

PARISH NEWS

MAY 2020

Parish News Distribution During the Coronavirus Restrictions

We are sorry that, while copies of Parish News for April were printed as usual, few were distributed since, by the time they were ready for distribution, it was concluded that delivery to every household was incompatible with the requirement to stay at home.

We are grateful to David Quysner and Sandy Thomas for arranging to distribute this May issue by e-mail to those for whom they hold e-mail addresses. There is bound to be some duplication and we apologise to those who receive two, or even three, e-mails. This "digital issue" is also available on the benefice church's website – www.sussexdownlandchurches.org.uk and Berwick Parish Council's website – www.berwickparishcouncil.org.uk.

We are anticipating that future issues will be distributed in this way until things return to normal.

As the "digital issues" do not include advertising, we intend to include the advertisements in the printed issues until they have appeared in a full 12 month's issues.

Jane Anderson/Valerie Shaw

From the Vicarage

At the time of writing, the graph for new cases of the epidemic is still rising steeply. My hope is that when you read this, we will be at least approaching the plateau. As many have said, we live in unprecedented times; many things which used to seem important have almost vanished. Who cares about the tittle-tattle from celebrities, the products to improve your appearance, the opinions of those who have no real expertise, the veneration of sport as practically a divinity? As Brendan McCarthy (Church of England Medical Adviser) has written "I hope we take this opportunity to press the reset button on the frenetic world we have created."

The season of Easter has always been a time of hope following devastation. 'Oestre'

is the Anglo-Saxon word for Spring - new life; and writing this on a sunny warm Spring morning certainly helps. When the playwright Dennis Potter was dying of cancer, he wrote that the world had acquired a heightened intensity. 'At this season the blossom is now out in full, and instead of saying "Oh that's nice blossom", I see it is the whitest, frothiest, blossomest blossom that there ever could be.'

At any time of prolonged danger, the wonders of nature and our deepest human longings take on a heightened intensity. Love within family and friends, caring in the community and the basic necessities of life become supremely important. We realise again that each new day is a gift – something infinitely precious. The air we breathe, the beauty of the natural world, the wondrous provision of Creation for all our physical needs of food and water – all of them are freely given. Jesus said that 'the meek will (and do) inherit the earth.' Why? Because they don't need to own it before they can enjoy it to the full.

In the darkest times we know deep down that each day is a gift, not a right. The ancient night office of Compline has the line: 'Into thy hands O Lord I commend my spirit'. Not a bad thing to say every night just before sleep, acknowledging where I have come from, and to Whom I really belong. And the next morning, when we (miraculously) wake up: 'Good heavens – I've been given another day. Perhaps I could make a better fist of it than yesterday.'

St Paul writes that the three most important gifts of life are 'faith, hope and love' (caring-forgiving-thankfulness), 'and the greatest of these is love.'

With every blessing, keep well.
Frank Fox-Wilson

Family Support Work -Lent Boxes

I hope that you are all staying well in these challenging times. For those who took an FSW Lent box (to fill with loose change/notes during Lent), would you kindly send your donations directly to the Family Support account as we are not collecting the money this year.

Anyone else who would like to give to this very worthwhile cause helping families in great need (especially at this time), the charity would be very grateful to receive your donations.

Electronic donations can be made to:
Sort code: 20-12-75
Account no: 40257133
Account name: CDAFSW
Reference: Lent (plus name of your church e.g. Berwick)

Alternatively, you can send a cheque made payable to 'CDAFSW' at the following address:
Family Support Work
Garton House
22 Stanford Avenue
BN1 6AA

Many thanks again for your continued support.

Tim Berrett/Jane Anderson

Lambing Season

The lambing season has now begun, so please could all dog walkers put their dogs on a lead when they walk through the local farmland. And please can all walkers with or without dogs keep to the designated footpaths. Thank you.

Victoria Burrough

Berwick Produce Show

It is with regret that the Berwick Produce Show Committee has taken the very hard decision, in light of the current issues, not to hold the Produce show this year. This is not a decision we have taken lightly and thank you all for your continued support and understanding.

We have not cancelled the band for 5th September in the hope that if we are able to, dependent on Government advise at the time, arrange a village picnic/BBQ for that afternoon.

Sue Woodgate
Co-chair Berwick Produce Show

Pilates

Emily Russell of Selmeston is running Pilates classes and Physiotherapy clinics

online during lock down. Contact Emily via email (emily@sussexphysiotherapy.com) or phone (07791 864384) if you would like more details.

Thank You - Alciston and Selmeston Quiz Night

A very big thank you to all who came to the tremendously successful quiz night in January, which raised an amazing £1100. There was a great atmosphere and Michele provided a terrific meal. Paul Dennis, as always, set challenging questions – even one that turned out to be a little contentious! We hope he will return next year.

Michele Boys, Stephanie Lewis-Grey, Jan Matthews

2020 – The 50th Anniversary of the Alciston and Selmeston Flower Show

This is a big year for the flower show in our villages, and we're aiming to make it a very special occasion. As the welcome signs of Spring make their appearance and your thoughts turn to your garden, we hope you'll have something very special in mind for the Flower Show too. Do you have fond memories of traditions from flower shows past that you would like to see revisited? Please let us know! Also, we are seeking someone from Alciston to join in the fun of planning this year's show, so if you or someone you know is interested, please contact Jan Mathews – Tel: 01323 811380, or Raina Thompson-Brody – Tel: 07595 480662.

Raina Thompson-Brody

Meeting Needs of Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers

At the Ladies' Breakfast in Seaford on 14th March, Jane Byers spoke movingly about the work of the Sanctuary Café. Owing to the current pandemic precautions only a small number of ladies were able to attend: 25 came, including the St Luke's ladies who catered for us so well (commonly we have 45-50 at a Breakfast). For those who could not be present, I am summarising the talk.

After a visit to 'The Jungle' in Calais with a team of health workers, Jane was inspired to help very needy people - such as those she had met there – who are trying to escape from bad situations and start a new life in the UK. She began to talk about their problems with her friends and to collect useful items for them, meanwhile listening for the Lord's guidance in the matter. Then at King's Church she met Gill Caroe, who

was already involved with Networx Eastbourne, a charity seeking to meet some of the needs of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in the town. They thought of setting up a drop-in centre and subsequently opened it in Seaside. Then, for about four months they prayed and sat there regularly waiting for people to come... Someone told them about a similar venture in Hastings, already well-established and well-known. At a visit there, Gill and Jane met a man with expert knowledge of immigration matters, who told them many people walk from Eastbourne to see him (having no money for bus fares). Having arranged for this helpful gentleman to undertake sessions at the Eastbourne centre, they saw a rapid rise in attendance. Since then - over a three-year period – the numbers have gone on increasing, necessitating two moves to larger premises.

The Sanctuary Café has been open weekly on Monday mornings at All Souls Church rooms behind the Beacon shopping centre. This is a very convenient and spacious place for the various services offered. Some people come regularly for the English conversation classes, others just to chat with volunteers or other clients. Some bring their children to enjoy the play area, where a couple of volunteers keep them safe and happily occupied. Others come to collect Foodbank vouchers, or some of the free food donated by supermarkets. Yet others want to choose items from the donated clothing and household linen. There are free hot drinks available and a friendly welcome for anyone. Volunteers can often point people to other sources of help or help them fill in forms to apply for available government services. (The café has had to close temporarily owing to the pandemic. Meanwhile volunteers try to keep in touch with clients by phone.)

Jane told anonymised stories about a couple of the clients who had benefitted from coming to Sanctuary café, and she quoted from the Old Testament in support of her contention that God wishes us to be kind to "the foreigners in our land". Finally, she answered questions from the audience, some of whom wanted to donate toiletries and such small items of use to the clients who often have very little of anything while they are waiting for a decision on an asylum request. Everybody was impressed with the way the Lord had led Jane and Gill to develop this work.

All being well (assuming the pandemic has waned by then) our next Ladies Talk will be by Dr Dundas Moore (a retired GP living in Alfriston), on the theme of "The Challenges

of Hospital Chaplaincy". Please put 9.30am Saturday 20th June in your diary and consider going to hear Dr Moore in Berwick Village Hall. Instead of breakfast, there will be tea/coffee and home-made cakes! Please check in the June magazine for confirmation as to whether this will go ahead.

Ruth Butlin

200 Trees planted in Selmeston and Alciston!

Many thanks to everyone involved in planting 200 trees throughout Selmeston and Alciston villages in March, funded by OVO Energy's 'I Dig Trees' project. We planted 14 different native species across 11 different locations in our villages, and we look forward to watching them grow. Thanks to everyone who helped plan, plant, and support this project. We hope to repeat it sometime soon, and keep our area a beautiful, verdant place full of the wildlife we love.

Raina Thompson-Brody

Family Support Work (FSW) – Update

I am writing this from home, as the events of the last few weeks have dramatically altered all our plans. We would normally be looking forward to lots of fundraising events to kick off our busy calendar.

But now our office is closed, our events are cancelled, and we are trying new ways of working to make sure that our families, who need us now more than ever, can continue to be supported. Our practitioners are no longer able to visit families at home so are staying in touch regularly by phone, text and social media. We are offering an enhanced food bank service with more deliveries to ensure that families do not go hungry over the coming weeks and helping them navigate the problems that can arise for families cooped up for a long time in small spaces. This can be challenging at the best of times, but for families already trying to cope with extremely complex situations it is a really scary situation and the support that we are able to give, albeit remotely, is crucial for the next few weeks and beyond.

We know that many of you are regular donors to our food bank under normal circumstances, and for that we thank you enormously. Several people have been in touch to ask how they can support us in other ways at this time. Our biggest need now is for funds to help us continue the foodbank operation and the day to day

work of our practitioners, as all our groups and activities have been suspended for now. Should anybody feel able to support us in this way, donations can be made online via our JustGiving page www.justgiving.com/chichesterdiocesan or by direct transfer into our bank account. Details of our account can be obtained from our website by clicking the "Get Involved" link from our homepage and then selecting "Become a Friend" from the menu.

Thank you for your ongoing support and prayers.

Prayer points:

- That our staff, their families and the families we support remain healthy during the pandemic
- Wisdom for our Trustees and senior leadership team as they navigate through the crisis
- Give thanks for the many other community groups and individuals who have already been in contact with us offering support, that we might find the best way to use this to benefit the organisation

Nikki Kerr, FSW Director of Fundraising and Marketing

Why Are You Weeping?

Mary shivered. The cold night air wrapped itself around her like a shroud and she could feel its icy chill. Not just in the air but also the deep immeasurable cold of the relenting sadness that enveloped her heart. Tears welled in her eyes and tumbled down her cheeks as she relived the horrifying events on that faraway hill.

She had lost someone that she loved and respected. A love now broken like His body as it hung on the cross. There had been so much hope but that too had gone as His lifeblood ebbed away. Her faith had been strong and so she came to visit Him for one last time and to offer Him one last service of love and respect.

MARY.

In the East the first colours of dawn began to grace the morning sky. Pale and insignificant at first as if the darkness was reluctant to release its hold to the light of the day. The light became brighter as through golden yellows to deep pinks the sun began to rise.

MARY.

Mary's heart beat faster. She knew that voice. She wiped away the tears and saw Jesus standing there. It was the risen Lord.

Her tears were now tears of joy and a feeling of excitement and wellbeing rose up inside her. She knew that all her shattered dreams would be made whole again.

The day light was at its brightest now. The Morning Star has risen and His light was shining on the world.

Michèle Boys

Could the Lewes to Uckfield Line Finally Re-Open?

The vital Lewes to Uckfield rail line was closed in 1969. Not only did this cut rail services across the Lewes and Wealden districts but it also closed an alternative diversionary route from Brighton to London. Since then there have been numerous attempts to re-open the line which is, more or less, still intact.

Now the best chance of re-opening the Lewes to Uckfield railway line in a generation has come about with the Transport Secretary Grant Shapps recently launching the Restoring Your Railway fund.

As a result I am working with the BML2 campaigners (Brighton Main Line 2) on a bid as the Lewes to Uckfield line is eligible to be considered as part of the £48 billion Restoring Your Railways fund and we have submitted an expression of interest with the Government.

A business case will need to be presented to the Department for Transport by early March setting out costs, levels of support locally, and the potential growth that could come from reopened lines. Following this, the successful bids will go through to a further stage with successful bids announced in the summer of 2020. The Government are keen to get things moving quickly on these lines to allowing work to begin as soon as possible.

Since first being elected I have campaigned for the reopening of the Lewes to Uckfield line as another route for passengers from Lewes and the surrounding areas to get to London without having to use the Brighton Mainline. The re-opening of this line will take pressure off the current mainline and make rail more accessible to thousands of people along the route. I am working with the BML2 Project to make sure that we can grasp this opportunity and finally re-open the Lewes to Uckfield line.

For more information on the detailed plans do visit www.bml2.co.uk.

Maria Caulfield, Member of Parliament for Lewes

News from King's Academy, Ringmer

The school has had to adapt very quickly to a completely new way of teaching. In a matter of a few days we were able to provide a very different system of interacting with our students whilst still ensuring that we could provide the same high level of teaching and maintain all of the appropriate child protection measures.

All students are now sent work daily across a variety of subjects as well as additional learning and reading material. We have also been able to produce a newsletter with extra resources and general information about how to stay safe whilst this emergency is in place.

For our Year 11s this has been a particularly difficult time. At this time of year, students are preparing for their GCSEs and looking forward to their Prom and Leavers' Day. This year there will be no GCSEs, with results being based on past work and mock exams. Many of our students plan their studies and revision in a very structured way and now feel they have missed the opportunity to show their best work. We are keeping in regular contact with them to provide support and will be seeing how we can celebrate their time at Ringmer when things get back to normality.

We have, of course, still been keeping the school open for those children who, because of family circumstances or who have a parent who is a key worker, cannot be at home. Staff have been operating a rota to provide learning for these students and this facility will continue after the Easter Holiday. We were able to staff the Easter holidays however, those students needing support have been able to make alternative arrangements. We thank them for this allowing staff to have a break and both staff and students to stay safe.

We do hope you all stay safe and well at this difficult time and would like to pass on our best wishes to our retired School Librarian, Ruth Whitlock and her husband, who have both been ill but are now, we understand, making a recovery.

Stephen W. Green, Environmental Coordinator, King's Academy Ringmer

May Gardener's Diary

Hopefully we have planted all our Potatoes by now. Just keep an eye on the weather and if a frost is forecast, try to cover up any leaves that are showing.

Sweetcorn can be sown in pots to plant out, as soon as they are strong enough. Also

get your Runner Beans, French Beans, Peas, Courgettes, Marrow, Squash, into pots or modules ready for planting out when its warmer at night. Tomato plants should be growing well by now in the greenhouse.

Vegetables to sow straight into the ground are Beetroot, Carrots, Turnips, Radish, Spinach, Swede and all types of Cabbages. Don't forget to sow short rows, so you can add more later, to spread the harvesting.

Pests become active this month so keep a close eye on young plants for aphids on leaves and wash them off with water. Put collars around you Brassica plants to protect them from Cabbage Root Fly.

Watering newly sowed seeds and seedlings is very important. To test if you have been watering enough put your finger in the soil. If it comes out moist, that's perfect.

Keith Winter

Peregrine Falcon - You Say You Want a Revolution?

Circling high in the blue skies above Sussex is one of the world's deadliest predators. Peregrines are hunting above us. Scanning the avian traffic in the Sussex

airspace, their incredible vision locks on to an unsuspecting bird passing below and the Peregrine instantly negotiates one of the most sophisticated aerial manoeuvres possible. They stop flying. With wings and feet tucked in tightly, peregrines drop from the sky at an unbelievable speed – hurtling earthwards at up to 200 mph - the fastest creature on our planet. Everything, even the eyelids and nostrils on this bird are built for speed. Like a bomb made of muscle and feathers, it'll decimate any victim in its path.

We're fortunate to still have these amazing birds here in Sussex. During WW2 their taste for pigeons (including those carrying wartime messages) saw Peregrines treated as if they were on the payroll of Mr Hitler himself. The Secretary of State for Air declared war on these falcons and issued the 'Destruction of Peregrine Falcons Order'. The birds were slaughtered, their nests destroyed.

After we gave Adolf the old heave-ho, Peregrines were left alone, and numbers began to recover. But they were to face an even more deadly threat than the British Government: Dichlorodiphenyl-trichloroethane (or DDT to its friends).

Farmers worldwide had started spraying a variety of wonderful new chemical insecticides all over the countryside to improve yields. These invisible poisons hit the bird at the top of the food chain the hardest. In 1958 there were 650 pairs of Peregrines in Britain. Six years later there were 68. Concerns over their decline sparked an investigation that led back to the source of the Peregrine poisoning and the world's eyes were opened to the reality of the damage that these chemicals could cause to our environment and to us. Rachel Carson wrote 'Silent Spring', the environmental movement was born.

Today, perched on our cliffs and cathedrals, high above the organic food-filled shelves in kitchens across Sussex, the killer that kick-started the environmental uprising stands defiantly overlooking us all like a beaked Che Guevara. A feathered testament to revolution, strength and tofu veggie burgers.

*Michael Blencowe
of the Sussex Wildlife Trust*

Benefice Clergy

Revd Peter Blee
Rector of Berwick and Vicar of Selmeston with Alciston
The Parsonage, Berwick, Polegate, BN26 6SR
Tel: 01323 870512
Email: peter.blee@berwickchurch.org.uk
Peter's day off is Saturday.

Revd Frank Fox-Wilson - Assistant Priest
The Vicarage, Wilmington, Polegate, BN26 5SL
Tel: 01323 871148
Email: frank.fox-wilson@berwickchurch.org.uk
Frank's 'on duty' days are Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

Churchwardens

Alciston - Michèle Boys Tel: 01323 870623
Berwick – Vacant
Selmeston - Jan Matthews Tel: 01323 811380

Benefice Administrator

Stephanie Lewis-Grey Tel: 01323 811136
Email: benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk

Parish News Advertising and Distribution

This is coordinated by Jeremy and Valerie Shaw.
Tel: 01323 811567.

Parish News

The production team is Jane Anderson and Martin Chilvers. Contributions (other than advertising requests) should be sent to Martin Chilvers by the 12th of the month.
Email: empty.sea@outlook.com;
Post: 66 Parkfield Avenue, Eastbourne, BN22 9SF.
You should receive confirmation of receipt by the 15th of the month, but if not, please call him on 01323 507655.

Contributions can also be passed on to one of the coordinators:
Jane Anderson at Old Postman's Cottage, Alciston
Tel: 01323 870075.
Valerie Shaw at Selmeston House, Selmeston Tel: 01323 811567.
Laurie Tinsley, Wynsford, Berwick Tel: 01323 870895.

Donations

Financial donations to the Parish News are gratefully received. Cheques payable to "Parish News" can be passed to the Treasurer, Valerie Shaw, Selmeston House, Selmeston, Polegate, BN26 6UD. Alternatively, electronic donations can be made to Barclays Bank - Account No. 70650625; Sort code 20-49-76.

*We are very grateful for donations last month from Dr and Mrs Vokins, Mr Gillett, Miss Ward, Mr and Mrs Hughes, Mr Pike, Mr Rees, Mrs Robertshaw, Mrs Weir, Dr and Mrs Woodbridge, Miss Walton, Miss Irving, Mr and Mrs Bradford, Mrs Lawrence, Mr and Mrs Boys, Mrs Burns and two anonymous donors.
And this month from Cuckmere Valley Lunch Club, Miss McIntosh, Mrs Newton, Mr & Mrs K Spencer and Mr & Mrs Jelly.*