

# Parish News

**St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden**

**St John, Little Walden and St James, Sewards End**

**Part of Saffron Walden & Villages Team Ministry**



**November 2023**

**FREE**

## The Ordination of Rev'd Ella Harris as Priest



Rev'd Ella Harris was ordained Priest at St Peter ad Vincula, Coggleshall by the Bishop of Colchester, the Rt Rev'd Roger Morris, in a service on Saturday 30th September 2023, together with other candidates from the Stansted and Harlow Archdeaconries. Attendance was by invitation as space was limited, but the service can still be watched on YouTube at:-  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=54X4reAxQ-8>

Before the service, Ella said, "I'm eagerly anticipating my Priesting this Saturday, and am overwhelmed by the support shown from members of our Churches. Right now, I'm reflecting and praying on these words of the ordination service: 'You cannot bear the weight of this calling in your own strength, but only by the grace and power of God. Pray therefore that your heart may daily be enlarged and your understanding of the Scriptures enlightened. Pray earnestly for the gift of the Holy Spirit.'"

Team Rector and Area Dean, Rev'd Jeremy Trew, said, "Ella has brought great skill and insight into her role in her first year. Her ordination as priest is confirmation that she is appreciated and is making a difference."

Originally from Widdington in Essex, Ella now lives in Saffron Walden with her husband Toby.

Clifford Want

*Photograph: Rev'd Alex Jeewan, Team Vicar for the Cam Village Churches; Rev'd Ella Harris; Bishop of Colchester, the Rt Rev'd Roger Morris; Rev'd Jeremy Trew, Area Dean and Rector of St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden.*

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## PARISH NEWS - EDITORIAL DEADLINE

The deadline for contributions for each issue is the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the previous month. Hence, the deadline for the **December-January** issue is **Sunday 5th November**.

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**St Mary's Church Website:**

[www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org](http://www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org)

## The Rector's Letter

From The Rev'd Jeremy Trew

Jeremy writes...

November is very much a month of remembering in the Christian calendar. We begin with the remembrance of All Saints and All Souls where we recall those who have gone before us, both the saints of old and those we have known and loved in our own lives. We mark Remembrance Sunday so that we may not forget the sacrifices made by so many in wars past and present. And, at the end of the month we mark "Christ the King", reminding us of this particular role of Jesus as the revealer of God's Kingdom here on earth.



All of these remembrances bring with them a challenge: A challenge that we remember honestly and that we try in our own way to honour the legacy left to us. The Bible calls all God's people "Saints". This is not a title for an elect few only, but a recognition that each who choose to follow Jesus have a special role to play in God's ongoing work of creation. Likewise, Remembrance Sunday can cause us to reflect how as a nation we live with the legacy of wars fought and sacrifices made in the freedoms we enjoy today. Our stewardship of those freedoms for ourselves and future generations is our real act of honouring those who died. Likewise, when we reflect on the kingship of Jesus, we are challenged to consider what that kingship means: What does Jesus want us to understand when he talks about the Kingdom, and what kind of King is he? As we approach Christmas and begin once more to rehearse its stories we may begin to get a clue.

May our remembering not just allow us to dwell on the past, but also to reflect upon it, and in the light of that reflection to understand our task in the present all the more.

Yours

Jeremy



## A Prayer for November

*provided by the Prayer Team*

Many have loved, since school days, the simplicity of this prayer - especially when sung (tunes by Walford Davies and more recently John Rutter). It originates at least from the late 15th Century having been found in France. It was adopted by various collections of prayers in Britain -including the Book of Hours, from Salisbury Cathedral (1514). Today it can be found in the hymn books of all the major Christian denominations:

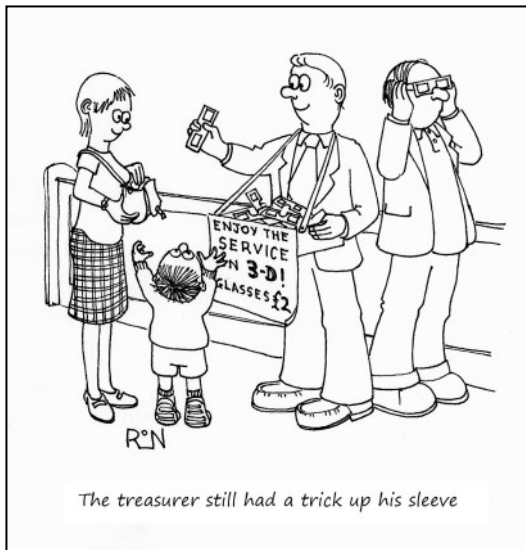
God be in my head and in my understanding;  
 God be in my eyes and in my looking;  
 God be in my mouth and in my speaking;  
 God be in my heart and in my thinking;  
 God be at my end and at my departing.

A simple prayer that invites God to fill every part of our lives, and affects every aspect of them.

## From the Registers

### Weddings

2 Sept - Dane Karaman & Francesca Riordan  
 9 Sept - Jordan Dawes and Kate Gunton  
 16 Sept - Christian Shaw and Elizabeth Stephani



## Stand by for the Politics

The Climate Crisis has well and truly entered the political arena! Whether it is the revision of the electric cars deadline, the postponement of the end of gas boiler sales, the opening of a coal mine in Cumbria or the granting of licences to drill for oil and gas in the Rosebank, the two main parties are positioning themselves for the general election on this topic.

In some ways this is good news. Ever since I became concerned about our environmental crises, I have been hoping that they would get onto the national agenda, and was always disappointed. It featured as a minor issue in the 2019 General Election but was dwarfed by Brexit.

Of course it is an issue that should transcend party politics. The future of humanity on this planet is such an overwhelmingly vast issue you would think there was bound to be common ground: the survival of our children and grandchildren. But politics is fraught with the short termism of courting electoral popularity, and international relations are fraught with conflicting national self-interests.

Added to that are massive business corporations, deeply invested in fossil fuels, which exercise their power in this country, world-wide, and perhaps most conspicuously in the USA, through lobbying and political donations.

One argument that is commonly used is that the poor will suffer most from the switch to renewable energy. This all depends on who you define as ‘the poor’. Globally the world’s poor are already suffering and dying from our failure to halt and reverse climate change. Those who have contributed least to the problem are losing their crops, livestock and water supplies in deep and prolonged droughts.

Compared to that, the challenge of switching time-expired and inefficient domestic boilers in poorer households to heat pumps seems an eminently soluble problem. Similarly for small, struggling businesses often dependent on petrol driven vans, the interplay of subsidies, inducements, taxes and regulations needs to be carefully managed to aid the inevitable transition.

Meanwhile, as the issue enters the political arena, claims are made about how we compare to other countries, how we are ‘world leaders’ in this or that, or how we will meet our ‘legally binding commitment’ by 2050, but need to ‘max out on oil’ just for now. The planet, of course, takes no notice of such boasts. Every tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> we pump into the atmosphere is going to be doing damage for centuries to come, until our great, great grandchildren extract it. Trees alone simply can’t keep up with our emissions. What matters is how many tonnes we put up there *between* now and net zero.

There is a beautiful world to enjoy if we can plot a course to get there. A

world in which every country is self-sufficient in clean, renewable energy, whether wind, wave, geothermal, tidal, solar, hydro.... Every day God's creation gives us more energy than we can possibly use. This could be energy owned by communities for their own benefit rather than by multinational companies for their own vast profits; secure energy that does not lead to international tensions, blackmail or war; energy that is affordable for everyone so that no one has to choose between heating or eating. A wonderful world!

We need our politicians to take the lead, but let's not let politics stand in the way.

Edward Gildea, Eco Team Leader



Photograph: Celia Bartlett



## Harvest Festival Gifts for Uttlesford Foodbank

St Mary's Church held its family Harvest Festival on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> September, preceded by breakfast. Appropriate harvest gifts were received for the Uttlesford Foodbank. The singing of the harvest hymns was ably led by the Junior Choir. During the service the congregation broke up into groups to join in harvest-related activities.

Clifford Want

See a photograph of the Junior Choir on page 23 taken by Martin Hugall

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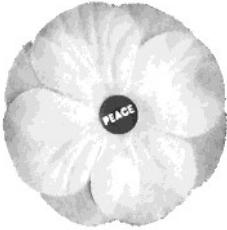
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## Remembrance – Praying for Peace – Wear a White Poppy



If asked, we would all confirm that we abhor war and all the resulting damage both humanly physical and mental, together with the wanton destruction of buildings and also the heritage of the country being attacked.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month we will think of the 1.5 million killed as a result of WW1 & WW2 and it is right that we continue the declamations of The Co-operative Women's Guild in 1933, when the first white poppies were distributed – Never Again !

The Royal British Legion cares for and supports the 1.8 million former service personnel currently resident in the UK, 32% of whom were over 80 in the 2021 census. We wear a red poppy to mark and support them.

On 21 September it was International Day of Peace and the United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres said "For people and for planet alike, we can and must push for Peace. It is our most fundamental job".

It is staggering that over 108 million people are forcibly displaced from their homes and communities are wrecked as a result of violence, conflict, human rights violations and persecution – and year on year this appalling figure escalates (UNHCR). 52% of those currently displaced by war are from Syria, Ukraine and Afghanistan.

Sadly of the 108 million, 43 million are children – 30% of whom are separated from their families and the United Nations strives to relocate them. Ukraine has suffered hugely with almost 10,000 deaths, 18,000 injured but a shocking 27,500 civilian casualties, 1,000 of which were children! Other displacements resulting from war are from Yemen, Sudan, Azerbaijan, Ethiopia and record numbers transiting through Central America and Mexico – 390,000 as of 23 September.

The power of prayer is great and we must pray earnestly for PEACE for these war-torn countries, their people and aggressors - and for our planet. Collect and wear a White Poppy – there are fabric and paper (recyclable) ones this year. They will be free to collect in the weeks before Remembrance Sunday at the West and South doors and in the choir vestry.

Diana Hoy

## How about advertising in Parish News?

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If you are looking for a final resting place for a loved one, please bear in mind Radwinter Road Cemetery where the gates are always open and there is tranquility within. For further information please contact Elaine Baynes, Cemetery Officer, at Saffron Walden Town Council, Market Street, Saffron Walden, CB10 1HR. Telephone: 07769 167 179 or email [elaine@saffronwalden.gov.uk](mailto:elaine@saffronwalden.gov.uk)

<https://saffronwalden.gov.uk/services/cemetery/>

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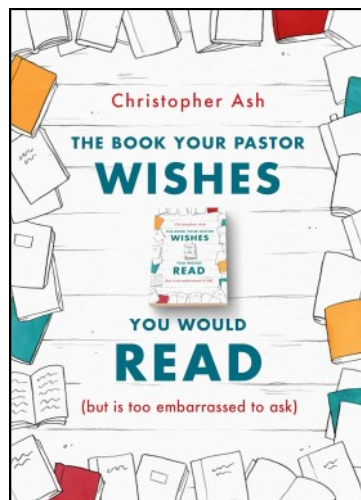
## A book about Clergy wellbeing

The wellbeing of the clergy and of church employees is very important. Working in the Church is a vocation, but it is also a job, and, as the book reminds us, clergy are people just like the rest of us, with their own backgrounds and expectations, and they work best when they feel cared for, encouraged and supported by their congregations.

This is why Christopher Ash wrote *“The Book your Pastor Wishes you Would Read”* (but is too embarrassed to ask), published by the Good Book Company. Ash, by the way, was formerly the vicar at Little Shelford and is now at St Andrew the Great in Cambridge and he spoke at Saffron Walden Bible Focus a couple of years ago. The Secretary of the Saffron Walden Deanery Synod liked his book so much that she offered five free copies to the first to ask, so I asked for one. In the book, Ash explains that pastors need appropriate houses, rates of pay and days off, but he also suggests that being paid to attend conferences, having a reading budget and even study leave sabbaticals can help keep church workers refreshed. Perhaps us congregation members taking responsibility for our own spiritual growth is one of the things that can hearten church employees the most, because Ash describes how he loves it when people thank him for sermons, or interact with points he has made, and how rewarding it can be to see signs of genuine vibrant spiritual lives in the congregation. Clergy have families, and we are enjoined to care for them too.

Reading the book I was very grateful that in the Church of England there is a good structure for ensuring that a lot of these matters are handled by experts within the Diocese, but I was also aware that there are lots of things that PCCs and other church members can do to care for our workers, and I was challenged to wonder whether there was more that we ought to do. The call to holiness, a vision of what a spiritually vibrant church should look like, and the need to have high expectations of our workers and to challenge them occasionally, sounds like a difficult balance to achieve but something worth striving towards. We usually expect church workers to look after us, but the irony of the situation is that Clergy are part of the Universal Church too, so it is only when we support and look after them that they can help us the most. If you would like to read a copy, please ask me.

Anna Martin





## Open Day 23rd September 2023

WOW What a day that was!! Beyond our wildest expectations with 319 people attending the event. They enjoyed the festive feel of the Church with the banners, hanging from the columns, made by Tessa Hawkes and depicting the various projects etc that we have been involved with over our 90 years.



The Archive displays going back to the late 1800's, the history of the kneelers and banners, some banners hanging from the rood screen. The display stands around the Church giving details of our many projects. The fun of the quizzes for both adults and children which involved searching around the Church to find the answers and, of course, the coffee and cake of which there was plenty thanks to all the donations. We would also like to welcome all the new members who joined on the day, it is so good to have you on board, we now have almost 100 members which will really help us to help maintain St Mary's in all its beauty for generations to come. Finally a big personal THANK YOU from me to all the members who worked really hard on the Friday and on the day to give everyone a huge welcome and make it such a special day not forgetting two ladies from the Mothers' Union.

Pamela Mugliston, Secretary

*(Photo: curtesy of The Walden Local)*



**Cathedral Trips** The Cathedral visit to Norwich on **17th November** is fully booked but reserves are always welcome just in case. Pick up times are on the website and an email reminder will be sent. Plans are already being made for our next visit which will be to Rochester in the spring, England's second largest Cathedral. Once details are in place an email will be sent to all members, complete with a booking form, these will be dealt with on a first come first served basis as we are always limited depending on the various Cathedrals and their tour numbers. Come and join us for an interesting and fun day out.



Have you noticed some new **brass badges** on the Welcomers for first and second Sunday 10.30am services? Both of those teams are Friends' members which is fantastic. We have calculated that over 25% of members play an active part in the life of the Church as well as supporting St Mary's financially where we can.



Kristina Coleman  
ARCM

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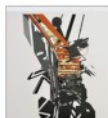
Monday 6<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2023



Shirley Felts



Gaia Shaw



Neil Shrubbs



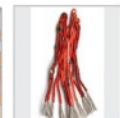
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# The Calendar

*This calendar is provisional. See The Grapevine or the church website for the latest information.*

## St Mary's, Saffron Walden

One service in church each Sunday is streamed on YouTube [Y]: details on the church website. Coffee is served after the Sunday 10:30 services

### Thursday 2 November

10am Silent Prayer in the North Chapel

### Sunday 5 November - All Saints Day

8am BCP Holy Communion  
10.30am Holy Communion [Y]  
4pm All Souls Service

There will be no H2H Service on November 5th - the young people have been invited to an event by the Faraday Institute for Science and Religion at the URC.

### Sunday 12 November

8am BCP Holy Communion  
11.15am British Legion Remembrance Service [Y] following the Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial with silence at 11am  
4pm Words and Music for Remembrance with Compline

### Sunday 19 November

8am BCP Holy Communion  
10.30am Holy Communion [Y]  
4pm Living Stones Service in the Parish Rooms

### Saturday 25 November

10am - 1pm Christmas Fair in St Mary's Church

### Sunday 26 November - Christ the King

8am BCP Holy Communion [Y]  
10.30am Family Service  
4pm Taizé Service



## Regular weekday services at St Mary's

### Tuesdays

5pm Evening Prayer by Zoom, see weekly bulletin for login detail

### Wednesdays

8am Morning Prayer  
9.30am Holy Communion (1st Wednesday with Prayers for Wholeness and Healing)





## St James', Swards End

**Sunday 5 November**

10.30am Holy Communion

**Sunday 12 November**

3pm Remembrance Service

**Sunday 19 November**

10.30am Morning Praise



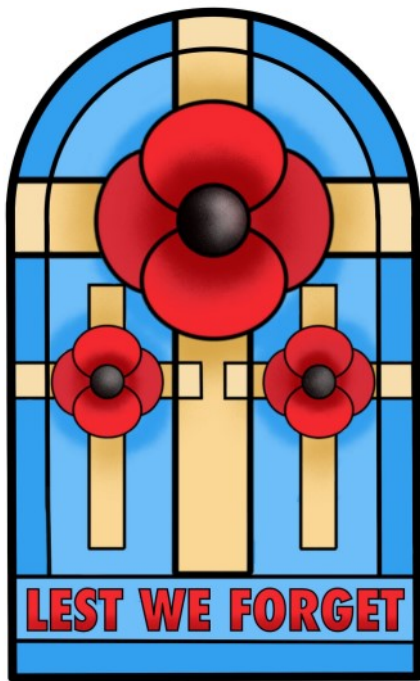
## St John's, Little Walden

**Saturday 11 November**

10.30am Remembrance Service

**Sunday 26 November**

10.30am Holy Communion



## St Cuthbert's Way

"Ever thought about doing a pilgrimage?" asked a friend, who knew that Sarah and I enjoy walking holidays. We hadn't, being unable to set aside sufficient time to do the Camino to Santiago and having already visited Walsingham (only by car). But when we started looking into St Cuthbert's Way, the appeal proved irresistible. The walk looked short-ish, not too difficult and would take us to a part of the country neither of us had been to before. The route connects Melrose, in the Scottish Borders, where St Cuthbert began his religious life, with Holy Island, his original burial place.

Cuthbert (634-687) was, with Aidan and Bede ("ABC"), one of the inspirational figures of the early Church in England, particularly in Northumbria, where he spent almost all his life. As Prior of Melrose Abbey, he attended the Synod of Whitby (664), when it was agreed that the Roman's Christian customs should supersede Celtic ones. He became Prior and then Bishop of Lindisfarne before retiring to the Farne Islands. Fear of his body falling into Danish hands meant that his coffin was repeatedly moved around Northumbria after his death, including Durham.

In mid-September, we met up with friends from Rickling Green (and their black Labrador, Greg), to try to complete the 63 mile walk in 5 days. The Way starts in the ruins of Melrose Abbey, and climbs into the Eildon Hills which give an excellent view of the river Tweed and the omnipresent Waterloo Monument. The first stretch of 15 miles to Harestanes was relatively easy, in warm late summer sunshine. We enjoyed delicious blackberries along this part of the route, and were given some excellent Victoria plums in St Boswells, the only town we passed through as we followed a series of footpaths and bridleways, all impeccably marked. There were a handful of fellow walkers, mostly from North America, where the Way is well advertised. The next day needed a longer walk of 17½ miles to Kirk Yeaton, on the border with England. Again, not difficult walking (albeit with a steep climb to Wideopen Hill towards the end of the day,) but a bit too far for me (and Greg) – I definitely felt sore feet that evening.

The third morning saw us leave Scotland, and walk across wild grouse moors in driving rain (it was our one wet day) to Wooler; a shorter walk, but with strong overtones of Wuthering Heights. From there to St Cuthbert's Cave (where, according to which legend you believe, Cuthbert was either a hermit, or his perfectly preserved body was hidden from invaders) and the first views of the spectacular Northumbrian coastline. We made our way down to Fenwick, just a short distance from the causeway to Holy Island.

The trick is to time your crossing to arrive for Holy Communion, and get back to the mainland before the tides cut you off – we made it, just! One giant blister among the four of us humans, but many happy memories.

John Pickthorn

## Churches in Germany

In July, Roger and I spent three weeks in Germany, seeing some wonderful places, churches, and art as we drove to Bavaria and back, to stay with a longstanding family friend. We've been to Germany, and Bavaria, several times before, but this journey prompted especially deep reflections and insights about Germany, its development, its present, its churches, and how these have affected us too. For the first time, we took in parts of what had been East Germany, and visited several sites which were crucial in the life of Martin Luther and the Reformation in Europe.

I would love to share these reflections, and some pictures, with you. Please join me for an illustrated talk in the Parish Rooms on

### **Churches in Germany and the Legacy of Luther**

**Sunday 26th November**

**Refreshments available at 2pm: talk at 2.30 pm**

**Entry free: donations invited for St Mary's Church.**



***Luther's church at Wittenberg***



***Magdeburg cathedral – the wise virgins***

Thanks to Gill and Simon for their help in organising this afternoon talk.

Paula Griffiths

## Mothers' Union Annual General meeting - York 2023

This was attended by over 700 members who filled the seats of the Barbican for 3 sessions, followed by Evensong at the Cathedral where Archbishop Stephen Cottrell preached on Revelation 21.1-4: -

See the home of God is among mortals.  
God himself will be with them;  
Mourning and crying will be no more,  
For the first things have passed away.

This fitted well with the 2023 theme 'Transformation-Now'. Sheran Harper, the Mothers' Union Worldwide President, spoke of her many experiences as she visited over 80 areas in the world and met members who shared the joy and support of family life. She encouraged all to understand the importance of educating both boys and girls, making sure that boys grow up knowing their sisters are with them and that they love them and help them. Girls should receive the same teaching. She noted that girls are a little faster to mature than boys and they help boys to build confidence and accept and give love and affection.

The issue of helping clergy was also important and being aware that activism against domestic abuse is an ongoing priority for 365 days. The words RISE UP is a new campaign and these capitals stand for RESPOND, INFORM, SUPPORT, EMPOWER, UNITE and PRAY.

Most Mothers' Union members who attended had been members for many years and understood and experienced the difficulties of life. Some with illness- some bereaved- some with concern about their future.

All experienced the great hail storm while the door of York Minster Cathedral was kept locked before permission to enter for Evensong. And many were concerned about delays in transport to get home. But, the support of togetherness and understanding through all of this was wonderful and just as the Archbishop said in his sermon - God was with us and the first things passed away!

Elderliness confronts older members and the society is supporting indoor members contacting them and they say The Indoor Members' Prayer: Loving Heavenly Father, Lord of the world, you know the secret thoughts of every heart and hear the prayers of all. You have chosen us to work for you and be as one in prayer. Guide us in our prayerful task and strengthen us to do your will. Uphold us in our doubt that those for whom we intercede may truly come to know your healing peace and love. We ask in Jesus' name, your only Son, our Lord. Amen.

Sheilah Girgis-Hanna

**YOU**inthe**PEW** interviewed by Chris Bishop**Matt Williamson**

I am a Norfolk boy at heart, I was born in Norwich, grew up in Dereham then moved to Swaffham when I was a teenager. My previous job was at All Saints Church in Belton. I moved here in September 2013 when I became Youth and Children's Leader at St Mary's Church.



My role at St Mary is to work with the children and young people. When I was interviewed for the job I was not just interviewed by the panel but I was also grilled by the youth group. What struck me most was the love they had for Jesus and the potential to encourage them in their faith.

There are three events which I have loved doing here in Saffron Walden, the first was VBS - Vacation Bible School—a brilliant opportunity to share the love of Jesus to close to 500 children each summer! I had a great team around me as I led the Seniors tent, which was for 11-14 year olds, until it stopped running in 2019.

Another favourite was taking our young people to summer camp - whether that was Soul Survivor as in previous years, or more recently, DTI - Dreaming the Impossible. This 5-day camp gives the young people a taste of a different type of worship. The week is packed with seminars, sports, talks and worship to encourage them in their faith and to grow closer to God. To quote our young people, they loved being able to worship with 4000 other young people and that sense that they are not alone in their faith journey.

A highlight of my year is the Jimmy's Meal. Our youth group, Aftershock, have put on an annual three course meal with entertainment for up to 60 people. All donations go to the work of Jimmy's Night Shelter in Cambridge. The young people do an amazing job decorating the room and preparing the food, servers and entertaining. Each year I am amazed by the guests' generosity. Over my time here the young people have raised close to £20,000 for Jimmy's.

As well as VBS, DTI and the Jimmy's Meal, I have to say that the first Lighting of the Christmas Tree service I went to was brilliant. It is great to see that the church offers something for these families each Christmas which is special to them and points them to the true reason for the season.

I am blessed to have an amazing wife, Nic, and two beautiful children, Joshua and Emilia. As a family we don't have a motto as such, however, our good friends Rachel and Sam Prior gave us a frame with Joshua 24:15 on it 'As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.' This is up in the hallway of our house so is the first thing you see when you walk in. I guess this is a motto for us as a family, that in all we do, think and say, we are serving Jesus.

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## St Mary's Music News - November

It was a delight to return to choir after the summer break and we are pleased to welcome Esma Kashif to the alto section. We were also pleased to see Jo Byers who re-joins the altos after a year working on Skye. In the Junior Choir we welcome new singers Hoi Hoi, Nam Nam, Danncha, Eve and Sylvia. We wish them a long and happy stay with us. This brings the Junior choir to capacity with over twenty children. Ziyi, our organ scholar who joined us before the break, is beginning to learn the pattern of services. It is good to welcome her properly this month.

One of the pleasures of the autumn term is what has become an annual scholar's concert. This is usually led by the scholars who are leaving for university. This year however, as no one is leaving us, it was a celebration of present and past scholars: a splendid evening in which we celebrated a very talented group of young musicians. Masterminded by Kate Beare various scholars past and present entertained us with solos on violin, flute, piano and vocals and a group medley from West Side Story. The ambience was cabaret style with twinkling lights; there were great eats. 'It was an absolute blast!'

We celebrated the patronal festival with a feast of music both morning Eucharist and Festal evensong. In the morning the introit *Locus Iste* (Bruckner) served to quieten our hearts for worship and then the ever joyful *A maiden most gentle* (Carter) lifted our spirits. In the evening we sang a new anthem for the Patronal Festal Evensong. Jeremy Allen introduced many of us to *Let all the world in every corner sing* (Vaughan Williams) – a splendid piece which aptly reflected the beauty of our building as we celebrated our patron. The Junior choir took part in the Harvest Festival Family service. Their contribution of singing was much appreciated by the congregation.



Children from some of the local primary schools (Y3 and Y4) attended an exciting organ concert given by Oli King, Jeremy Allen, Philip Sunderland and Peter De Vile on 29<sup>th</sup> September. They learnt about the organ and listened to some interesting and fun pieces. The idea of the concert was to introduce the children to the sound and the history of the organ in the beautiful setting of the church and to spark an interest in a sound with which many of them may be unfamiliar. Works were performed from all three organs in the church.

The choir is preparing to sing evensong at Birmingham Cathedral on 4<sup>th</sup> November. The anthem will be *Save us Oh Lord* (Bairstow), setting *Stanford in B flat* and Smith's responses. We look forward to this event and hope to be joined by David and Jenny Tomlinson.

Gill Gibson

## Gelio's Anthology of Obscure Proverbs

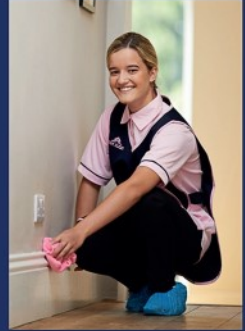
Here are two old Proverbs about money.

From Japan comes ' **Getting money is like digging with a needle; spending it is like water soaking into sand** '

There is also a Jewish Proverb ' **Money really adds no more to the wise than clothes can to the beautiful** '







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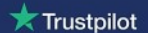
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Muniments Room

## Archive Group

**A monthly record of pieces of interest from our past Parish Magazines**

**Compiled by our Archivist Canon Chris Bishop**

### November 1936

I wish something could be done – specially at this end of the town - to eradicate the litter nuisance. When the late Alderman Miller was Mayor he went to all the elementary schools in the borough and vigorously harangued the children on the subject and, I believe, procured a new byelaw making the littering of the streets a punishable offence. There followed a few spasmodic prosecutions if I remember rightly – but now for a long time the byelaw has remained a dead letter - could it not be brought again into force, and could not the teachers impress on their pupils the duty of co-operating with the authorities and the road men in keeping the streets clean? If it were made taboo and anathema in the playgrounds it would probably soon disappear from the streets, the Common, the Churchyard and the Churchyard paths, where now it is in painfully conspicuous evidence. It must give inspectors of schools a very poor opinion of our sense of neatness and tidiness to see it in such profusion in the streets. We do not want to get the reputation of being a slovenly lot of people. We live amid lovely surroundings, let us try by every means to enhance and not disfigure them and, above all, refrain from making a rubbish heap of the last resting place of the dead.

L.Hughes. October 20<sup>th</sup> 1936

### Quiet Morning: Saturday 9th December, 9.30am –12noon

The Rev'd Ella Harris will lead this year's **Quiet Morning** in St Mary's Parish Rooms from 9.30am. All are most welcome.

Her theme is '**The Creator and the Clay**'.

The Prayer Team, [hazel.colebrooke@gmail.com](mailto:hazel.colebrooke@gmail.com)



## **Review of 'Whistle Down the Wind'** 28 *Parish News - November 2023*

I was given the opportunity at the first meeting of our "Film Club" to view again the charming film "Whistle Down the Wind". Andy Colebrooke had sent us a list of possible discussion subjects and relevant Bible verses. I was surprised by the fact that I had never wondered about the meaning of the title. Using Google I learnt it means to cast someone or something off to its own fate. The 1961 film was directed by Brian Forbes and starred Alan Bates as 'The Man', a dangerous fugitive, Arthur Blakey, with Hayley Mills as Kathy Bostock the eldest of 3 children. They live with their widowed father, a farmer, and their paternal aunt who acts a housekeeper. The children mistakenly come to believe that the stranger found in their barn is Jesus Christ. They have learnt about him in their Sunday school lessons. They try to keep him a secret but soon the knowledge spreads amongst the children of the village. Eventually Kathy's father becomes suspicious and when the police are called in 'The Man' is apprehended.

Our discussions afterwards were wide ranging. Most prominent, the difference between children's lives then and now and nostalgia for that seemingly simpler life. Few had television, telephones or even electricity. Here we are with our computers, mobile phones, all our gadgets and constant access to news and information but rarely sit down together around a table for a meal discussing the day's events. We mourned that nowadays many children don't know about Jesus or the Lord's Prayer and that this story would be alien to them. Would there be a crowd of children gathering anxiously to see him if such an event happened now?

Christian symbolism is seen throughout. The mirroring of religious art in the way 'The Man' hangs his head to the side like the crucified Christ and the three children silhouetted at the top of a hill could be the crucifixion group or even the three wise men. 'The Man' whilst being searched standing with his arms outstretched as if on the cross and many more such scenes.

It is a sign of our times that we were shocked to see two unarmed detectives negotiating with an apparently violent man through a flimsy barn door. The effect of Kathy's devotion to 'The Man' she believes is Jesus and the crowds of children who flock to see him seems to be transformative for him and the reason his capture is a quiet calm affair and not violent as it might well have been.

We see, in the film, how unprepared those who publicly represent Christians are to answer questions about their beliefs. How even the very young can see through the bluster.

We thought it was a film well worth viewing again and recommend it to you. Watch what our most observant noticed happens to Charlie's boiled egg!

Kathleen Huey

## God of the mountains, God of the valleys



*Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand. Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone ... The earth takes shape like clay under a seal; its features stand out like those of a garment... Have you journeyed to the springs of the sea or walked in the recesses of the deep? (Job 38:4–7, 14, 16)*

These verses from the biblical book of Job focus on the Earth, from the top of the highest mountains to the deepest valleys of the sea floor. Job used to have a very comfortable life, but lost everything: health, children, and much of his property. He can see no obvious reason for this terrible turn of events, so he demands an answer from God, asking “What have I done to You...? Why have You made me your target?”

There is no direct reply to Job's question, but instead a long conversation with his friends who assume (wrongly) that he must be being punished for doing something very bad. When God finally speaks, He draws Job's attention to his surroundings. The sun, moon and stars, the immensity of land and sea, the creatures that inhabit them, and the processes that produce weather are a wonderful display of God's creative power. God is the origin and sustainer of all these things, and they are far beyond anything humankind could produce, fully understand or imagine – even today.

The things we do know about the processes described in Job can help us appreciate how marvellous they are. Mountains are produced by the movement of the Earth's rocky crust over great periods of time. Erosion by weathering or glaciers then grinds down those rocks to produce the mineral component of soil.

Considering the wider perspective of creation can help restore our sense of who we are, who God is, and where we fit into His purposes. God speaks to Job in the midst of his suffering, lifting his eyes to the power and creativity of his Maker. Only after this theology lesson are Job's practical needs addressed. What will life be like for us over the coming months? A constant check on our own thinking – reminding ourselves of the bigger picture of God's plans and purposes – might be just what we need to help us keep going.

Ruth M Bancewicz, The Faraday Institute, Cambridge.

*(This article drew very directly on the writing of Prof Bob White in New Daylight [BRF, Sept-Dec 2020], and the input of a Bible study group based in Cambridge.)*

*Photograph: by Viola ' from Pixabay*

## Strayed Sheep or Our English Coasts

**William Holman Hunt 1852 Tate Britain**

'Strayed Sheep' is a breathtaking painting by Holman Hunt. The minute detail and painstaking brushwork is outstanding, while the painting as a whole glows with the effects of the afternoon sunlight streaking across the coastal downs of Sussex. Rather like the Impressionists twenty years later, it was largely painted outdoors, but to a totally different effect: not to give 'an impression' but to be relentlessly realistic; uncompromising in its truth to the appearances of nature.

Gazing at it for a while I am in awe at the texture of the grass on the far hill; the quality of the sheep's wool; the care taken to depict every leaf and bramble as the light shines through; the texture and colour of the rocks and the wild flowers.

One effect of light that I love is the light shining through the ears of the lamb nearest us, glowing red with the blood of the ear; an effect I was delighted to see in real life on a walk recently.

A wonderful drowsy mood permeates the painting with one prone sheep basking in the warmth of the sun, and others nestling their heads affectionately on each other; but there is confusion and danger dramatized by the lamb caught up in the brambles on the cliff edge, looking at us for help and confused as to how he got into such a pickle. Why indeed are all the sheep gathered so precariously on the edge of the cliff? How can they be so unaware of the danger?

For all its realism and fidelity to detail, this painting is simply a metaphor. In religious terms it illustrates the line of Isaiah 'For we like sheep have gone astray. We have left God's paths to follow our own'. Absorbed in easy comforts and oblivious to danger, we find ourselves on the brink of disaster.

1848 had been a year of revolutions and uprisings across Europe, in France, Italy, Germany, Austria and Belgium, and there had been much discussion here about how poorly defended our coasts were against attack by Napoleon III. The location of the painting near Hastings hints at the successful invasion by William the Conqueror. In the far distance on the horizon there is the wisp of smoke from a steamship, which some regard as symbolising that renewed threat. Equally, as in a novel by Thomas Hardy, it could symbolize the threat to our peaceful rural way of life by the coal powered industrial revolution.

Of course, at the thought of coal, I cannot resist an ecological interpretation of the painting: that we like sheep are careless of the dangers of the climate crisis and of ecological breakdown. Absorbed in our enjoyment of



*Photograph: Edward Gildea*

the comforts of our fossil-fuelled lifestyles and the late afternoon sunlight, we have no regard for the precipice on which we stand. Of course Holman Hunt would not have had that interpretation in mind! But as viewers, we are free to find and explore our own insights and metaphors.

One final detail is unarguable however: in the bottom left-hand corner are two butterflies, possibly engaged in courtship, but always symbols of the transience of life. Life is fleeting. We are in danger. We are in need of a shepherd. There is no time to lose.

Edward Gildea

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/hunt-our-english-coasts-1852-strayed-sheep-n05665>

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