

PARISH NEWS

JANUARY 2021

From the Parsonage

The start of 2020 felt as though it might be an auspicious year, but I don't suppose many expected it to be so in the way that it was!

At the beginning of 2021 it doesn't feel so much as if it is the start of a new year as of a new era. If the present threat of the pandemic has been transferred in people's mind to the greater but less present threat of the climate emergency, then that can only be for the good. We may be living through a tectonic shift in the world economy and the birth of a new consciousness of our relationship with the natural world. How exciting if that is the case.

In any one day we're conscious of some things and not of others, and those things that we take no thought for we do little about. It's good to reflect on this reality and ask ourselves whether we're in control of that conscious space, which we might think of as an inner sanctuary. We can think of our consciousness as being like a room. Certain things are allowed in, others are kept out. And there's a limited amount of space, so once we've filled it up, we just have to start excluding other things. Our guide to how we manage our consciousness is our spirituality and faith. Faith teaches us to have a regard for our conscious state and treat it with reverence: taking more care about what should be in, more thought about what we keep out.

In terms of Christian understanding this is why Saint Paul talks about 'guarding your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus' [Philippians 4:6-7](#). I hope that in midst of the challenges that lie ahead you may have your heart and mind guarded from anxieties and fear and instead may be conscious of the goodness of God in all creation, especially in the life of Christ, and be guided by His wisdom.

Wishing you all a happy new year.

Peter Blee

Church Services and Morning Prayer

During Covid restrictions, please look on the website – www.sussexdownlandchurches.org.uk (or www.berwickchurch.org.uk) or subscribe to 'Sunday Link' and you will be sent service times each week. To receive the Sunday Link please email benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk or telephone 01323 811136.

Our churches remain open daily for private prayer and we are holding Sunday services as well as online services. Revd Peter Blee is available for visiting outdoors if permitted and available to talk on the phone - Tel: 01323 870512.

We hope to be livestreaming services from Berwick in January, please look out for information on the website.

3rd January – Epiphany

8.00 am Alciston – Holy Communion
9.00 am Morning Prayer (Zoom meeting*)
10.00 am Wilmington – Holy Communion
11.00 am Berwick – Holy Communion

10th January – Baptism of Christ

9.00 am Morning Prayer (Zoom meeting*)
9.30 am Arlington- Holy communion
9.30 am Selmeston – Morning Prayer
11.00 am Berwick – Morning Prayer

17th January

9.00 am Morning Prayer (Zoom meeting*)
9.30 am Selmeston Holy Communion
10.00 am Wilmington Morning Prayer
9.30 am Arlington Morning Prayer
11.00 am Berwick Morning Prayer

24th January

9.00 am Morning Prayer (Zoom meeting*)
9.30 am Arlington Holy Communion
9.30 am Alciston Morning Prayer
11.00 am Berwick Holy Communion

31st January – Candlemas

9.00 am Morning Prayer (Zoom meeting*)
[Please see note above possible livestreaming of services from Berwick in January.]
9.30 am Wilmington Holy Communion
11.00 am Berwick Holy Communion

* Please request a link from the Benefice Administrator
benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk

Ready, Steady, Census

The 2021 census is almost upon us. Households across England and Wales will soon be asked to take part in the nationwide survey of housing and the population. It has been carried out every decade since 1801, with the exception of 1941.

Information from the digital-first census will help decide how services are planned and funded in your local area. This could mean things like doctors' surgeries, housing or new bus routes. Households will receive a letter with a unique access code in the post, allowing them to complete their questionnaire online. Paper questionnaires will be available on request. Census day is Sunday 21st March 2021.

*Alison Stevens
Clerk to Berwick Parish Council*

Live Animal Exports

I am really pleased that the Government has announced plans to end live animal exports for slaughter. I have campaigned to end this cruel practice, which we couldn't outlaw while we were members of the EU, and it is the start of a renewed push by the government to strengthen the UK's position as a world leader in animal welfare.

Live animals commonly have to endure excessively long journeys during export causing distress and injury; these proposals form part of an eight-week consultation, launched on 3rd December in England and Wales, seeking views on how to protect animal welfare better during transport. and to see us become the first country in Europe to end this practice.

The government is also consulting on proposals to improve animal welfare further in transportation more generally, such as:

- ◆ Reduced maximum journey times.
- ◆ Animals being given more space and headroom during transport.
- ◆ Stricter rules on transporting animals in extreme temperatures.
- ◆ Tighter rules for transporting live animals by sea.

This marks a major step forward in ending live exports for slaughter. Animal welfare is one of the most frequent issues raised with me by constituents. For years I have had to tell them that as long as we are in the EU, we cannot ban the live export of animals and that we would look to do so once we had left. I am pleased therefore that we are now beginning the process of banning the cruel and distressing live export of animals for slaughter now that we have left the EU and the transition period is ending.

Around 6,400 animals were transported from the UK directly to slaughter in continental Europe in 2018, based on internal figures. This consultation takes into account the responses to the 2018 'Call for Evidence', as well as the report published by the then Farm Animal Welfare Committee (now known as the Animal Welfare Committee), which is made up of farming and veterinary experts, into the existing welfare standards for animals during transportation.

The consultation can be found at <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/transforming-farm-animal-health-and-welfare-team/improvements-to-animal-welfare-in-transport> until 28th January. Please do take part and have your say.

Maria Caulfield, MP

Pottery Classes

Eight weeks of pottery day classes with Sarah Walton from Monday 11th January to the week commencing Monday 8th March (with half term on 15th February). The fee (including firing costs) is £200 paid upfront.

As soon as it's safe to resume teaching groups of students here I will do so but, in the meantime, I have put together these classes that support a student who in the main works at home. They include a weekly 40-minute individual lesson with me in my studio on a Monday or Tuesday between at 10.00 am and 4.00 pm. The room is warm, spacious and safe if we social distance and wear masks. Plus a weekly 40-minute Zoom group meeting at 10.00 am each Wednesday bringing together all students on the course for further tuition with an opportunity for discussion and for students to cross refer.

Techniques taught start with pinched and coiled forms and progress to larger and more complex forms that fall under the general heading of 'hand building'. Stoneware clay is used, and the subsequent firing of work is done in an electric kiln. At the first lesson a student is given 2 kg of clay, their own tools and all necessary equipment and asked to use this during that and each class, after which they then take them home with them to use there. I ask a £20 returnable deposit for the use of this equipment. Further amounts of clay can be purchased at £2 per kg.

Please contact me to book in for the course or to discuss any queries you might have about these classes. Please also feel free to visit the rural studio beforehand. There is no public transport to the studio but there is plenty of space for car parking.

Sarah Walton Keepers, Bo Peep Lane, Alciston, BN26 6UH
Tel. 01323 811517 Website: www.sarahwalton.co.uk / Instagram: sarahwceramics

January Gardener's Diary

If you're thinking of growing vegetables this year for your dinner table (and of course the local village show!) here are things you can do in the garden this January, weather permitting. Start by digging over the area you want to use, so the frosts and rain can break it down ready for spring planting. If you have a compost bin or heap, before digging, spread that over part of the area where Potatoes, Onions, Beans and Brassicas will be.

Plan what seeds you need and write a list so you know when the best time is to sow and harvest them. Keep them in an airtight container so they stay fresh. Potatoes need to be ordered early so they can be put in trays about 6 weeks before planting for chitting. They do say that Shallots should be planted on the shortest day of the year and harvested on the longest day of the year, so give it a go if the weather is okay.

If it's not too wet, try putting Broad Beans in now for an early crop, or put them in pots to plant out later.

Keith Winter

Family Support Work (FSW) – Update

What a year 2020 was. None of us could have anticipated how events would unfold, but we are still here and have continued to support almost 500 families throughout this crisis.

It has continued to be very busy for our practitioners as families needed a lot of support – especially during the second lockdown in December. Despite schools remaining open, many of our children had to isolate due to coronavirus cases in their schools. We continued to provide emotional support to parents and made sure that children had enough activities to keep them busy. Sadly, mental health issues again escalated amongst parents, so we helped them to access specialist support where possible, although these services are themselves under stress.

We were overwhelmed by the generosity of churches across the Diocese with donations of Christmas food and toys for distribution to our families. Thank you to all who have contributed in any way, and which helped us provide the best possible Christmas for them.

November's work in numbers

- ◆ 266 (socially distanced) visits to families and 208 phone calls supporting 41 grandparents, 377 parents and 314 children.
- ◆ 32 supported meetings (virtually via Zoom/Skype etc.) with other agencies.
- ◆ 332 food deliveries made.

Prayer points

- ◆ Thanks for the wonderful response to our Christmas appeal.
- ◆ Wisdom for our senior management team and Trustees as they plan for 2021 and beyond.
- ◆ Pray that, after a break over the Christmas period, all staff will be able to come back refreshed in January.

Nikki Kerr, FSW Director of Fundraising and Marketing

News from King's Academy, Ringmer

Happy New Year from all the staff and students at King's Academy Ringmer. We hope and pray that this year will enable us all to get back to some sort of normality.

Christmas at school was a different experience although staff worked very hard to ensure that we were still able to make the event a special occasion. Students, like the rest of us, have had a difficult year and we all wanted to keep things as normal as possible.

Our students collected a substantial amount of food donations for local Food Banks as part of our Twelve Days of Giving. The Christmas Lunch was a great success, and we would like to thank our kitchen staff for making such a huge effort to lay on such a wonderful meal. The last day of term also saw our annual Christmas Jumper Day for staff and students.

Our annual concert at St Mary's was sadly unable to take place, but we were able to present an online festive concert featuring recordings by some of our excellent performers.

As we enter a new year, we still have to contend with the pandemic restrictions but are optimistic that we will once again be able to contribute to our local community.

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

Covid-19 Scams

Police are reminding Sussex residents to stay on the alert as reports come in from elsewhere across the country of frauds or attempts related to the current Covid-19 coronavirus issue. Most reports are related to online shopping scams where people have ordered protective face masks, hand sanitiser and other products that have never arrived.

Phishing emails are another 'tool' that fraudsters have been using during the lockdown period. These types of emails attempt to trick people into opening malicious attachments that could lead to fraudsters stealing people's personal information, email logins and passwords, and banking details.

Some of the tactics being used in phishing emails include:

- ◆ Fraudsters purporting to be from a research group that mimics the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or World Health Organisation (WHO). They claim to provide the victim with a list of active infections in their area, but to access this information the victim needs to either click on a link which redirects them to a credential-stealing page or make a donation of support in the form of a payment into a Bitcoin account.
- ◆ Fraudsters providing articles about the virus outbreak with a link to a fake company website where victims are encouraged to click to subscribe to a daily newsletter for further updates.
- ◆ Fraudsters sending investment scheme and trading advice encouraging people to take advantage of the coronavirus downturn.
- ◆ Fraudsters purporting to be from HMRC offering a tax refund and directing victims to a fake website to harvest their personal and financial details. The emails often display the HMRC logo making it look reasonably genuine and convincing

You can protect yourself from these types of scams by:

- ◆ Watching out for scam messages - don't click on the links or attachments in suspicious emails and never respond to unsolicited messages and calls that ask for your personal or financial details.
- ◆ When shopping online, if you're making a purchase from a company or person you don't know and trust, carry out some research first, and ask a friend or family member for advice before completing the purchase. If you decide to go ahead with the purchase, use a credit card (if you have one) as most major credit card providers insure online purchases.
- ◆ Protecting your devices from the latest threats: always install the latest software and app updates to protect your devices from the latest threats. The National Cyber Security Centre offers advice on looking after your devices (www.ncsc.gov.uk).

Wealden District Neighbourhood Police Team

Nicholas Culpeper - The Complete Herbal Hero

Just over 400 years ago, in 1616, a legend was born; a rebel who revolutionised British medicine. The herbal hero and the botanical bad boy - ladies and gentlemen, I give you Nicholas Culpeper. He did his growing up upstream in Isfield, just north of Lewes. The country lanes and starry Sussex skies were his classroom and the hedges and the heavens taught him botany, astronomy and astrology. He learnt about love too. In 1634, Culpeper and his Sussex sweetheart planned a secret Lewes wedding and a speedy elopement to the Netherlands. But tragedy struck when his love-struck lady's carriage was struck by a lightning bolt en-route to the ceremony. She died instantly.

There's no cure for a broken heart and Culpeper left Sussex to start a new life in London. He threw himself into his work as a lowly apothecary's assistant, cataloguing medicinal herbs on Threadneedle Street. At this time, medicine was only practiced by elite physicians. They would charge exorbitant prices for their secret remedies and would not even demean themselves to talk to patients, instead requesting a sample of urine to make their diagnosis. Culpeper believed medical treatment should be available to all - not just the privileged.

Setting up his own practice in a poorer part of London, Culpeper started treating forty patients a day with herbal cures derived from English plants. Then he dropped his botanical bombshell. Culpeper published an incredible tome that instructed people how to pick their own remedies, free of charge, from the hedges and meadows. The book was 'The English Physitian' in 1652 (later enlarged as 'The Complete Herbal'). His book promoted and preserved folk remedies at a time when some were discrediting village healers and preventing them from passing along their traditional knowledge. Enraged, the medical establishment accused Culpeper of witchcraft. But his Complete Herbal endured. It's been in continuous print longer than any other non-religious English language book, running rings around Tolkien and Rowling and their tales.

No doubt Culpeper's herbal remedies could have come in useful for some of you over the festive period; wild privet (for headaches), blackthorn (for indigestion), rosemary (for flatulence) and the juice of ivy berries 'snuffed up into the nose' (for hangovers). So, start 2021 by raising your Nutribullets and Ginseng teas to the healing properties found in 'mother nature', and to four centuries of Nicholas Culpeper.

Michael Blencowe of the Sussex Wildlife Trust

Benefice Priest

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.

Churchwardens

Alciston - Michèle Boys Tel: 01323 870623
Berwick – Ruth Nares Tel: 01323 811186
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

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.

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 a donation last month from Nigel Hudson.