array of raffle prizes was amazing. The silent auction also saw a good selection of more expensive items inviting secret bids. So many wonderful donations!



The whole atmosphere was one of welcome, friendship and good fun. Many, many people commented on not only how beautiful the church looked but also how welcoming the church felt and the warmth and friendliness of all the people working there.

On the Sunday afternoon the Advent Carol Service was held with the congregation sitting in the midst of all the trees and this seemed very special.

Many people had worked very hard to make this event such a success and I felt honoured to be a small part of it, it was a truly wonderful time and raised much needed funds for the church, the Martlets and the Food Bank.

Christine James

FEBRUARY SEASONS FESTIVALS AND SAINTS DAYS

14th February – Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday is the first day of the penitential season of Lent, in which the Priest applies ashes to the foreheads of Christians to signify an inner repentance.

Ash Wednesday, originally called *dies cinerum* (day of ashes), is mentioned in the earliest copies of the Gregorian Sacramentary, and probably dates from at least the 8th Century.

The pouring of ashes on one's body (and dressing in sackcloth, a very rough material) as an outer manifestation of inner repentance or mourning is an ancient practice. It is mentioned several times in the Old Testament. What is probably the earliest occurrence is found at the very end of the book of Job. Job, having been rebuked by God, confesses, "Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:6). Other examples are found in 2 Samuel 13:19, Esther 4:1,3, Isaiah 61:3, Jeremiah 6:26, Ezekiel 27:30, and Daniel 9:3. In the New Testament, Jesus alludes to the practice in Matthew 11:21: "Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes."

In the typical Ash Wednesday observance, Christians are invited to the altar to receive the imposition of ashes, prior to receiving the sacrament of bread and wine. The Priest applies ashes in the shape of the cross on the forehead of each, while speaking the words, "For dust you are and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19). This is of course what God spoke to Adam and Eve after they eaten of the forbidden fruit and fallen into sin. In the context of the Ash Wednesday imposition of ashes, they remind each penitent of their sinfulness and mortality, and, thus, their need to repent and get right with God before it is too late. The cross reminds each penitent of the good news that through Jesus Christ crucified there is forgiveness for all sins, all guilt, and all punishment.

With no flowers and no Gloria being sung during Lent the church building has a different atmosphere about it but what of the people?

The Church of England, with its rich history and commitment to both tradition and adaptation, has embraced Lent as a season of

reflection, repentance, and spiritual growth. Traditionally marked by fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, Lent invites believers to journey alongside Christ in his self-sacrifice and prepare their hearts for the resurrection celebration.

In the 21st century, the observance of Lent within the Church of England has taken on a renewed significance, navigating the complexities of modern life. The essence of Lent remains rooted in self-examination and devotion, but the expressions of these practices have evolved to resonate with contemporary believers.

Fasting, a hallmark of Lent, has expanded beyond the traditional abstention from food. Many individuals now choose to fast from social media, technology, or unhealthy habits, recognising that the sacrifice of personal indulgences can deepen their spiritual connection. The Church of England encourages this adaptive approach, acknowledging that the purpose of fasting extends beyond mere ritual to a transformative engagement with one's relationship with God. Often this abstention has been substituted by some action, bible reading, Lent Course, attendance at a service for example.

Prayer, another pillar of Lenten observance, has found new avenues in the digital age. Online prayer groups, interactive apps, and virtual prayer gatherings have become integral to the 21st-century Lenten experience. The Church of England has embraced these technological tools, recognising their potential to foster a global community of believers engaged in collective worship and spiritual support.

Almsgiving, the third pillar of Lent, has taken on a broader and more inclusive dimension. While financial generosity remains crucial, the Church of England emphasises the importance of giving time, talents, and compassion to those in need. The 21st-century Lenten journey encourages believers to actively engage in social justice initiatives, environmental stewardship, and community-building projects, reflecting the church's commitment to holistic transformation.

Compiled by William Holden

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AND STERIL NURSE & REFLECTOLOGIST

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MONEY MA££ERS - Figures for November 2023

Receipts

Planned Giving	£	3576
Income tax recovered	£	707
Community Centre Income	£	1582
Pay Donation Station/Sundry Donations	£	1618
Collections/Other giving	£	108
Fundraising	£	550
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£	8141

Payments

Parish Contribution	£	6304
Salaries	£	788
Utilities and Insurance	£	292
Rectory	£	347
Community Centre running costs	£	375
Sum Up/Bank Charges	£	5
Upkeep of services	£	430
Church running expenses/maintenance	£	1326
PCC Expenses	£	1044
Funds sent to Charity	£	70
TOTAL PAYMENTS	£	10981

Year to date deficit £52,324



MONEY MA££ERS - Figures for December 2023

Receipts

Planned Giving	£	3497
Income tax recovered	£	720
Community Centre Income	£	1282
Pay Donation Station/Sundry Donations	£	365
Collections/Other giving	£	55
Fundraising	£	2629
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£	8548

Payments

Parish Contribution	£	6304
Salaries	£	788
Utilities and Insurance	£	484
Rectory	£	326
Community Centre running costs	£	194
Sum Up/Bank Charges	£	5
Upkeep of services	£	14
Church running expenses/maintenance	£	123
PCC Expenses	£	786
Funds sent to Charity	£	220
Printing costs	£	213
TOTAL PAYMENTS	£	9457

Year end deficit £54,149



Date	Reading, Commemorations & Intentions Calendar for February (Year B)
THURS 1ST	Our City Council
FRI 2ND	All working in Care Homes
SAT 3RD	Aldrington School and its Teachers and staff
SUN 4TH	Second Sunday before Lent Proverbs 8. 1, 22-31 Colossians 1. 15-20 John 1. 1-14
MON 5TH	Kings School and its Teachers and staff
TUES 6TH	Diocesan Synod
WEDS 7TH	Religious Orders
THURS 8TH	Bishop Martin
FRI 9TH	Bishop Will
SAT 10TH	Bishop Ruth
SUN 11TH	Sunday next before Lent 2 Kings 2. 1-12 2 Corinthians 4. 3-6 Mark 9. 2-9
MON 12TH	Archdeacon Martin
TUES 13TH	Our Parish Representatives on Deanery & Diocesan Synods
WEDS 14TH	Our Parochial Church Council
THURS 15TH	Our Standing Committee

	Reading, Commemorations & Intentions Calendar for February (Year B)
FRI 16TH	Our Police Forces
SAT 17TH	All Christians in areas hostile to their faith
SUN 18TH	First Sunday of Lent Genesis 9. 8-17 1 Peter 3. 18-end Mark 1. 9-15
MON 19TH	All street pastors
TUES 20TH	All doctors, nurses and health workers
WEDS 21ST	All aid workers
THURS 22ND	Rev Jan, Jenny, Adam and Hannah
FRI 23RD	All NHS workers
SAT 24TH	Our Government and all Members of Parliament
SUN 25TH	Second Sunday of Lent Genesis 17. 1-7, 15-16 Romans 4. 13-end Mark 8. 31-end
MON 26TH	All refugees
TUES 27TH	Our local hospitals
WEDS 28TH	Rev Tim, Clare, Ben, Sammy and James
THURS 29TH	Tea and Tots

Tertullian: Pioneering Theologian and Early Church Father

In the annals of early Christian theology, Tertullian stands as a formidable figure, often regarded as the founder of Latin Christian literature and one of the earliest Western theologians. Born in Carthage (modern-day Tunisia) around 160 AD, Tertullian's life unfolded during a critical period of Christian development. His theological contributions, marked by fervent zeal and an uncompromising commitment to his beliefs, have left an indelible imprint on the shaping of Christian thought.

Little is known about Tertullian's early life, but his journey towards Christianity was undoubtedly influenced by the socio-cultural milieu of second-century Carthage. At the time, the Roman Empire grappled with religious pluralism, and Tertullian, a well-educated son of a Roman centurion, found himself drawn to the burgeoning Christian movement. Around 197 AD, he converted to Christianity, abandoning his previous affiliation with Stoicism.

Tertullian's impact on theology is multifaceted and enduring. His writings span a wide array of topics, ranging from apologetics and ethics to ecclesiology and eschatology. Among his notable contributions is his defence of Christian beliefs against prevailing philosophical and religious challenges. Tertullian engaged with pagan intellectuals, demonstrating the rationality of Christian doctrine, and emphasizing the inadequacies of pagan beliefs.

One of Tertullian's hallmark works is "Apologeticum" (Apologetic), a powerful defence of Christianity addressed to the Roman authorities. In this treatise, he argued that Christians were not enemies of the state but law-abiding citizens whose faith should be tolerated. His defence laid the groundwork for the later development of the Christian doctrine of religious freedom.

Tertullian also played a crucial role in the articulation of key theological concepts. His formulations on the nature of God, the Trinity, and Christology influenced subsequent Christian thinkers. Notably, he coined the term "Trinity" (Latin: trinitas) to express the complex relationship between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, although the full-fledged Trinitarian doctrine developed more fully in later centuries.

In his work "De Carne Christi" (On the Flesh of Christ), Tertullian delved into the mystery of the Incarnation, exploring the implications of Christ's dual nature as fully divine and fully human. His reflections on Christology contributed to the broader theological discussions that unfolded in the following centuries.

Despite his significant contributions to theology, Tertullian's later life was marked by controversy. Around 206 AD, he embraced Montanism, a charismatic movement that emphasized prophetic revelations and strict moral discipline. Tertullian's association with Montanism led to his eventual excommunication from the mainstream Christian community.

Tertullian's theological legacy extends beyond his own lifetime. His writings influenced Latin Christian thought for centuries, providing a foundation for later theologians such as Cyprian, Augustine, and Jerome. Even in his divergence from mainstream Christianity, Tertullian's ideas continued to shape theological discourse, prompting subsequent generations to engage with his writings.

Tertullian, the passionate and unyielding theologian of Carthage, played a pivotal role in the early development of Christian theology. His contributions to apologetics, doctrine, and the defence of Christian beliefs left an enduring mark on the trajectory of Western Christianity. Tertullian's intellectual fervour and unwavering commitment to his convictions exemplify the dynamism of theological exploration during the formative years of the Christian faith. Despite the controversies that marked his later life, his enduring impact is evident in the theological discussions and debates that unfolded in the centuries that followed.

William Holden

Psalm 55:22
Cast your cares on the LORD and he will
sustain you; he will never let the righteous be shaken.

And finally.....

Prayer for February 2024

Father, In this coldest and shortest of months, this month when traditionally thoughts turn to love and the promise of Spring, help us to be thankful and steadfast and to see Your bigger picture in what is sometimes a frightening world, a world where love between nations seems to be in short supply and the future uncertain.

We pray for all those whose lives are in turmoil through a lack of love and justice. Help us to remember the great love You have for Your world and Your people, so great that You sent Jesus to show us how to live, how to love and how to overcome the troubles of the world.

Thank you that Your love is stronger than the forces of evil, stronger than death. Help us to put our trust in Jesus, to keep our focus on Him, knowing He will never leave us or forsake us. Thank you that His love is stronger than the forces of evil, stronger than death. In his name, Amen.

By Daphne Kitching



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