

Parish News

St Mary the Virgin, Saffron Walden

St John, Little Walden and St James, Swards End

Part of Saffron Walden & Villages Team Ministry

February 2021

FREE



The Rev'd Jeremy Collingwood

When Rev'd Jeremy Collingwood retired to Saffron Walden in 2002, he noticed there was no biography of George Stacey Gibson, who had done so much for the town. Jeremy picked up his pen with fascination. 'Mr. Saffron Walden' was published in 2008, followed by 'Sir Thomas Smith', the Elizabethan dignitary in 2012 and finally, 'A Short History of Lord Butler of Saffron Walden' in 2017.



Jeremy took services in many local churches in his retirement, but mainly in Debden and Wimbish. He came to love these parishes and felt it a particular privilege to take part in the Remembrance Day services with their involvement with Carver Barracks. He delighted to respond to any church invitation that offered cakes!

The Saffron Walden Historical Society invited him to be Honorary Life President. He contributed regularly to their magazine, 'Saffron Walden Historical Journal', and eagerly looked forward to their monthly meetings.

Jeremy's passion was teaching and encouragement. For many years he led Bible study and discussions groups, including those in his home with a meal and wine. He led walks and loved the fields and paths of North Essex.

His career was as full and varied as his life: Naval Officer to Cambridge student; overseas colonial District Officer in rural Northern Rhodesia to Head of the Law School in Zambia. Here he wrote 'Criminal Law of East and Central Africa', the official and only textbook for this huge area on this subject for many years. Then came a stint with the Director of Public Prosecutions as a barrister.

A call to the ministry meant becoming a student again. For three years he prepared to become a priest in the Church of England. He spent 11 years as Vicar in Hotwells, Bristol and Rural Dean of Clifton and 11 years as Vicar of Christchurch, Guildford and Rural Dean of Guildford. He was finally a member of St Mary's, Saffron Walden.

Jeremy died on Thursday 10th December 2020. He leaves a wife, Margaret and three daughters, Olivia, Elizabeth and Emma and five grandchildren. He was dearly loved.

Clifford Want, based on input from Margaret Collingwood

Please see Margaret Collingwood's message on page 6 and Rufus Barnes appreciation of his friend on page 20

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PARISH NEWS - EDITORIAL DEADLINE

The deadline for contributions for each issue is the 1st Sunday of the month. Hence, the deadline for the **March** issue is **Sunday 7th February**.

Copy to Parish Administrator:

Dawn Saxon

email: office@stmaryssaffronwalden.org

01799 506024

Editor: Andy Colebrooke

01799 732970

Advertising: Gillian Brace

Email: office@stmaryssaffronwalden.org

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During the lockdown...

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St Mary's Church Website:

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TEAM RECTOR:	Vacancy
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CHURCHWARDENS:	Denis Tindley; 01799 524436 (Saffron Walden) Gill Caswell; 01799 520485 (Saffron Walden) Michael Dean; 01799 523388 (Sewards End) Lyne Ketteridge; 01799 523898 (Sewards End)

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Pastoral Letter

From The Rev'd John Saxon

Dear friends

It seems that 2021 is starting very much where 2020 had left us – in a state of tight lockdown, socially isolated from many of our family and friends and with uncertainties about the future security of our children's education, our economy and, for many of us, our jobs. Yet, as our Prime Minister and other officials have told us, help is coming in the form of vaccinations. By the time you are reading this, many vulnerable groups and care/medical professionals will have been immunised. It is hoped that 2021 is the year when our social freedoms will be restored along with many other norms of behaviour and function in our society. What do you hope for?



Albeit in a very different way we have just celebrated Christmas and the birth of Christ and soon it will be Lent with the journey to Easter and Christ's death and resurrection. In the bible, we read of God's love for his creation, seen ultimately through the gift of his son Jesus, and hear the countless stories of faith in the lives of people who have put their trust in that love. At this time though, it would be very easy to counter with the continuing gloom of the pandemic and ask 'Where is this love in the world now?'

However, for Christians, Jesus is the Hope for our world; a true Light to overcome all its darkness. A Christian life is never promised to be easy and trouble free, but it does promise the gift of God's love, if we but put our trust in his son our saviour. Christian hope is not some vague notion that things may get better in the future; it is the word used to describe the faith we have that God's reign of love will finally prevail. Christian **hope** is the orientation of one's life towards the **faith** that trusts **love** alone will conquer the pain, despair and frustration of our daily lives. A famous passage from the bible about love is from the Apostle St Paul, 1 Corinthians 13. He ends this passage with 'And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.'

So, what do you hope for? Along with many in 2021, it will no doubt be for successful immunisations, a suppression of the virus and a return to a better kind of normality. However this year plays out, may you and I know the certain hope that love will prevail and live lives in faith and trust for this.

With all good wishes for 2021

John

Margaret Collingwood writes...

May I express my heartfelt appreciation to St Mary's and the many village churches for their love and support to Jeremy over the past eighteen years. You made his retirement one of purpose and joy. He loved preparing the sermons and sharing God's love. He particularly enjoyed working with the men - walking, delicious meals and breakfasts, discussion and study.

Thank you for your understanding as he got more frail. He faced each little inevitable loss with dignity, courage and grace. But at the end he needed your prayers as never before. Please don't underestimate what that can mean in the tough times.

Next June we hope to have a memorial service for a wonderful life, richly lived, and to mark our would-have-been Diamond Wedding Anniversary. You are all invited to come and celebrate!

The text at our wedding was from Ecclesiastes: "Two are better than one and a threefold cord is not quickly broken". Jeremy and I shared in the Parkinson's, it changed the life of both of us. But we were not only in it together, we knew the Lord was with us. So the times when Jeremy or I felt a bit scared and bewildered we knew He was hanging on in there, holding us up.

Love Margaret

P.S.

H.M.S. Lapwing Association[†] has had close links with Saffron Walden since the war. Their Secretary, Les Edwards wrote to show his appreciation of Jeremy Collingwood, who had been their Chaplain for some time:

'During the years that we had the privilege of Jeremy as our "Ship Chaplain", he really supported us in all that we did...It is a great loss of any Royal Navy Ship to say farewell to her Officer Chaplain as he "Crosses the Bar" but especially a great loss to us all of H.M.S. Lapwing. From us all we say to Jeremy "may your Sails be set, your compass be true, your home Port is awaiting for you"'.

[†]In December 1941, Saffron Walden Borough and Rural Councils raised £120,000 to adopt a ship: H.M.S. Lapwing. The Saffron Walden coat of arms was painted on its quarter deck, and the ship's crest hangs in the Town Hall.

From the Registers

Baptisms

We welcome into the family of the Church and pray for:

- 1 Nov. Darcy Montgomery Seren Head
Raffael Oscar Dennis Head
- 6 Dec. Ava Elise Gambling



Funerals

We send our deepest sympathy to the families and friends of:

- 12 Oct. Pauline Haigh
13 Oct. Elizabeth Dixon
16 Oct. David Schooling
- 11 Nov. Mavis Bowler
12 Nov. Alan Edge
18 Nov. Anthony Hedger
23 Nov. Audrey Peasgood
- 3 Dec. Susan Morrison
7 Dec. Beatrice Piper
10 Dec. Peter Auger
30 Dec. Barbara Wickenden
31 Dec. Alan Barrett

*Praying for them and for those who mourn
"May they rest in peace"*



Advance Notice of a Lent Quiet Morning

The Prayer Team are planning another Quiet Morning on Zoom on Saturday 13th March. We are in the early stages of planning it, so as yet the theme and speaker are not known BUT we will let you know as soon as the planning is completed. We will be putting the details in either the Bulletin and/or The Grapevine. We would love to see you there so put the date in your diary!

Sue Walker



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Congratulations to Robin O'Neill, honoured by the Republic of Austria

At a ceremony last year in the Austrian Embassy in London, Mr Robin O'Neill of Saffron Walden was presented with the Decoration of Honour in Gold for services to the Republic of Austria. The presentation was made by the Austrian Ambassador, Michael Zimmermann, on behalf of Federal President Van der Bellen. Also receiving the award was Lord Janric Craigavon: both men have been long-standing Chairmen of the Anglo-Austrian Society. The Austrian Embassy thanked them both for their dedicated work and valuable support.

Robin was British Ambassador to Austria from 1986 to 1989; he has been a committed member of the Anglo-Austrian Society for many years.



Prayer for the month of February *provided by the Prayer Team*

A Coming Home prayer

A short prayer taken from The Daily Celtic Prayer Book and one that can be memorized so it can be with us wherever we are...

Jesus the Door
the Word, the Welcome,
soften my step,
and still my mind,
so may Your presence
of peace be over me.
Peace be here:
my heart is open.



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Hope versus Optimism

As a new year dawns, I wonder how hopeful we all feel about the future.... The vaccine programme is underway, but we must still wait and see how Brexit works out! Sadly, though, I don't hold out much hope for our future on this beautiful planet. When Prince William said that 'We should leave the world in a better condition than we found it,' he was being hopelessly optimistic. There is absolutely no way that, when I die, I will be leaving the world in anything like as good a condition as I found it.

Talking to a group of coppicers in November, I was asked whether I felt hopeful and I had to admit that I don't.

Mankind has set in train a series of vast 'positive feedback loops' which we have no means of reversing in the

course of this century. Nature normally works with negative feedback loops which balance each other out: The number of wildebeest in a herd grow, so the pride of lions succeeds in killing more and the pride grows until the wildebeest start to diminish, so the pride of lions makes fewer kills, gets smaller, allowing the herd to grow again, and so on.

However, the frightening bush and forest fires in California and Australia, caused by rising temperatures, simply put immense tonnages of CO2 into the atmosphere making those fires ever more likely. The vast fires in Siberia, where summer temperatures were 10 degrees above average, are melting the permafrost, releasing huge amounts of methane. At 80 times more potent as a greenhouse gas for twenty years this makes the fires expand further and further. The rapid melting of the polar ice cap means that far fewer of the sun's rays are reflected; instead they are readily absorbed by the deep blue arctic ocean which warms far faster and causes even more ice to melt.

None of these positive feedback loops will begin to be reversed until we reach carbon zero in 2050 and then start removing some of the 30 billion tonnes of greenhouse gases we put into the atmosphere every year. Sadly, I am not the only one losing hope. A survey conducted by Yale-NUS college found



Photograph: Edward Gildea

XR on Blackfriars Bridge in November 2018

Continued on page 13...



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that 92% of those surveyed had a negative view of the future. One woman said, 'I can't in good conscience bring a child into this world and force them to try to survive in what might be apocalyptic conditions.' Another said, 'I regret having my kids because I am terrified that they will be facing the end of the world due to climate change.'

These are heart-rending sentiments. But there is a paradox here: for all my lack of hope, I am still optimistic. These immense disasters are man-made and man is beginning to take steps to avert the catastrophe. The Reith lectures by Mark Carney demonstrated how the financial world has begun to take note, shifting its investments into more sustainable businesses and devising ways of promoting ecological responsibility in the ways markets work.

The outcome of the US elections is a game-changer and China's decision to become carbon neutral by 2060 is momentous. Agreed, they are still investing massively in coal in order to produce all the consumer goods the western world wants at the prices we want to pay, but they are world leaders in clean energy technology manufacture, and one benefit of a dictatorship is that change doesn't get slowed down by democracy!

At home, our Prime Minister has just budgeted £14bn to fund his ten point plan, and while that is dwarfed by the £43bn being spent to cut journey times from London to Birmingham by 20 minutes, it is a very welcome beginning. The radical new Agriculture Bill also gives hope that we can begin to transform unsustainable farming practices, and maybe even Europe will follow!

So there is room for optimism, even for the hopeless!

Edward Gildea, Eco Team Leader

From the editor...

Although the pandemic has severely restricted many of our Church activities, PARISH NEWS continues to need news items and interesting articles from local sources.

Whilst we are fortunate to have material available from the excellent website 'Parish Pump', what is most prized is material from within our parishes. Your editor will be pleased to receive copy (approx. 500 words or less) on any topic of general interest to our readers. These can be sent at any time and will be considered for inclusion in future editions. Many thanks in anticipation!



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St Mary's Music News

The choir has been very busy since the last newsletter which took us to the beginning of November. Importantly, members of the choir have sung for every service either live in groups of 2 to 6, or in larger numbers in recordings. It has been a privilege to contribute to regular worship, especially when we were able to attend in person, before the latest lockdown.

In a piece of very good news, we are delighted to report that Harry Sunderland was accepted as a member of the National Youth Choir before Christmas, joining George Cass who has been a member for some time. In November there was a special recording for Remembrance Sunday, which now seems a very long time ago. The small number of participants was in marked contrast to the throngs of local military and civilian groups including both adults and children who normally attend this solemn event.

Since then the adult choir and choral scholars have sung in 2 carol services, the first for Advent on 6th December, and then in the service of Nine Lessons and Carols on 20th December. This year because most of the practices were on Zoom, the carols chosen were relatively well known, and – possibly a first – all in English.

It was very exciting to be a full choir in church again, albeit socially distanced approximately 3 metres apart, and with relatively little time for face to face, or rather mask to mask, rehearsals, to limit the possible transmission of the virus. This meant that the members of the choir were spread across the full length of the church from the West door up to the rood screen, which made keeping in time with each other, Oli and the organ distinctly taxing. Oli had to spin like a top in order to bring all the different voices in at the correct times. For all of us learning how to perform together, and getting the microphones adjusted for the various locations and musical inputs is still a work in progress, but happily progress is definitely being made.

All the services have been livestreamed and are accessible from the church website, including very creative photography of parts of the church which were particularly relevant to individual carols, for example a stained glass roundel of the Virgin Mary.

Meanwhile the Junior choir has also been busy. They pre-recorded music for both the Christingle service and the Lighting of the Tree service.

Continued on page 15 ...

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Unfortunately, the choir will not be singing in church in January due to the worsening health situation. This means that it has sadly been necessary to cancel the Epiphany Carol Service. Oli does of course, with typical resourcefulness, have a plan B which is to record-and-stitch some motets for inclusion into live streamed services on the third and fourth Sundays of Epiphany. Watch this space!

Otilie Lefever

See also Oli King in 'You in the Pew' on page 29

The Transition Project receives a grant to assist the unemployed



The Transition Project, assisting unemployed people to get back to work, is to receive a grant of over £1000 to assist it to update its systems and to become available online. Education Services 2010 made the offer for expenditure over 6 months which will be used for the purposes of digitalising the Project's systems so that its services can become more accessible.

The Project was set up in 2010 by a group of volunteers under the leadership of the late Rev'd Christopher Warren, who was anxious to assist those made redundant during the 2008 financial crisis. It has been underwritten throughout by St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden including the provision of accommodation in the Parish Rooms. Project members have assisted large numbers during the 10 years since, but the present pandemic has required it cease the face to face contact that had always existed and commence working online.

Spokesman, Gerald Gardner says 'Transition offers encouragement to job applicants to write appropriate CVs and letters that reflect their own personality and capabilities, often overlooked in CV writing, and then offers advice to enhance those points that its adviser believes will assist the applicant to stand out among others. Often applicants are worried about their performance at an interview, so we offer a mock interview and address any weaknesses. We encourage applicants to help themselves rather than lead them in a particular direction, but if we believe an applicant should seek specialist advice, then we assist him or her to obtain it.'

Details of the Transition Project can be found online at www.transitionproject.co.uk.

Calendar for February 2021

This calendar is provisional and subject to change with government restrictions, see The Grapevine or the church website for the latest information and login details. See weekly bulletin for services streamed from village churches.

St Mary's, Saffron Walden

Most services, except family services, are broadcast on YouTube [Y] and some on Zoom [Z] - details from the website. Congregations cannot currently be accommodated in church under compliance with physical distancing.

Sunday 7 February (2nd Sunday before Lent)

8am Holy Communion (1662) [Y]

Sunday 14 February (Sunday next before Lent)

10am Holy Communion [YZ]

4pm Choral Evensong [Y] (subject to cancellation - check website)

Wednesday 17 February (Ash Wednesday)

9.30am Holy Communion [YZ]

Sunday 21 February (Lent 1)

10am Family Service [Z]

Sunday 28 February (Lent 2)

10am Holy Communion [YZ]

St John's, Little Walden

Joining St Mary's services

St James', Swards End

Sunday 14 February (Sunday next before Lent)

9.30am Simple Communion [Z]

Sunday 28 February (Lent 2)

9.30pm Simple Family Service [Z]



Streamed weekday services -

See weekly bulletin for sign in details.

Tuesdays

5pm Zoom Evening Prayer

Wednesdays

9.30am Zoom Holy Communion

QuinquQuiz 2021

Dear everyone who is interested,

Last year we had a Quiz to raise funds for the Bishop's Lent Appeal. We raised over £300.

Things of course are different this year because of the virus, but I would still like to organise another QuinquQuiz, though of course it will be different.

For a start Quinquagesima is early in February so I would like to keep the name, but have a **virtual Quiz** later in the month on **Saturday February 27th at 7.30 pm**

If you would like to take part, all you have to do is give me your name etc and then send me £5 so that I can forward the money to the Appeal.

Upon your registration I will send you a copy of the rules for the evening.

The prize this year will be the fun of taking part and to wave to your friends courtesy of Zoom. When all the scores are counted by **YOU** (honesty is essential!) the individual or couple who win will be given due congratulations (hurray). I very much look forward to hearing from you.

Canon Chris Bishop 01799 523722/mob. 07810 851002

2 St Mary's View, Saffron Walden CB10 2GF

CCS Lent Modules are open to anyone in the Diocese

The Saffron Walden module is based on the film, *The Man Who Knew Infinity*, starring Dev Patel and Jeremy Irons. It's the story of a mathematical genius brought from India in 1914 to work with the ablest brains in Cambridge.

We shall look at selected, short clips from the film, and relevant bible passages to lead us into discussion of such diverse topics as: faith, certainty, our own understanding of God, exile, and the heart's true home.

The course will be on Zoom, Tuesday evenings 23 February - 23 March

Fee: £25 payable to the Diocese

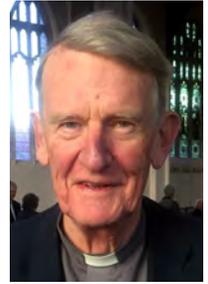
Course Leaders: The Rev'd Andy Colebrooke and The Rev'd Angela Want

The module is for anyone who enjoys film and wants to reflect about their own faith and discipleship. Students might like to buy or rent the film for viewing in its entirety, although that is not a requirement.

No knowledge of mathematics is required!

Full details of all CCS modules and an application form are available on the Diocesan website: www.chelmsford.anglican.org/discipleship/lent-modules and on our Parish Administrator's email bulletin.

My dear friend Jeremy Collingwood ...



'Have you met Reverend Jeremy Collingwood yet? He's recently retired to Saffron Walden and he loves Israel and is interested in the Jewish roots of the Christian faith. His Church in Bristol used to financially support me when we were at Stella Carmel in Israel.' So said Rev'd Ray Lockhart, then Israel Director (now President) of the Church's Ministry amongst Jewish People (CMJ), at an annual meeting of the charity at High Leigh conference centre in Hoddesdon.

I had to admit that I hadn't at that point met Jeremy, but I soon did. Jeremy was at the conference and, as befits someone who loved country walks, was, like me, on the Saturday afternoon walk in the Lea Valley Country Park. We soon became friends. A friendship which lasted to the very last hour of Jeremy's life. We said goodbye to him as he was stretchered into the ambulance in which he was to die.

Our involvements with Israel went deep. Jeremy had led a number of study tours to Israel during his time as a parish priest. I was and still am a trustee of CMJ and had led a couple of tours before Jeremy's arrival here. Once he arrived in Saffron Walden, he and I teamed up to lead trips, taking people from the Saffron Walden and Villages Team, as well as from elsewhere in the UK and indeed from around the world, plus of course his older sister, the strong-willed but much-loved Sally. Jeremy loved running these trips and put in a great deal of work to ensure their success, but, sadly, older age caused him to decide it was time to put away his suitcase.

Even though leading trips to Israel was no longer on the agenda, it did not mean Jeremy's involvement with Jewish-related ministry had come to an end. David Tomlinson agreed that I could hold a Passover meal every other year in the Parish Rooms and Jeremy (and both our Margarets) played a big role in ensuring their success. Similarly, Jeremy was, until a couple of years ago, an active part of the team organising St Mary's Holocaust Memorial Day event under the leadership of Tim Hardingham – a Minister for whom Jeremy had enormous respect and whose recent tragic death affected Jeremy very deeply.

Some people at St Mary's may not have realised that Jeremy was a part of the ministry team. Latterly he did not regularly lead services at the Parish church, because he took an active role in the wider parish and the deanery. He helped out during the vacancy in the Parish of The Icknield Way Villages and more recently he was very active, and popular, at Debden and Wimbish, both during Hilary Davey's time as Team Vicar there and also during the vacancy prior to John Saxon's appointment as her successor.

Even if he did not take a lot of regular services at St Mary's, Jeremy was

active in many other ways, not least in leading the Men's work for many years. He was a much loved and respected theologian whose Men's Lent courses, held after a dinner, (always cooked by us men), at his home in Audley Road, were extremely popular and fully subscribed. He always asked us what **we** would like to study and once we had taken a decision, he would ensure that his teachings were fully prepared and both rich in deep Biblical meaning, but also fully accessible to us lay people. It was a testimony to Jeremy's knowledge that other members of the clergy team often attended. At the other end of the day, for many years he chaired the Men's breakfasts which were also popular and he led the Men's walks, which always ended up with a light lunch in a pub that he had tried out to ensure its fayre was up to the right quality!

If you get the impression that Jeremy loved his food (especially cake!!), you would not be wrong. A knock on the front door of 55 Audley Road would inevitably result in an invitation to coffee and cake or biscuits and a good conversation on a subject of mutual interest. If time did not permit such a visit, there was often a look of disappointment on his face – perhaps he felt he had been deprived of the opportunity of getting out the cake tin! Jeremy's passing has deprived us all of the opportunity for time to be spent with a much loved friend, pastor and theologian.

Rufus Barnes

Quotes for February

Lent is a time for taking stock of oneself spiritually. It is a time for 'walking in the wilderness' in preparation for Easter. With this in mind, we offer:

The devil wrestles with God, and the field of battle is the human heart.

Fyodor Dostoevski

To get the world right, start with yourself.

Anon.

The best prayers have often more groans than words.

John Bunyan

It is but right that our hearts should be on God, when the heart of God is so much on us.

Richard Baxter

Those who go against the grain of God's laws shouldn't complain when they get splinters.

Anon.

Your worst days are never so bad that you are beyond the reach of God's grace. And your best days are never so good that you are beyond the need of God's grace.

Jerry Bridges

Parishpump

Paddy McKeown



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More Memories by Lady Perina Braybrooke

When Prince Charles opened the organic garden at Audley End House it was a boiling hot day and we struggled round the huge plot where, at that time, nothing much had grown. Prince Charles was marvellous, talking to all the volunteer gardeners, among whom was one of Robin's daughters. We were giving lunch to quite a few people and I kept looking at my watch as I was worried that everything would be spoilt. However, at last it was over and H.R.H. was preparing to leave. He politely came back to say goodbye to me – I was lagging a little way behind, and he said that he was sorry he had only met one of our many daughters. To my shame, I answered that none of them were anything to do with me. This I should not have said.

I think the event that Robin most enjoyed during the years of his Lieutenancy was the Commemoration of the Essex Regiment liberating Bayeux. About forty people went over to France by bus and Robin and I were given the front seat, so we were able to look out through the vast window at the peaceful Normandy countryside. Just behind us sat the general and his wife, who had commanded the Regiment on that wonderful day, and Robin had a fascinating talk with him about everything that had happened all those years ago. The next day Robin unveiled the Stone Memorial and made the sort of speech he was so good at. There were flags flying and bands playing and it was altogether a marvellous event, remembering that Bayeux was the first town in France to be liberated. Robin was interviewed by Look East for the BBC and gave a very good account of it all.

Robin retired as Lord Lieutenant at the beginning of 2002 and we were summoned to Buckingham Palace with seven other retiring lieutenants and their wives, to be presented with the photograph.

He had done his duty for over ten years and I think was quite relieved to step down. I remember one late afternoon when we were going to Hampshire, he said to me 'You drive; I just haven't got the energy'. People think that all the Lord Lieutenant has to do is flutter around the royals, but this is simply not true. While, of course, it is a great honour to be chosen to represent the monarch in your county, it is hard work and sometimes an evening at home seems rare. Robin would go off to camp with the Essex Regiment, attend the services at the Abbey or St Paul's for events such as the Queen Mother's Hundredth Birthday and countless other services all over the country. He would be at endless charity events, usually making a speech, take the salute at military parades and support all the mayors and anybody in the civic world. And Essex being a large county, there was always plenty to do. But perhaps the most taxing job of all was having to memorise the names of people who were to be introduced to the

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royal person at a royal visit. Sometimes there were two of three “line ups”, which made it even more difficult. Can you imagine how awful, if he had got a name wrong?

So we drove to Buckingham Palace and were ushered into a beautiful room known as the White Drawing Room and given a drink. After a while, in came the Queen and the Duke and it so happened we were the first couple she spoke to. Her opening words to Robin were that she was concerned that Mr Blair was not appointing Lord Lieutenants at the moment. ‘Well Ma’am’, replied Robin, ‘We have got a splendid man to follow me, but the thing about him is he’s a Roman Catholic and so is Cherie Blair and as she runs just about everything now; that’s why we’ve got him.’ There was a pause, which seemed to go on forever and then she said with a twinkling laugh ‘You’re probably right’ and went on to the next pair.

At the end of the party we all went up to be given the photograph and when Robin was handed his, he hesitated for a moment and the Duke said, rather testily, ‘It is us you know.’

One of the last services we attended, before Robin retired, was in the lovely round church in Great Maplestead, which is near Halstead. After it was over, an old man came up to me and asked ‘He’s not going to stop being Lieutenant is he?’ I replied that he had been doing the job for over ten years and any way he’d reached the age when it was stipulated that he had to go. ‘Well’ said the old man ‘I can tell you, he’s the most available man in the county.’ I wasn’t quite sure what he meant, but I took it as a great compliment.

Lady Perina Braybrooke

Smile Lines ...

‘Why don’t you publish your sermons? someone asked the Vicar. ‘Well, perhaps I will – posthumously’ he replied modestly. ‘Oh please do’ enthused the first – and make it soon’

Why pay money to have your family tree traced. Go into politics – and your opponents will do it for you.

‘People who say that something is impossible should not interrupt those who are managing to get it done’

A father asked his son if he were in the top half of his class at school. The son replied ‘I’m one of those who make the top half of the class possible’



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Peace in the Desert

In the garden recently I came across some wild thyme, the tiny flowers growing well, despite the weather. Breaking the small leaves in my hand I was reminded of delicious herby dumplings.

God also reminded me that we read in His word that we too should be broken before being used, as corn is crushed before bread is made, or as grapes are pressed before wine is produced; only then can we be available for use in other people's lives.

I thought back to that holiday in the Negev desert in Israel. My husband and I were camel trekking for five days, having prayed that we might spend quality time with God, getting to know Him. When we arrived there was a beautiful allure to the desert, all around was rocky sand, stretching as far as the eye could see. On the first evening the two guides told us what a great experience our time would be and explained to us how to cope with riding on camels, showing us how to mount and where to hang on, not easy! The great slow moving beasts were sitting comfortably in the sand, and looked us up and down then snorted in disdain. My camel, leader of the group seemed to be very tall. Our guides provided us with an interesting supper and with strong boiling tea served in small glasses. Then we all slept that night in a large Bedouin tent, the sides rolled up and open to the wild outside. The sky was a dark midnight blue sprinkled with millions of twinkling stars. The cold desert night air, and the grunting of the nearby camels lulled us to sleep. At breakfast time we sat on the ground cross legged in a circle around a small cooking pot, sampling the different foods on offer.

The third day of the trek was very hot, thirty-five degrees. Ambling along a narrow ridge on his huge padded feet my camel lost his footing and, tumbled over. I was flung to the ground, a voice in my head told me to move away quickly, and I managed to crawl out of the way of the heavy beast as it fell. My arm was broken in three places and my leg was badly gashed, but we were miles from the nearest road. Lying in the burning sun, frightened and in pain I questioned the Lord. Why? How could He let this happen?

The guides rigged up a small tent over me for shade and one of the other travellers splinted my arm and bound up my injured leg. I thought of the storm on the sea of Galilee, those angry waves and winds crashing around the disciples came to my mind, and His voice came clearly to me. "Peace, be still." He was close to me on the desert floor, I felt nothing could capsize my boat because Jesus was there with me, I could trust Him, even though I didn't understand the situation.

The guides had used a small radio to call for help and eventually after an

hour a rescue truck arrived. My husband and I were taken along dried up river beds through salt plants, dried broom bushes, sharp rocks and deep hollows. It was a long hair-raising drive and we arrived with great relief at the nearest road. The hospital in Eilat was a further 50 kilometres.

The treatment I received was excellent, and everyone was so kind. My arm was set and plastered. Bits of the desert floor were removed from my leg, and eighteen stitches added before bandaging me up. The doctors logged my details into a large folder with "Camel Accidents" on the front; it seemed that I was not the only traveller hurt in this way. The rest of our trekking holiday was spent resting and recovering in Eilat until it was time to catch our flight home. Maybe this was the breaking God had reminded me of at the beginning of the trip. In the midst of the pain and heat of the desert I found peace with Him and my life was enriched. I can truly say that God is with me, even when life seems hard and painful.

Everything in our lives happens for a reason. Sometimes God allows us to be buffeted, and we have to learn how to overcome and know that He will preserve us. He will give us the power and strength to cope, and we will see His hand at work.

Margaret Barnes



Nicola hoped to be a Flight Attendant in the 'new normal', so the Parish gave her some initial training

YOU in the **PEW**

interviewed by Chris Bishop

Oli King

Where were your roots and when and why did you come to live in Saffron Walden? I was born in Wisconsin (USA) to British parents and came to the UK as a very small baby! I grew up in a small village just outside Guildford. I initially moved to Cambridge 10 years ago when I took a career change and studied Music Therapy at Anglia Ruskin University, also in Cambridge. This was one of the best decisions of my life!



What brought you to St Mary's? By pure co-incidence, a part-time church music post became vacant in a small town called Saffron Walden. On the map this looked close to Cambridge and a small but significant seed of an idea formed in my mind. I was mercifully invited for interview and fell in love with the amazing church, people and town. The rest, as they say, is history.

Apart from being a member of the congregation what other events etc have you enjoyed, or still enjoy here? I adore the local countryside and go out running and walking most days. I also love the Saffron Hall, and being in close proximity to London.

What event in Saffron Walden sticks in your mind as being the most enjoyable/ thought provoking / or moving since you have lived here? There have been so many – especially in church! This is a really hard question...A deeply significant event for me, was recording our first online service last March at the start of lockdown with Alex Jeewan in Great Chesterford. This involved a single smart phone and many stacks of books for propping the aforementioned device up properly. We also borrowed the little portable organ from St Johns, Little Walden. It was an incredibly hasty effort but unbelievably powerful. In many ways, we have been on a long journey during this time.

If you had a family coat of arms what motto would you like to have on it? Work hard, play hard and try to live well. Always help others.

Smile Line

I called the RSPCA today to report I had just found a suitcase in the woods containing a fox and four cubs. 'That's terrible,' she said. 'Are they moving?' 'I'm not sure, to be honest,' I replied, 'But that would explain the suitcase.'



The Grange Care Home

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Archive Group *findings...*

February 1890

Dear Readers

For a change this year each month I am going to produce snippets of interest that come from the Churches within the Deanery during the year 1890.

Canon Chris Bishop. Archivist.



Great and Little Chesterford.

The regular performance of week-day and Sunday services has met with very slight interruption during the late period of illness which in the newspapers was spoken of as prevalent in so many parts of the country, and anyone who was inconvenienced by the omission of one whole, and part of another, Service on Sunday January 12, will understand why help was not forthcoming when it is stated that three Vicars of parishes in the immediate neighbourhood were invalided the same day, making it quite impossible for all to secure the assistance needed.

Elmdon

The Enlargement of the Churchyard.

It has been found necessary to invoke the aid of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to free the additional ground for the Churchyard from land tax and tithe. This will postpone the Consecration until the middle of March, although the land is now ready, with regard to hedging, fencing and levelling.

Heydon

On Dec 27th Miss Savile gave a tea at Heydon House to the women who attend her weekly readings. Fifteen were present, some being kept away by illness.

On Dec 30th the Hon. Mrs Savile gave a Tea in the School room to School-children. After the tea the children were amused by the appearance of an active, jumping little puppy and a fiddler! and on leaving each child received a present and an orange.

Continued on page 32

Debden

In last month's Parish Magazine certain comments were made upon the distribution of a Christmas gift of beef etc at Debden. We find that such remarks gave pain, for which we express regret. All the same we cannot help feeling that those who take upon themselves the office of Almoner should be very careful in the distribution of the charity entrusted to them and should know something of the circumstances of the neighbours amongst whom they live. When we find well paid men with small families, who spend the bulk of their wages in the public house, receiving gifts of beef, and quiet men with large families, and an invalid, and an aged man overlooked, we think we are justified in looking at possible motive, and certainly, if it does not show favouritism, it is a proof of want of knowledge of the needy at our doors.

Streethall

The holy season of Christmas was observed as usual. The Church was prettily decorated: not many attending the Services, owing, we think, to the good dinners which have to be cooked on that day.



A parcel for Justin! Now lockdown at home would be more bearable.

Lockdown Learning

No doubt we will have many lessons to learn once lockdown is over, not least the way society values some of our hardest working, lowest paid members. However, last year I began to learn something else new: Welsh! Why you may ask? I have no Welsh forebears, no connections through work to Wales, and I know only one person living there (and he is an old friend of Andy's), so what was the driving force behind this decision? I think it was simply a romantic view of the Welsh countryside (castles, rivers and mountains), an admiration for Welsh singing, especially male-voice choirs, the musical lilt of the language and - of course - *that* hymn!



Photo by Julian Rayar on Unsplash

So I signed on with Duolingo in March and am still, very slowly, working my way through their well constructed programme. And it is all free! Naturally there are some things which I have found puzzling; for example, the way that consonants change at the beginning of words, which I now know is called a soft mutation, or, unlike English, the division of nouns into masculine and feminine (how my heart sank when I discovered this recently!).

One of the good things about Duolingo is that you can ask a question if you have not understood a particular exercise and receive an answer by email almost immediately. Points are given for every exercise completed and I am currently proud to find myself in the Sapphire League, though I am unsure how I got there!

My ambition is to understand *Peppa Pig* and *Pobol y Cwm* on SC4 (no subtitles!) and to make a visit to the Principality itself and to order a cup of tea in the valleys.

'Iechyd da!'

Hazel Colebrooke

Ed: let us know what crazy new things you have been doing during lockdown

Hope for 2021: Celebrating the now and future creation

I find that watching buds swelling on trees and plants during the winter months gives me a tremendous sense of hope. We may all need some extra hope for 2021, after the events of 2020. By the time you read this a number of us may have been fortunate enough to receive a COVID vaccine, but all of us will probably still be under various kinds of restrictions. After creation's winter shut-down, the sight of tiny flowers poking out of brown earth may be more important than ever.



Getting outdoors during daylight hours, enjoying green spaces and getting some fresh air and exercise are great ways to keep ourselves healthy at any time of year. A psychologist colleague wrote, 'Attending to the details of nature can also inspire awe, which has been linked to positive mood and increased life satisfaction.' I expect it is this sense of awe that makes it easier for many of us to connect with God outdoors.

Helping ourselves and others to thrive is a good start to 2021, but it is also vital to have hope for the future. The COVID-19 pandemic was caused by an animal virus jumping into the human population. Diseases like this are not 'natural disasters', but are almost certainly caused by environmental destruction and poor farming practices - either from greed or the desperation born of poverty. Part of the answer to the current crisis is for us to care for all of Creation, both human and everything else, with God's help.

Our ultimate hope is in God's promise that He will bring about a new heaven and new earth. We can look forward to the day when Creation will be fully redeemed and liberated from evil. The Greek word used to describe the new creation is the same as that used to describe someone who becomes a Christian, whose humanity is restored and renewed. There will be continuity between the old and new earth as it is cleansed and purified, surpassing and perfecting what has gone before. There will also be some discontinuity, as there will be no more suffering or death.

So, one source of hope for 2021 is that we can enjoy both caring for and meeting God in Creation. But the parts of Creation that we find most beautiful, giving us a sense of awe and helping us to worship, are also a reminder that there is something much better to come.

Ruth Bancewicz

Church Engagement Director, The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion, Cambridge

Books for Lent

Living His Story – revealing the extraordinary love of God in ordinary ways

The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2021

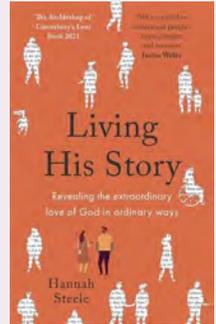
By Hannah Steele, SPCK, £7.99

The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2021, *Living His Story*, explores evangelism as a way of sharing God's love with people. How can we convey the love of God to our neighbours in a post-Christian world that has largely forgotten the gospel of Jesus Christ?

Hannah Steele uncovers liberating and practical ways of sharing the gospel story afresh. With warmth and encouragement, she shows us how we can live Jesus' story in our own lives simply by being the people God made us and allowing people to be drawn to him through our natural gifts.

Living His Story is a Lent devotional that will change the way you think about evangelism, show how ideally suited it is for the world we live in and fill you with confidence in sharing God's love with the people around you.

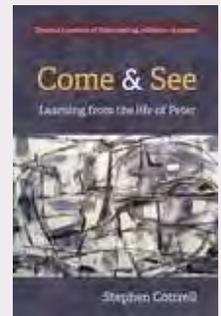
Set out in six sessions to take you through Lent, the book can be used as a single study for individuals or small groups to prepare for Easter. It will help you find space to see evangelism from a new practical perspective.



Come and See – learning from the life of Peter

By Stephen Cottrell, BRF, £7.99

When we look at the life of Peter – fisherman, disciple, leader of the early Church – we find somebody who responded wholeheartedly to the call to 'come and see'. Come and meet Jesus, come and follow him, come and find your life being transformed. This book focuses on Peter, not because he is the best-known of Jesus' friends, nor the most loyal, but because he shows us what being a disciple of Jesus is actually like. Like us, he takes a step of faith and then flounders, and needs the saving touch of God to continue becoming the person he was created to be.



More Books for Lent

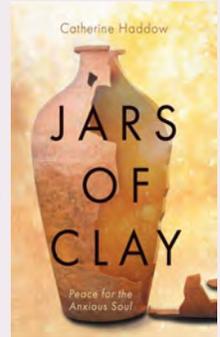
Jars of Clay – peace for the anxious soul

By Catherine Haddow, 10Publishing, £6.99

Globally, we've never been more anxious. Statistics for those seeking help for anxiety are rising rapidly and countless people feel isolated and alone. Maybe you're one of them.

If so, then this timely and helpful book on anxiety is for you. Chartered psychologist and experienced counsellor Catherine Haddow speaks truth to calm fearful minds and hearts.

Catherine explains how anxiety operates in our bodies at a physical and spiritual level. She then unpacks how the treasure of the gospel can alter our experience of anxiety, pointing to how God's promises penetrate our struggles. Ultimately, deep and lasting peace can be found, not in a process, but in the person of Jesus who meets us in our fear and brokenness.



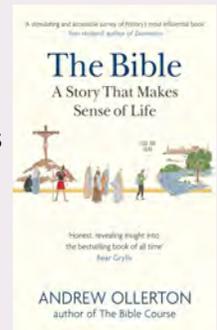
The Bible: a story that makes sense of life

By Andrew Ollerton, Bible Society, £14.99

This book explores how the story of the Bible not only helps us understand our own lives but gives us a framework for making sense of life in general. We can see how the narratives in the Bible mirror the narrative arcs we go through:

'We are not Israel enslaved in Egypt, but their quest for freedom mirrors our own. We are not with Jesus on the shores of Lake Galilee, but our need for a Messiah is just as real. In our modern age, perhaps we need this grand narrative and ancient wisdom more than ever?'

Helpful diagrams and maps are integrated throughout. Wherever you stand with the Bible, whether you are seeking to find out its meaning for your own life or just want to know more about its stories, this book may be an excellent starting point.



Reviews from Parish Pump

St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden Website:

www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org