

STAMP

MAGAZINE

SUMMER 2020

THE PARISH OF ST MARY & ST PAUL
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

50p

CONTENTS

From the Editor	3
An update on our parish life in these strange times	4
A Picture Worth A Thousand Words	6
Flowers for Cutting	8
Parish Pictures	10
Editor's Interview	11
Listening in Lockdown	14
How was lockdown for you?	16
Passing it on	20
Kitchen and Toilet in St Mary's	22
Bishop's Harvest Appeal 2020	25
Langa Township Pre-School Trust in the pandemic	26
Farewell to Revd Caroline	28

After all the problems we as a church and as individuals have experienced during the current pandemic I thought it was important to choose a front cover for this edition that would lighten our hearts.

Reading Roger's article on page 8, I was reminded of the wonderful flower arrangements we saw at the Flower Festival in St Mary's in 2012 celebrating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and I looked out this photograph for the cover that I took at the time to share with you.

We might be forgiven if we become somewhat blasé about the amazing flower arrangements we see every week in our two churches - but they truly are works of art. Do take some time occasionally to have a closer look at the displays and delight in the skill of the arrangers.

Thank you Ann R, Pat H, and Pauline P at St Paul's; Lynne S, Rhoda E, Cynthia N, Mary B, Jill M, Mary N, Maureen P, Dot F, Jill W and Jan P at St Mary's for gladdening our hearts.
JW

For the flowers are great blessings.
For the flowers have their angels,
Even the words of God's creation.
For the flower glorifies God
And the root parries the adversary.
For there is a language of flowers.
For the flowers are peculiarly
The poetry of Christ.

Christopher Smart 1722-71

FROM THE EDITOR

HICK'S GOLDEN RULE

Professor John Hick's (1922 -2012), the Scarborough-born and world -famous philosopher and theologian had a view on goodness expressed in his golden rule as, 'it is good to benefit others and wrong to harm them'. He saw this as a universal feature of humankind and confirmed this through his reference to the ethical convergence of several faiths, for example:

Christian 'as ye would that men should do to you, do ye likewise to them'

Muslim 'no man is a true believer unless he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself'

Taoist 'the good man will regard others gains as if they were his own, & their losses in the same way'

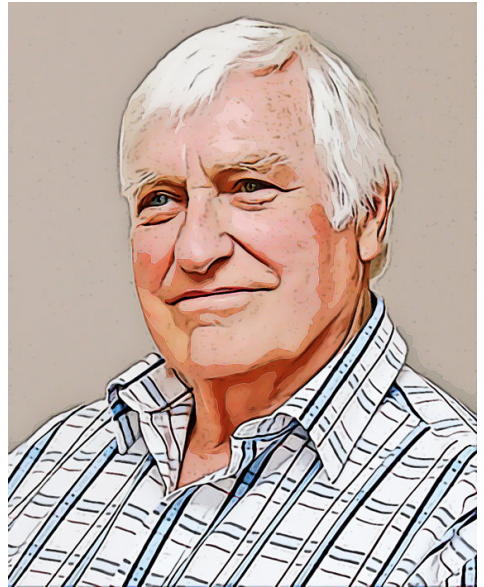
Hindu 'One should never do that to another which one regards as injurious to one's self'

Judaic 'What is hateful to yourself do not to your fellow man'

Buddhist 'As a mother cares for her son, all the days, so towards all living things man's mind should be all embracing'.

Hick concludes that in each case "it begins on the common ground of fair dealings and respect for other people's lives and property and leads on toward the higher ground of positive generosity, forgiveness, kindness, love and compassion".

Leading a pluralistic approach to religions, in Birmingham in the 1980's he was the founder and first chairman of All Faiths For One Race and among his many writings his 'Universe of Faiths' is worth a read. Taught in a Quaker school, and on a journey which took him through evangelism and Methodism he ended his life as a Quaker. In some circles he was regarded as heretical.



AN UPDATE ON OUR PARISH LIFE IN THESE STRANGE TIMES



It was good in these uncertain strange times to get back to regular worship in church in July, however the excitement of being back was rather mitigated by the fact that many of our regular congregation were still self-isolating at home and unable to attend; with others understandably cautious about coming back.

As well as this we were also initially unable to offer Holy Communion and there were more restrictions that have still not gone away; the sharing of the peace, singing and choirs, passing the collection plate and sharing refreshments after the service remain forbidden. In August we started giving Holy Communion – in one kind – which was a great delight and now as September starts we are about to reinstate weekday services.

We have moved as fast as possible (when dealing with BT and Open Reach that is not very fast at all!) to install Wi-Fi in both our churches so that in the new times we find ourselves in, and should there be a second lockdown, we can live stream services. St Paul's now has Wi-Fi up and running and a survey of St Mary's is pending which, we are told, will allow installation to happen soon.

At last we have been able to fix October 4th as the date for our Annual Parochial Church meeting. We will hold this at St Paul's so that we can social distance participants in the combined church and hall space and use the Wi-Fi to allow people who cannot attend to join us online. ▷

◁ Although the Pastoral Group has continued to monitor people and keep in touch by telephone, our work with the Residential Homes and our local schools has suffered during this pandemic. With schools returning in September there is still no sign of us being able to get children back into our churches in large numbers or groups and the hard work to establish 'Sausage Sunday' services, especially at St Paul's, has been put in abeyance. This may all change as we approach Harvest Festival and Christmas but with the Council cancelling the popular Old Town Halloween Event (which was our hugely successful parish Fresh Expression) there is little sign of change coming anytime soon.

Our work with young people in the parish has naturally been somewhat curtailed and we are struggling to keep children - who must remain with their family 'bubble' in the pews - happy and engaged. It is unlikely that this will change very soon and we are awaiting the return of children to school to see what we can learn from their new practices.

All of this threatens to make Christmas rather similar to the Easter we have just struggled through or with restricted ticketed services, and so the traditional Christmas Eve services may be online without a congregation or very much varied

from the norm. Ticketed services may make us sympathetic with local restaurants who have to live with last minute cancellations as part of their regular way of life. Somehow I don't think us taking a credit card deposit for pew places will wash!

Now that church is back it has been pleasing that our numbers are rising, with us exceeding planned numbers regularly at St Mary's and larger congregations also coming along to St Paul's (including families that had previously only attended the new family service).

The shape of our services is - of course - very different now with restrictions on singing, serving and much of the participation. An upside of this has been the use of the said responsorial psalm as a part of the regular Sunday liturgy in both churches.

Yes, the times have been unpredictable and tough but with St Paul's celebrating 60 years of the new church this year, and St Mary's having been around a few weeks longer, we have seen many challenges over the years and we will continue to meet those of today in the same prayerful and resolute way.

Canon John



A PICTURE WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

Global Thinkers Forum is an international non-profit organisation based in London with a core mission to promote values-based thinking and accountability in leadership. Launched in 2012 Global Thinkers Forum has a network of influencers and partners that reach more than 70 countries around the world and engages leaders across business, philanthropy, academia, science, civil society, NGOs and government.

A few weeks ago it invited its members to submit a photographic or literary entry to a competition with the following brief:

A World in Crisis Human Stories in the CoVid -19 Era

We invite you to share with us how Covid-19 has impacted your country, your life, your community, your way of thinking or someone you know.

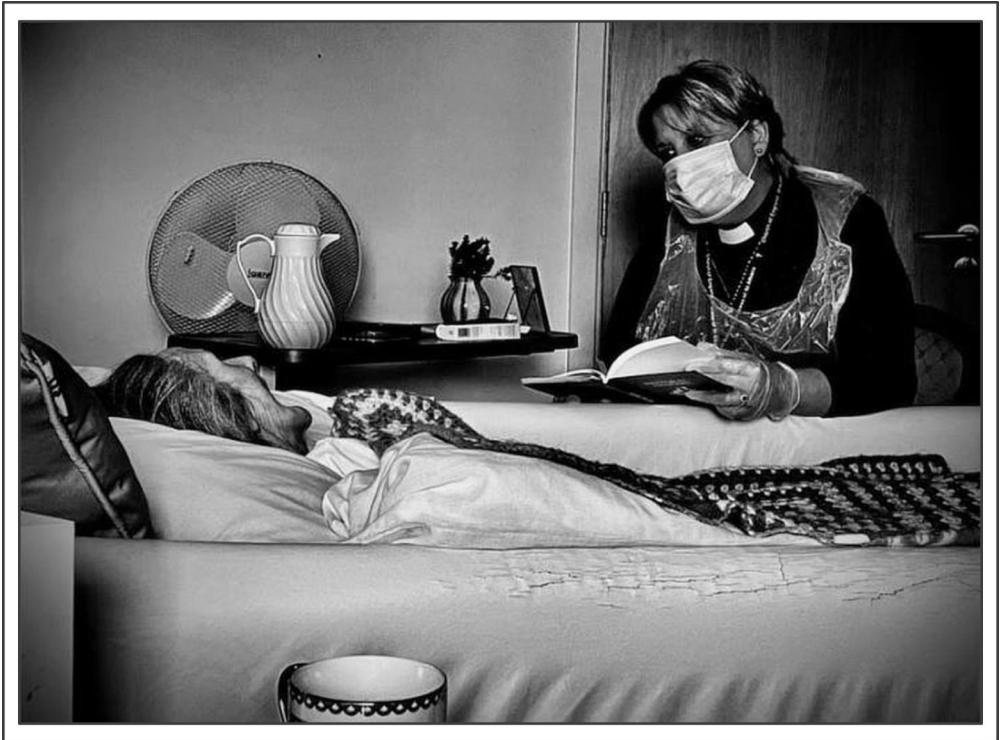
Charles Crawford submitted a photograph, reproduced on the next page, which he captured during a visit of Revd Caroline to his dying mother in a local nursing home. The photograph was awarded one of the three prizes* and is a moving and eloquent rebuttal of the then oft-repeated assertion, 'the church is closed'.



Charles Crawford CMG is a communication consultant who has drafted speeches for members of the Royal Family, Prime Ministers and other senior figures. He gives masterclasses in negotiation technique and public speaking / speechwriting. He is the former British Ambassador to Poland (2003-2007); Serbia and Montenegro (2001-2003); and Bosnia and Herzegovina (1996-1998). A barrister and mediator, he draws on 28 years' experience in the UK diplomatic service.

** The other two winning photographic entries were from Malawi and Belarus*

"Life and Death amidst Lockdown"



"My story describes the death of my mother during lockdown. The human spirit manifests in so many different ways. The reading of the last rites by Reverend Caroline shows us that even during a major health crisis, life is not about procedures and rules and 'distance'. Life is about good intentions and caring and love. They are never masked."

FLOWERS FOR CUTTING

Reflecting on this season now that we are in August shows that it has not been a good one for growing! The spring was extremely dry with no spring rain which is important for early growth. There were also some exceptionally hot days for that time of year. Then it was all change with the jet stream moving south and we experienced one day low pressure and another high wind. Despite all the challenges with the weather the enjoyment of growing plants is still there.

In my garden as well as growing vegetable I always have some space for a crop of cut flowers. I plan it so I have a succession of cut flowers throughout the season, i.e. from May – late September/early October depending on weather conditions.

My first crop is Sweet Williams, these are bi-annuals so I sow the seed in May the previous year. I prick them out into cell trays and when mature plant out in rows in early August. These will then overwinter in the garden and begin to flower early May. It is always good to give a bunch of these, mixed coloured, sweetly scented flowers to a friend.

The next crop is Freesias. The bulbs have become much cheaper over the last few years and readily available from most garden centres. I grow mine in pots, planting them in January with multi -purpose compost to half the depth of the pot, then ½ inch layer of silver sand(children’s play sand will do), set the freesia bulbs into the sand and back fill with more multi- purpose to within ½ inch of the top of the pot. Stand the pots in a garden frame or a sheltered spot in the garden.



Sweet William



Freesia

Freesias enjoy cool conditions and semi shade. Foliage will start to appear in March followed by flowering in late May/June. Stake them with 18 inch split canes placed around the edge of the pots linked by two levels of string. This crop should give you flowers, which are sweetly scented and mixed colours, for six to eight weeks.

My third crop is Gladioli, a rewarding flower with tall spikes of evenly spaced flowers. The choice of colours now is amazing. I tend to go for the loose corms rather than the prepacked ones as the quality is better. Most larger garden centres will stock these. I plant out the corms in early March, in rows, to a depth of six inches



Gladioli

putting a layer of silver sand at the base to prevent the chance of base rot. I start cutting blooms in July and continue to late August/early September.

Lastly, to complete the season I grow early Chrysanthemums, both spray and standard types. This crop I start as young plants, bought in from a specialist grower in March. They are potted into 3



Chrysanthemums

½ inch pots and grown on in a standing out area. After three – four weeks I remove the growing tips, this enables the plants to bush out producing three – four shoots. By late May/ early June pot on into 9 inch pots using a loam based compost or John Innes No.3. Place a four foot cane in the pot and liquid feed with seaweed every five days once the plant has settled into the pot. Flowering should start from September onwards giving you continuity of flowers until late October/ November depending on the weather of course!

These are some ideas for cut flower growing throughout the season. It is always rewarding to be able to give a bunch away. *Roger Sygrave*

PARISH PICTURES



New notice boards have been installed outside both St Paul's church and St Mary's Church Hall together with a directional sign in the hall car park at St Mary's.



When Gordon set about clearing the undergrowth from the car park at St Paul's during the July heat-wave, Alan and Tom, two of the Solway neighbours turned out to give him a hand.

EDITOR'S INTERVIEW

Marion Smith

Marion was born in Rusholme, Manchester in 1926 and, aged 4 ½, she moved to Bolton. Her childhood memories are very happy, but she lost her mother when she was 14. Thereafter she lived with her very caring grandparents who were a great influence on her. She feels a northern, Lancashire girl with beaches, moors and hills and tinkling streams always in her memories. An unhappy memory is of the Blitz in 1941 Sheltering in in a cellar, they were protected from the blast of a landmine by a railway embankment.

She loved schooldays at Bolton School, two quadrangles of buildings, one for girls and one for boys. 'Never the twain shall meet' and the girls were not allowed to look out of windows in case they might see a boy! Excelling at school, where she sang and took up the violin and the piano, she ended up as House Captain, Head Girl as well as captain for lacrosse, tennis and netball. Accepted into Manchester's world - famous Halle Choir, she went to London University to study English and then life changed for ever.



Aged 19 she met the 26 - year old Flight Lieutenant Harvey Smith, freshly demobbed and home from war service in North Africa and Italy. They married the following year. This was the start of a marriage, which lasted until Harvey's death in 2010. They have two children, Jenifer and Michael, and two grandchildren, Alice and Joseph. Over all these years Marion has had to adapt to a life on the move, having set up 10 households, including in Manchester, London, Cheshire, Lancaster and Paris, and finally ending with Harvey ▷

◁ in Hemel Hempstead in 1964, first in Box Lane and lastly in Garland Close. The latter related to Harvey wanting to be close to St Mary's as he prepared for the priesthood and at the time it was a good move.

Down the road in the High Street were three banks, two butchers, a Post Office and several others - no more, we regret to say!



Asking Marion about her early career, her answer was in those days girls were not expected to work and she 'was a kept woman' until the 1960's! However, she was not an idle woman and Harvey was very supportive as she became involved in many initiatives.

Politically left of centre, she joined the National Women's Citizen's Association, which started as part of the suffragette movement. Its main purpose was to educate and support women to take their place in public life. This group was influential in Parliament. She was very active in London and later in Cheshire organising and giving speeches, including moving a motion at the national conference on the need for nursery schools, which did not exist in those days.

Marion also was involved with the Girl Guide movement for 30 years. One day her daughter coming home said, 'we need a leader, you could do it'. She became a Captain and then a Camp Adviser and finally the Hertfordshire County Outdoor Activity Advisor. Guiding and Scouting were very significant in the county at that time, 17,000 boys and 16,000 girls being involved. Her special memories are of leading two expeditions, the first for two weeks to Norway's Lofoten Islands within the Arctic Circle and later to Nepal, round Annapura, the world's sixth highest mountain.

In the 1960's Marion started to teach part-time and in the 1970's she moved into Diocesan work.

As the St.Mary's Church representative, she was Chair of the Deanery Social Responsibility Committee. ▷

< For three years she trained at the Abbey through the Herts and Beds Counselling Foundation, and 350 hours of practical experience followed. From then on until she was 90 she was a Counsellor in private practice. She found the work very fulfilling, a lot of listening, a sort of detective work, helping people to find out what was going on in their lives and to move on. Basically, a Jungian approach, with the odd recourse to Freud, always aiming to be eclectic in her technique.

Marion was confirmed at University. She sees herself as 'middle to high church', but additionally is greatly fond of and moved by the Iona style of worship. Faith is part of her being and it needs no explanation. We talked about ethics, spirituality, religion and church.

What comes first? Is it spirituality followed by ethics out of which religions emerge needing buildings? Or is humankind essentially good, that is ethical, and this is the base for it all? How come that all religions throughout the world, however differently developed, have a similar ethical approach? We had no answers. However, in our time and in our country, Marion feels that the generality have lost their reverence for churches

It is almost as if going to church now is viewed as an insurance policy, a

'what if there really is a heaven and hell?' sort of thinking.

Marion became 'a curate's wife' for 20 years. Aged 70 Harvey was ordained and became a non-stipendiary priest at St Mary's. In 1946 he had started this journey at St.Chad's, Durham University but fled as, aged 26, he found that along with 18-year olds he was being treated like a schoolboy. Now he, finally fulfilled, was supported by Marion and she greatly enjoyed this part of their lives together.

Marion lives alone. Registered as blind, life is difficult, but she is grateful to be with us. She can see vague shapes and get about and she told me even that she can read the draft of this piece if I send it in bold and point 16. She does miss reading and painting and shopping. She quoted, 'old age is not for wimps'! The pandemic has been a great setback, for example she cannot go with Robin and Gill Woodd to the Proms, nor can she go to lectures at the Royal Institution nor to art galleries.

In this interview, as a Cumbrian, I met a brave and very lucid 'girl from the North'. I loved her straight forwardness and frankness and now it is privilege to be able to share her varied and very interesting story with the readers of STOMP.

GG 26 August 2020

LISTENING IN LOCKDOWN

In the 16th week of lockdown, whilst wondering how all of you have been managing, my mind focusses on the pending Summer issue of STOMP. One thing that I have been doing has been to listen to old 'pop music' on Spotify. It was a catching up on largely unknown or unremembered territory. Reflecting on what I have been listening to I remember during a tutorial the words of the Principal of Heythrop College, Dr McQuaid a leading British Jesuit thinker. He said that he best found God through music. Did he mean madrigals and Bach and Handel oratorios and psalms and hymns or more? Nobody asked the question – a pity I now realise!

Sitting here I think of the great force of Wesleyan hymns in the Methodist movement, of the power of gospel singing, both experienced as I have trawled YouTube for well-known hymns being sung in Africa.

But what has this got to do with 'pop songs'? Listening to quite a few of these this last week I've chosen just few by dating them and going into Google to read the lyrics, even using Wikipedia to get some background. The songs chosen range through the period 1959 to 1976. Choice was influenced by both the music and the themes of the lyrics. I was particularly interested in the timbre of the music and the inclusion of spiritual and ethical messages.

Peter Seeger's song of 1959 became an international hit when adopted in 1965 when The Byrds sang it as 'Turn! Turn! Turn! There is a Season'. It includes eight verses of Ecclesiastes III:1-8, ending with the song's own words, 'A time for peace, I swear its not to late'. In 1963 Bob Dylan first sang 'Blowing in the Wind', with its equivocal line concerning peace, 'it's dying in the wind'. ▷

◁ In 1970 Crosby, Still, Nash and Young issued 'Teach Your Children', concerning which a commentator saw it to 'reflect on societal implications of messages given to children about war and other issues'. In 1970 Paul McCartney sang, 'Let it Be', with the famous line 'Mother Mary speaks to me, Let it Be'. He had dreamt about his mother in 1968, she dying of cancer in 1956, and in that dream she had said to him, 'It will be alright, let it be'. In 1971 we had John Lennon's 'Imagine', with its key thought, 'Imagine all the people living in peace', seen to have been 'a humanistic paean for the people'.

The lyrics were inspired by a lecture by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and serve as a confessional. In 1973, inspired, by the common prayer book of a non-conformist church, George Harrison composed and sang 'Give me Love', 'Give me Peace'. In 1975 we had Hot Chocolate's, 'A Child's Prayer, including 'say a little prayer and give the Lord thy soul to keep'. In 1976 we had Cat Stevens', 'Peace Train'. Converting and now named Yusuf Islam he sang this song in New Zealand on 29 March 2019 at the memorial service for the Christchurch mosque shootings.

Many millions of people of all ages, but especially the young, have followed and listened with joy and even veneration to these sorts of songs and they live on with us.

Each song has its own genesis and its own story but there are many common features, such as a yearning for peace, a concern for others, a sense of time and of hope and of optimism, ideals with a resonance for people . Possibly like many others I listen to a song because of the tune, the singer and the group, remembering a few catchy words. In the lockdown I have gone further, looking at the lyrics and the stories. The revelation has been the thread of ethics and spirituality which come through.

Should you want sometime to follow this personal 'hit parade', let me also share with you Procol Harum's, 'Homburg'. This can only be fully understood if you read all the lyrics. It is a completely different sort of song issued in 1967, the genre described as 'baroque rock'. With a Bach-like tempo and capturing another side of pop music, the surreal and dreamlike imagery convey feelings of resignation and futility, a complete contrast in ending this article.

GG 4 July 2020



Gaining and Losing ...

HOW WAS LOCKDOWN FOR YOU?

We have been living through a momentous time. Generations from now, people will recall the time (the first time?) the world ground to a halt, people went into voluntary self-isolation and, for the first time in centuries, churches and other places of worship were closed and voices were no longer raised together in song and worship. Who could have envisaged the current situation a year ago? Governments around the world struggling to cope with a completely new situation – a world-wide pandemic and its aftermath?

None left untouched

None of us has been left untouched by this experience. For many of us it has been and will be a terrifying and difficult time. Many have suffered a debilitating social isolation, not meeting another human face for days and even weeks on end, nor hearing a friendly voice. Others have experienced real and worsening financial hardship because they slip through the cracks of government support, or are supporting members of their family who have lost jobs or

who have run into debt. Calls to domestic abuse helplines have increased significantly and perhaps most of the population has experienced an increase in anxiety as daily warnings proliferate, self-confidence oozes away and contagion rates start to climb again even as lockdown eases.

One Parish, supporting each other

However, 'Out of the strong came forth sweetness,' as the logo with the dead lion on Lyle Golden Syrup tins reminds us, referencing Samson's riddle in Judges 14. There is no situation so bad that the Holy Spirit cannot work through it to create something wonderful. None of us is untouched by Covid 19, but the touch is not all negative. We may struggle with the idea of our church buildings having been closed, but we have gained a true sense of church, of being one parish looking out for and supporting each other. Members of our church family have gone out of their way to connect with others and to serve them in any way possible, through phone calls, shopping, prayers, cheerful comments and photos on WhatsApp, coming into the churches to clean and refurbish, learning how to use new technology to share worship – the list is long. People have experimented online with different forms of worship, and have found solace in unexpected places. ▷

◁ More and more of us, through our own experience of social isolation, have learned what a crippling and painful condition loneliness can be, and so have become more aware of the suffering of those for whom isolation is a default position, and not a momentous but temporary aberration. Reaching out to others in empathy and love is a new habit we must maintain. Neighbours who were just on nodding terms have become good friends. People are more on the lookout for signs of despair, and are willing to do something about it now. Crises in mental health are no longer a shameful secret but genuine illnesses, needing loving support, not fear and prejudice.

Financially, it has become clear that governments must give adequate support to the Health Service at all times, and there is more willingness in society in general to take a little less to provide those in need with more.



Our support for the DENS Foodbank has increased (although a small extra donation every week by more people would be welcome as the need for food is likely to increase as financial pressures rise). Truly there are clear and wonderful benefits created by the Holy Spirit in the midst of a difficult and challenging time.

Substantial financial loss

As a parish, we have suffered very real and substantial financial losses. Income from letting our Halls disappeared overnight, and will take many months to build up again to previous levels, even assuming there is no second wave. Fundraising events have had to be cancelled. Being unable to attend church has meant that many have not maintained their regular giving by envelope or cash in the plate. No weddings mean no fees, and no First Sundays, baptisms and church openings have resulted in drastically reduced levels of casual giving by visitors. Capital works, like the toilet and kitchenette at St Mary's, and dealing with outside drainage at St Paul's, can go ahead thanks to generous bequests, but we are trying to keep this money for use on major innovations and refurbishments, (things that we would find it difficult to fund otherwise) not the day-to-day running of the parish. We are deeply overdrawn on our budget for the year. Money for salaries for cleaners and our parish administrator; for heating, lighting and insurance; for service and parish printing costs; for the hundreds of incidentals like candles, stamps, cleaning materials, etc. – we will be severely challenged to meet these demands from our severely reduced income. ▷

◁ Above all, we will struggle to pay our parish share this year. The parish share is the contribution made by each parish towards clergy salaries. It's not a direct link, but the money we give goes into a central fund and is used for clergy salaries throughout the church. This means that parishes in deprived, low income areas can get a priest as easily as the wealthiest parish in the land. Some churches, however, have so little income that that they are forced to default on their parish share, and this year we know it will be infinitely worse. If even we, who have never defaulted before, are genuinely looking at this possibility, how many churches will be unable to make their full contribution this year?

The Diocese (and the Church of England as a whole) will inevitably have to make their own economies to pay clergy salaries – they cannot allow the numbers of paid clergy to drop much lower if the Church is to continue in its calling in this country. But they cannot do it alone, and they cannot sustain this level of economising for a long time without drastic change.

What can we do?

So what can we do to meet our day to day costs and to pay our parish share in full? Again, it is a question of gaining and losing.

- If, as a result of Covid 19, your financial position is significantly worse, please pray for a solution, and for the growth and life of the Church, both in this parish and nationally.
- If your income is about the same, please pray AND please consider donating the sum you might have spent on fundraisers like the Parish Fair or Art in the Nave.
- If you normally give weekly in the plate, please pray AND please make up any missing weeks over the last few months, if you can.
- ...If you are a net gainer financially over the Covid 19 period, because your income is fixed and your outgoings have diminished over lockdown, please pray AND please think about making a one-off donation to the parish from some of your surplus.

Donations may be given to John or the churchwardens. Please Gift Aid if you are eligible. ▷

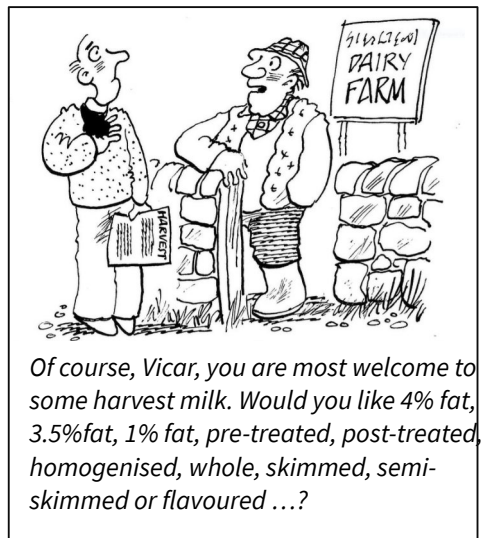


◁ It is said that an ancient Chinese curse is: 'May you live in interesting times.' Well, we are certainly doing that. This period will be remembered many decades after all of us have gone to glory! But perhaps it can be remembered not just as a time of economic, mental and emotional suffering, but as a genuine turning point. A time when we reached out to neighbours, and when we realised the inter-connectedness of all the people on our planet. When we seized the chance to rebuild in a more eco-friendly and sustainable way, when we learned compassion for mental as well as physical suffering and came truly to appreciate our health service and its dedicated workers. A time when we learned to demand less and to give more. And perhaps it will be a time in the parish of St Mary and St Paul when we rejoiced in mutual support, in giving what we could and in coming together to maintain both the buildings and the spirit of our churches.

Norma Podmore

Olny srmat poelpe can raed this

I cdnuolt blveiee taht I cluod aulacly uesdnatnrd waht I was rdanieg. It's the phaonmneal pweor of the hmuan mind. Aoccdrnig to rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mtttaer in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoatnt tihg is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe. Amzanig! And I awlyas tghuhot slpeling was ipmorantt!



PASSING IT ON



I've made myself comfy
to watch the marathon.
The runners run in relays.
The race goes on and on.
Some runners have been running
for nearly all their life.
Some runners have been running
since Eve was Adam's wife!

So now I watch them running
along with the racing track.
Some of them look forward.
Some of them look back!
They're looking out for someone
to pass the baton to
to carry on the race
and run on leg like new.

One runner just gets slower
as they crawl along the ground.
They want to pass the baton on,
but there's no one around.

Another runner wobbles by
with batons everywhere:
underneath their armpits,
some stuck in their hair,
underneath their chin
and in between their knees,
and only ever drop them
if they get chance to sneeze!
And when they pick them up again
from falling to the floor,
they see a runner struggling,
so take one baton more!

Another baton, small and bright
is passed from hand to hand,
but the runners are so busy
so all they do is stand.

I saw a struggle breakout
when a runner, bright and new,
tried to take the baton
but couldn't run on through.
The older runner kept right on
with baton holding tight,
because he was running left right left
and she was right left right!

A tumble nearly happened
when runners ran and found
a pile of unused batons
littering the ground.

But as I sat there watching
a wonder met my eyes.
Someone from the streets
heard the runners cries.
They never had run before
But held the runners hand,
and soon they shared the baton
as if it had been planned.

And soon it seemed that everyone
was running fresh and bright
and found that other runners
were warming up in sight.

But I could see a runner
leaning on a tree.
I felt a bit excited
and wondered 'could it be
that I could be a runner
and do my little bit
or should I just stay comfy
and watch from where I sit?'

That day I took the challenge
and started something new.
I wonder, when I've done my bit
can I pass it on to you?

Revd Austin Janes
July 2020



KITCHEN AND TOILET IN ST MARY'S



The provision of 'Facilities' in St Mary's was first discussed at a Fabric Committee meeting back in 2012 after I had seen something similar in the Church in Askrigg. A little research established a likely cost of around £50k and the likely hood of a lot of challenging permissions. So the idea was shelved as an unrealistic financial and administrative mountain.

However after Richard Salisbury died in 2014 it became more of a possibility but was put into third place behind ideas for revamping St Mary's Hall and replacing St Paul's windows and doors.

Through 2014 and 2015 St Mary's had difficulties with the Diocesan Advisory Committee over Faculty permission for work to the North Porch and the Choir Vestry re-roofing so at the beginning of 2016 the decision was taken that the design of a Kitchen and toilet would need a Specialist Architect . Michael Dales was appointed in late February 2016 and commissioned on a limited budget to prepare possible schemes. It was still only a possibility to be investigated.

Michael's advice was that piecemeal development in churches was frowned on by the 'Authorities' and so he should prepare a plan for the re-ordering of the west end of St Mary's which would include a kitchen and toilet which could be constructed as Phase 1. ▷



◁ In early June 2016 he submitted proposals to start discussion which included a glass enclosed room at the west end of the South Aisle, an internal glass lobby to the west door and options for a toilet and kitchen at the west end of the North Aisle.

Sadly Jenny Hill left the Parish in June and so decision making had to be put on hold until a new Vicar/Rector had been appointed. But the discussions and meetings continued most notably with the DAC and Historic England in November 2016. Following this meeting the outline proposals were given qualified approval.

Canon John Williams arrived in April 2017 and making a decision about the toilet and kitchen was not his first priority as plans for renovating St Mary's Hall and St Paul's windows were more advanced but background progress continued. One of the two short list options was chosen and a Quantity Surveyor estimate was commissioned to give a first real feel for the likely construction cost.

This overlapped with getting the Quinquennial inspection organised and moving forward with the Specifications and Approvals for the North Porch and the Vestry re-roofing works long planned and so progress on the Kitchen and toilet slowed.

In December 2017 the Hall renovation work was instructed and attention in the early part of 2018 concentrated on this. But through the year the more detailed Drawings for the Toilet and Kitchen were prepared – despite a late decision to change one of the previously rejected options. So in July 2018 the formal Faculty and Historic England approvals were applied for. ▷

◁ Negotiations with the Diocese about a drainage connection also started. Historic England had some initial reservations but were too committed on other things to discuss them, and the Chancellor gave them an ultimatum that if they failed to do so by a date in January or he would grant permission. They did not respond so Faculty approval was granted in January 2019.

Work then started on the detailed Drawings and Specification and obtaining the Permissions needed from Thames Water and the legal licence from the Diocese for a foul drain connection to be made into a manhole in the Rectory back garden – thank you John!

Tender enquiries were sent out in October 2019 and returned in the lead up to Christmas with a decision on the Contractor made in January 2020 for a March start date - before we knew about 'lockdowns' and Covid!

Work started properly at the end of May and the Project was formally handed over to us on the 27th August, the cost being a little over £92,000

I cannot end without saying thank you to Richard Salisbury for making it all possible, to Margaret and Norman Quail for the very attractive and unique handles adorning the kitchen doors and the Friends of St Mary's for contributing generously. Inevitably the cost is greater than the Quantity Surveyors 2017 estimate, but the Contractor's Final Account will be below the Contract sum and, quite properly, the final quality is better than he assumed – thank you Architect and Contractor.

I think it looks good and fits in well and I hope you do too. Hopefully our ancestors would also approve. Just imagine the difference it would have made to all those community events that the church has hosted over its 850 years. And hopefully it will continue in service for the next 850 years

But first we need to try out the kitchen facilities for ourselves with an after church coffee and chat, so roll on the end to Covid restrictions.

Robin Woodd



BISHOP'S HARVEST APPEAL 2020

Dear friends,

The UN tells us that, of the one hundred crop species that provide 90% of the world's food, more than seventy are pollinated by bees. Promoting beekeeping is, therefore, not just good for the people of Nepal directly affected by this project, but also good for the well-being of their country and its ecology, and that of neighbouring countries. St John of Chrysostom said: 'The bee is more honoured than other animals, not because she labours, but because she labours for others.' Please join me, this Harvest, in honouring not just the people of Nepal, but also the humble and essential bee who sets an example to us all in these times.

+Alan St Albans

**CREATING
A BUZZ
IN NEPAL**

WITH
**THE BISHOP OF ST ALBANS'
HARVEST APPEAL 2020**

Meet Manish: Pastor,
Beekeeper, Entrepreneur

**'FOR THE LORD
YOUR GOD WILL
BLESS YOU IN ALL
YOUR HARVEST AND
IN ALL THE WORK OF
YOUR HANDS, AND
YOUR JOY WILL
BE COMPLETE.'**
(DEUTERONOMY
10:1-5)

**DIOCESE OF
ST ALBANS**
Living God's Love

tearfund

Our Bishop's Annual Harvest Appeal this year will help many people in Nepal. In 2015, Nepal suffered immense loss and devastation in two major earthquakes; thousands of lives were impacted- 9,000 people died, communities made homeless, infrastructures collapsed and livelihoods completely lost.

In more recent years, however, the Nepalese people are growing to appreciate the value of beekeeping. Bees help to maintain the fragile biodiversity, as pollinators, to enhance crop production and a good income can be generated from sales of honey. It has been estimated that the country of Nepal can sustain 125,000 beehives; presently, there are around 26,000, showing there is significant opportunity.

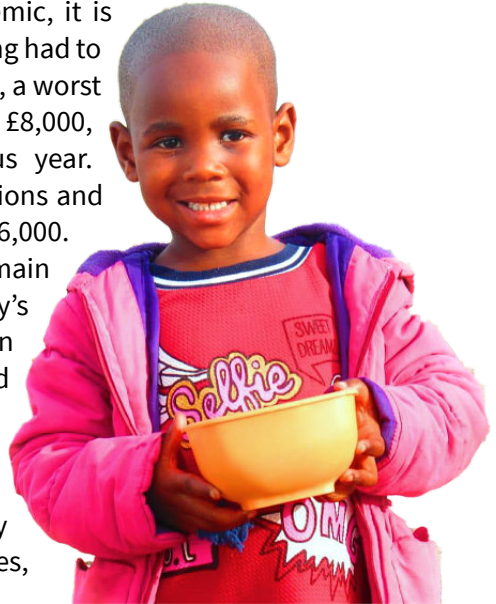
There is more information here:

www.stalbans.anglican.org/faith/bishop-s-annual-harvest-appeal/



LANGA TOWNSHIP PRE-SCHOOL TRUST IN THE PANDEMIC

With Cape Town badly hit by the pandemic, it is timely to report on the work of LTPT. Having had to cancel our events programme for 2020/21, a worst scenario budget showed an income of £8,000, compared with £38,000 in the previous year. Happily, there has been a surge of donations and income is more likely to be around £16,000. Previously we have reported that LTPT's main support base is the members of St Mary's and St Paul's. This has been proven again recently. Two special appeals in April and May raised £4,200, 50% of which came from members of the two churches. The appeals were focussed on providing the six pre-schools we support with sanitary items such as plastic gloves, wet wipes, hand wash and sanitisers.



My life has been greatly eased by the cancellation of the events programme and therefore it has been possible to put more effort into other support for the Trust. Jeff Wallis and I have completely revised the website,

(www.langapreschooltrust.uk).

Newsletter 35 is a bumper 8-page issue and Jeff has designed a Christmas card.▷

◁ On a wider front I have developed close contacts with the Bishops Diocesan College in Cape Town's Rondebosch and with its major initiative in Langa, the VUSA Rugby and Learning Academy. VUSA is isiXhosa for 'awaken' and the Academy is working wonders in the township. This, and all of our recent work, is covered by an article in Newsletter 35, accessible on our website: www.langapreschooltrust.uk. A hard copy of the newsletter will be available soon at the two churches.

Finally, we have just been contacted by the Langa Early Child Development Forum, covering 35 crèches and pre-schools and 8,000 children. They have asked for our help, which took my breath away. By coincidence two long-standing friends celebrate their golden wedding anniversary over a dinner in September. Thoughtfully and generously they have suggested that should guests feel the need to mark the occasion donations to LTPT would be welcome.

This gives the Trust unanticipated income and we have committed to send £1,000 to the Forum in September to contribute to food and learning materials, a drop in the ocean of need I'm afraid, but a gesture of support.



Children from Langa Township wait (socially distanced) for their lunch cooked at Bishops Diocesan College kitchen and served at Nomonde Pre-School by coaches from VUSA Rugby and Learning Academy

Gordon Gaddes

FAREWELL TO REVD CAROLINE AND FAMILY



On Sunday 9th August a group of parishioners enjoyed a socially distanced picnic to say farewell to Revd Caroline who was leaving to take up her new post in Waddesden, Bucks. The afternoon was very hot but sitting under the trees in the churchyard sipping John's Prosecco made for a very enjoyable afternoon to wish Caroline, Chris, Jonny and Bobby every blessing in their new home.

THE PARISH OF ST MARY & ST PAUL

The Clergy

The Revd Canon John Williams 01442 265272:

The Revd Luke Geoghegan

The Revd Richard Leslie

The Revd. Diana Spink 01442 262133

Parish Office

Norma Howie 01442 253977

Church Wardens

St Mary's: Norma Podmore: 01442 248535:

Emmeline Lambert 01442 268705

St Paul's: Gordon Gaddes: Tel: 01442 257920

Hall Bookings:

For St Mary's and St Paul's Halls:

Norma Howie 01442 253977

StOMP Magazine

hello@stmaryandstpaulhemel.org.uk

Editor: Gordon Gaddes

Design: Jeff Wallis

The Parish of St Mary & St Paul

Reg. Charity no 1130644

