

St Bartholomew's Church, Otford Parish News

May 2018

www.stbartholomews.co.uk

£1



SERVICES AT ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

May	8am	10am		6.30pm
6 May 6th Sunday of Easter	Holy Communion	Confirmation Service	3pm Commemoration of Departed Loved Ones	Evensong
10 May Ascension Day	-	-	-	8 pm Holy Communion
13 May 7th Sunday of Easter	Holy Communion	Civic Service	Messy Church	-
20 May Pentecost Whit Sunday	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	-	Evensong
27 May Trinity Sunday	Holy Communion (BCP)	Holy Communion	-	-

SUNDAY CLUB (FOR AGES 0-14)

INFANT: 3-7

JUNIOR: 8-11

SENIOR: 12-14

First Steps for toddlers and their carers meets on alternate Wednesdays during term time. For more details please contact Najen Harris, 01959 522813.

EPIC (for school years 5-7) meets on the 2nd Saturday in the month, 6-8 pm in the Church Hall.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FELLOWSHIP meet every Sunday evening during term time in the Church Hall, 6.30 - 8.00 pm.

HOLY COMMUNION Every Wednesday 10.00 am (Book of Common Prayer)

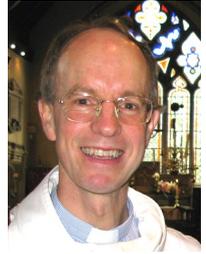
If you would like to book a baptism or wedding, please contact the Church Office 01959 523185.

Cover photo of Lizzie Yarnold's victory procession through Otford by Richard Worssam
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VICAR'S VIEWPOINT

Whilst, in this article, I often focus on events going on in the news, there is so much going on in our own parish over the next couple of months that this time I want to draw attention to some of these special events.

Firstly, there is the completion of our re-ordering and redecoration project. This is a very significant development in the life of our



church, the culmination of many years of work. I am very grateful to all those who have laboured so hard to turn this long-cherished dream into a reality. In particular, our Project Director, Heather Stanley, has done an amazing job in overseeing and co-ordinating this work. Russell Edwards has demonstrated his practical skills and expertise with unstinting dedication. Clive Southgate has done a huge amount behind the scenes. Our contractors, Bakers of Danbury, (especially John and Dave who have been working on site) have demonstrated the highest degree of professionalism and craftsmanship. There have been many others who have helped in all sorts of ways, notably in getting the church ready for worship services again.

I find it poignant that the first two services to be held in our newly re-ordered church were weddings. I am reminded that in John's Gospel the first public occasion in which Jesus demonstrated his glory was at a wedding in Cana of Galilee, at which he performed the famous miracle of turning water into wine.

Also, our first celebration of Holy Communion at a main Sunday morning service will be in the context of a Confirmation Service, presided at by Bishop James on Sunday 6th May. What a wonderful start! The nurture of faith, and encouraging people in a life of Christian

discipleship goes to the heart of the ministry of our church.

The following week we look forward to welcoming the village community to St. Bart's as we hold our annual Civic Service on 13th May. This affirms the close relationship between church and community which has existed over the centuries.

Then just a couple of days later, on 15th May, we will be welcoming churchwardens from across the Archdeaconry to a Visitation Service in which they will be formally sworn in by the Archdeacon and Diocesan Registrar to their new responsibilities for the year ahead.

Then just four days after that, on 19th May, we will be welcoming Terry Waite to St. Bart's as he engages in conversation with Nick Page about his experiences over the years and shares his wisdom with us.

The following day, 20th May, is Pentecost - one of the top three Christian festivals, alongside Christmas and Easter - at which we celebrate the giving of the Holy Spirit and the birthday of the Church. So you can see there is a lot to look forward to (not forgetting the official celebration of the completion of the re-ordering on Sunday 10th June)!

Your friend and Vicar, *Richard*

DIARY FOR MAY 2018

**Morning Prayer will be said on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays each week
in the Cranmer Room at 9.00 am**

- 2 9.30 am 'First Steps' (Otford Methodist Church Hall)
10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
7.45 pm PCC (Church Centre)
- 3 8.00 pm Worship Advisory Group (Vicarage)
- 5 9.00 am Churchyard Working Party
- 6 **8.00 am Holy Communion**
10.00 am Confirmation Service The Rt. Revd. James Langstaff, Bishop of Rochester
3.00 pm Commemoration of Departed Loved Ones service
6.30 pm Evensong
- 7 7.45 pm Homegroup (17 Leonard Avenue)
- 8 8.00 pm Homegroup (Park Farm House)
- 9 10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) refreshments afterwards
- 10 8.00 pm **Ascension Day Holy Communion**
**Magazine material for the June edition by today, please, to the Church Office,
st.bartholomews@otford.net**
- 12 6.00 pm EPIC (Church Centre)
- 13 **The Seventh Sunday of Easter: Sunday after the Ascension: Christian Aid Week**
8.00 am Holy Communion
10.00 am Civic Service
3.00 pm Messy Church (Church Centre)
- 14 12-2.00 pm Soup Lunch (Church Centre)
7.45 pm Homegroup (17 Leonard Avenue)
- 15 7.30 pm Archdeacon's Visitation (St. Bartholomew's)
- 16 9.30 am 'First Steps' (Otford Methodist Church Hall)
10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) refreshments afterwards
- 19 6.30 pm An Evening with Terry Waite (in Church)
- 20 **Pentecost/Whit Sunday**
8.00 am Holy Communion
10.00 am Holy Communion
12 noon Baptism of Neil Bragg
3-4.00 pm Otford Junior Choir (Church Centre)
6.30 pm Evensong

- 21 7.45 pm Homegroup (17 Leonard Avenue)
- 22 8.00 pm Homegroup (Park Farm House)
- 23 10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) refreshments afterwards
- 7.45 pm Finance & Standing Committee (Church Centre)
- 24 12 noon Memorial Service for Pamela Hewitt

- 27 **Trinity Sunday**
 - 8.00 am **Holy Communion (BCP) Revd. Chris Reed**
 - 10.00 am **Holy Communion (Revd. Chris Reed)**
- 28 Bank Holiday Village Fete
 - 7.45 pm Homegroup (17 Leonard Avenue)
- 30 10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)



Registers



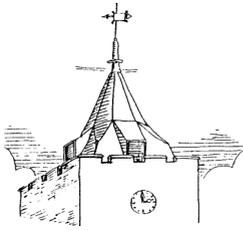
WEDDINGS (Our Congratulations)

- 14th April Anthony **Thew** and Samantha **Marshall**
- 21st April James **Peake** and Katharine **Alban-Davies**

FUNERAL (Our Sympathy)

- 21st March Paul **Barsby** (aged 88)

FROM ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH



CHURCHYARD WORKING PARTY

This will take place on **Saturday, 5th May at 9.00 am**. We are very short of helpers so if you could come for one hour it would make a difference. Come and join in the fun and bring some useful tools, too!

CONFIRMATION SERVICE, Sunday 6th May

There will be a service of Confirmation on Sunday 6th May at 10 am at which Bishop James will be presiding. This is a significant stepping stone in faith for all those being confirmed: Sophie Allen, Luke Gardner, Alec Harris, Alexander and Stephanie Runting, Brenda Thompson, Emily Tierney, Hugh and Iona Unsworth - please remember them in your prayers.

COMMEMORATION OF DEPARTED LOVED ONES - Sunday 6th May

The annual service to commemorate Departed Loved Ones will take place in church on Sunday, 6th May at 3.00 pm.

ASCENSION DAY (Thursday 10th May) & PENTECOST (Sunday 20th May)

On Ascension Day, forty days after Easter, we think of the completion of Jesus' ministry on earth and his return to our heavenly Father. It is, in effect, the other side of the coin from Christmas. At his Ascension, Jesus promised the gift of the Holy Spirit which we focus on at Pentecost, fifty days after Easter. You are warmly invited to join us for these two important Christian festivals.

CIVIC SERVICE - Sunday 13th May

The date of the annual Civic Service is on Sunday, 13th May, 10.00 am at St. Bartholomew's Church. We warmly invite you to join us at this service as we celebrate the life of our village community.

OTFORD JUNIOR CHOIR

I am delighted to report that the choir is thriving, and the children are having a lot of fun as well as developing their singing voices.

We now have over twenty on the register and regular attendance is in double figures.

We have arranged four sessions for next term, and hope to continue to attract young people in the village to 'give it a try'. The age group is settling into the 8 to 11 range, with most children coming from Otford Primary School, but the word is getting around and children are coming from other parts of Sevenoaks as well.

If you know of young people who are 8 or over who might be interested in singing, do let me know. Boys or girls, singers or tone-deaf growlers, just call me on 01959 523401 or email cmbishop38@gmail.com.

Dates for next term are Sunday 29th April, Sunday 20th May, Sunday 10th June and Sunday 15th July.

We meet in the Church Centre and each session lasts from 3 to 4 pm. Oh, and we have a drink and biscuits at half time !

Please keep spreading the word!

Chris Bishop

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK COLLECTION 13th-19th May

We hope you will be kind and generous to those who give up their time to deliver and

then collect envelopes on behalf of Christian Aid, which gives us all an opportunity to give to those less fortunate than ourselves. We are grateful to our magazine distributors for undertaking this task. Please leave the filled envelopes in the Parish Church Office.

Please note, members of Otford Methodist Church will be collecting in the following roads this year:

Bubblestone Road, The Butts, Evelyn Road, Flowerfield, Hopfield Close, Knighton Road, Sidney Gardens, Shoreham Road (north), The Old Walk, Tudor Crescent, Tudor Drive, Warham Road, Well Road and Willow Park.

(Magazine distributors do not need to take envelopes to deliver in these roads. Thank you.)

MID MAY SOUP LUNCH. Thank you to those who support the mid-soup lunches. The next lunch is planned for **Monday, 14th May, 12-2.00 pm in the Church Centre.** Minimum donation of £5. Join us if you can.

AN EVENING WITH TERRY WAITE
A celebratory event on Saturday 19th May at 6.30pm.

To mark the completion of our reordering and redecoration of St Bartholomew's, we will be welcoming Terry to St Bart's, Otford where he will be in conversation with former BBC broadcaster, Nick Page. This will be followed by a reception with canapés, and Terry's books will be available to be bought - and signed.

Tickets for this evening - £20 - are now available from the church office 01959 523185 (mornings only) and Joan Beacom 01959 524304.



BIG CHURCH DAY OUT
Saturday 26th and Sunday 27th May at Wiston House near Worthing.

An outdoor Christian Music Festival for all ages with lots of activities and all styles of music. Join us for just one or both days.

Website: www.bigchurchdayout.com and speak to Mags Southgate (524720) about tickets.

RE-ORDERING CELEBRATION SERVICE,
Sunday 10th June, 10.00 am

There will be a special service to celebrate the re-ordering and redecoration on Sunday, 10th June at 10.00 am to which we are inviting all those who have played a part in helping us to bring this project to successful completion. Bishop James will be presiding at this service.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH FAIR
Saturday 16th June, 2-5 pm

The Church Fair will be held on Saturday 16th June on The Green and the surrounding areas from 2.00 pm. There will be the usual array of stalls and attractions. Proceeds will go to support the mission and ministry of St. Bart's so please book the date in your diary and come and support the church. If you can help in any way, please contact Andrew Hill (01732 469538), Margie Torry (524463) or the Parish Church Office (523185). Further details of the Fair will follow in next month's magazine.

FAITH IN THE FAMILY...

PENTECOST

The birthday of the Church

Parents' pause for thought: Read the story of Pentecost in the Bible (Acts 2). Take time to think of any times when you have felt filled with the warmth and love of God (either quietly or dramatically). Perhaps you felt emboldened to speak out or take some action? Be prepared to share these stories with the children in your life. (Be encouraged by verse 39).



Peter's story: Read the story together, perhaps around the kitchen table. Wonder about it as follows:

I wonder how the disciples felt at first about preaching to the whole world?

I wonder what they saw and heard on the day of Pentecost?

I wonder how they felt afterwards?

I wonder if God might ask you to do something special. How would you feel?

Happy Birthday! Pentecost is sometimes seen as the birthday of the Church. Why not wear something red to church on 20th May to celebrate? Ask children to help you prepare a fruit salad for dessert (to represent the fact that Pentecost was a harvest festival and the first disciples were the harvest of Jesus' work) and eat with a 'birthday' cake!



Spreading the word: What can we tell other people about Jesus? Write this as a heading on a large sheet of paper. Leave some felt tip pens for the family to add their ideas (eg. He loves us, He is always with us, He keeps his promises, etc).

In the car/on a walk: How many things can you think of that need the power of wind or fire to get them going? What do you think human beings need?

Young children: Play the story of Pentecost, retelling it in your own words. Get everyone to tear up strips of red, yellow and orange tissue paper and float these down onto their heads! Make sound effects of the wind!

You could read a picture book about a windy day. Chat about the disciples being blown out onto the streets to tell people about Jesus at Pentecost.

Prayer: Thank God for the gift of his Spirit to each one of us. In a series of prayers, pray for home and family, for neighbours, for a street, for village or town, for big cities, for a country, gradually widening out your prayers to include the whole world! Use a globe as a visual aid.

DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS

www.sevenoaks.gov.uk Cllr.Lowe@sevenoaks.gov.uk <http://michellelowe.yourcllr.com>

This year is the centenary of women's suffrage when on 6th February 1918 women over the age of 30 years of age with a small property qualification were allowed to vote in parliamentary elections; and in November 2018 a second Act of Parliament was passed allowing women to be elected to parliament. It was not for another 10 years that all women over the age of 21 were given voting rights on the same terms as men.

As with many advancements it was local government that led the way in women's suffrage. The Local Government Act 1894 gave all women the right to vote in, and stand for, elections for parish and district councils, school boards and as poor law guardians. Just six years later there were nearly 2,000 women poor law guardians and 200 women members of school boards.

As we celebrate 100 years since 8.4 million women were given the right to vote and stand for election in parliamentary elections for the first time ever, and 90 years since women were given the same voting rights as men, Sevenoaks District Council is planning a celebration of women's advancement in the last century.

Planning is in the early stages, but we would like to celebrate how women's lives have dramatically changed in both health and work. A hundred years ago many women died in childbirth and from illnesses that we would not bat an eyelid at today. For example my great-grandmother had a septic leg wound and, without antibiotics, died leaving three small children without a mother.

In the world of work, careers and education, a girl born today has so many more life opportunities than one born in 1918. A century ago there were no women bishops, priests, lawyers (women were not allowed to practice law until 1919) and judges.

Sevenoaks District Council wants to celebrate women's advancement in the last century around November time and we are looking for ideas and local stories that could help form an exhibition or presentation. Was the Sevenoaks district home to one of the UK's first women lawyers? Did any suffragettes have links to the District? Do we have any people living locally who were born in 1918 and could give a personal account of how things have changed? Did Otford or any of our local residents play a key role in the advancement of women?

If you have any ideas or examples that could help us please email me at:

Cllr.Lowe@Sevenoaks.gov.uk as I would love to include them. Ideally we would like to involve the District's secondary schools to see if they would be interested in partnering with us.

With best wishes,

Michelle



SCOUTING IN OTFORD

Start and Restart

It was thought that Scouting in Otford began in 1930 with the formation of a Wolf Cub Pack. However thanks to a photographic clue supplied by Ed Thompson, and an old newspaper clipping, it is now known that Scouting actually started in the village in 1913.

Initially local boys banded together, having been inspired by Baden Powell's book, 'Scouting for Boys'. They were then joined by Scout 'Master', Miss Iris Cornwallis. Her family were great supporters of the Scouts, letting them use Twitton House as their HQ and presenting them with their first Colour in 1914. In 1916 the Troop was joined by a Wolf Cub Pack.



The Otford Troop with Miss Cornwallis; camping in 1914?

The 1st Otford held regular entertainments in the village, raising funds for camps and the war effort; a tobacco fund for the military and 'The Blue Cross Fund' for wounded horses at the Front were two of the causes supported. The Scouts sang, performed sketches and presented tableaux. They were joined by local performers - Lady Emily and Miss Dyke on piano and drums - and troops stationed in the village, who sang and performed gymnastic displays.



The Rev and Mrs Mayne Young are pictured with Miss Cornwallis and the Troop which dates this photo between 1915 and 1917

The Scout Troop would regularly attend church parades and furnish Guards of Honour at services. In 1916 the Revd. Mayne Young addressed the Scouts saying 'The Boy Scout Movement is a movement which ought to be dear to the hearts of every patriot, for it is doing a noble work in the training of the future manhood of The Empire'.

During these war years the Scouts would have formed Patrols, roving the countryside looking for spies or guarding the railway against saboteurs!

Not much is known about Scouting in the village between 1916 and 1922 as paperwork is scant, probably due to the war and its aftermath. It's not until 1922 that Otford Scouts are confirmed as still being in existence. The Troop closed in 1925.

In 1930, following encouragement from 'Toc H', a Christian Group born out of WWI, the Scouts reformed as the 15th Sevenoaks. In fact the Revd. Elder referred to the new Scouts as 'the children of Toc H'.

The Group comprised Wolf Cubs, Scout and Rover sections. A plot of land at the 'Chalk Pit' was acquired and the Group purchased an old War Office building as their HQ, which became known as 'Scouter's Cove'.

The Scouts placed flowers on the Village War Memorial each week, took part in competitions, learnt to swim, held concerts and helped at local garden fetes. They camped at Walmer Castle, visited a zoo, and saw Baden Powell (BP) 'at close quarters'. At Christmas they sent out hampers and mended old toys for poorer families.

During World War II the Scout Motto 'Be Prepared' took on a fresh significance. The Leaders became involved in home defence and Scouts attended lectures and exercises, acting as patients. The older Scouts were eager to do their bit and several left to act as A.R.P. messengers or to join the Cadet Corps.

Because of the Blackout, meetings were held in the grounds of The Grange, home of the Group Scout Master, Mr Laurie. Despite losing further leaders to the war effort Scouting continued with expeditions, camps, and badge work, with several becoming King's Scouts.

The Group acquired a new HQ, a derelict cottage at the top of Tudor Drive which was

later damaged by a Doodlebug. Since 1945 the Scouts have also met in The Gate House, Kemsing Scout Hut and The Memorial Hall. The current HQ was built in 1961.

Scouting has now been continuous since 1930 with many adventurous activities undertaken such as climbing, kayaking, archery and back to basics camping. And we have still continued to support Service personnel overseas, most recently in 2012, by sending out shoeboxes containing magazines, sweets, small gifts and drawings.

This March the Group raised over £1200 for WaterAid and Toilet Twinning by walking 16 miles from Otford to The Thames along the Darent Valley Path.

Currently there is a Beaver Colony, two Cub Packs and a Scout Troop. Demand is high and a second Beaver Colony could be easily formed with those on the waiting list. If you would like to join the 'adventure' and bring Scouting to even more children in the village, then please contact Jonathan Booth at 15thgsl@sevenoaksscouts.org.uk

Check out our new website for information www.otfordscouts.org.uk

If you were a Scout in Otford and have memories, documents or photos of your time with the Movement that you would like to share, please also contact us so we can add to our history.

Jonathan Booth

*Sponsored walk to The Thames
March 2018*



IN CONVERSATION WITH ... MARGARET NICHOLSON

Former Head of Maths at Walthamstow Hall

Born in Gloucester in 1945, Margaret's Scottish father was a weather forecaster with the Meteorological Office and her Lancastrian mother a social worker. Like all women at the time, her mother gave up her job as soon as she married. Margaret's parents had met at Edinburgh University; the university which she, too, later attended.

The family moved to Portugal in 1947 when Margaret's father was seconded to the Portuguese Meteorological Service - a 'blissful time' away from austerity Britain for her parents. The next year they returned to England so that her father could work at Heathrow Airport. Margaret's brother, Alistair, was born in



1949 while the family were living in Slough and then, in 1955, her father was posted to Prestwick Airport and

the family went to live in Troon. Margaret attended Marr College where she sat her Scottish Highers. Troon, with its bracing sea air, was an extremely healthy place to live and afforded the growing children wonderful freedom for cycling and other outdoor activities.

In 1963, when Margaret went to Edinburgh University to read for an arts degree in Maths and Natural Philosophy, the family moved to Bracknell where the headquarters of the

Meteorological Office was then based. Margaret loved studying at a Scottish university because it allowed her to explore so many subsidiary subjects in addition to her core degree requirements. Armed with an MA, Margaret next enrolled at Manchester University to train as a maths teacher. She made many lifelong friends whilst studying in Edinburgh and Manchester and thoroughly enjoyed being at both universities.

Margaret's first teaching job was in Woodley near Reading. She lived at home with her parents because she could afford 'a car or a flat, not both' and the car took priority; by then she had met her future husband Peter at a friend's 21st party and needed transport to visit him! Peter, having completed a degree in Engineering at Nottingham University, was a student at Cranfield studying Operational Research (mathematical solutions to business problems). They became engaged a year after meeting and married in 1969 in Warfield near Bracknell. After living for a year in Ealing, from where Margaret commuted by tube to teach at Francis Holland School, Sloane Square, the Nicholsons bought a house in Willow Park. Margaret said that the move to Otford was 'one of the best decisions we ever made'.



A year later, with the opening of the A21 bypass, Margaret changed jobs to teach maths at Tonbridge Grammar School. When their

eldest son Tom was born in 1973, Margaret stopped working. The family moved to Well Road in 1975 and Edward was born in 1976. Once both boys were at Otford Primary School, Margaret returned to Tonbridge Grammar on a flexible part-time basis allowing her to take her children to school in the morning and collect them in the afternoon. When the boys went to Judd, Margaret resumed full time employment, showing enviable efficiency and stamina in organising both work and home! In 1998, after eighteen years at Tonbridge Grammar, Margaret became Head of Maths at Walthamstow Hall where she stayed until retirement in 2004.

When Margaret first retired Peter was still working, running SW London Business Link. Tragically, soon after retirement, he became ill. He began to show distressing character changes: Margaret said the first signs were when 'his natural eccentricity was becoming irrational' and he began to do increasingly strange things. He had once been a marathon runner but now could only walk slowly and would fall on the stairs. He lost his empathy for other people and could no longer hold a proper conversation. Margaret told me they were 'blessed' to find an excellent local neurologist who sent them straight to the appropriate specialist in London who diagnosed Pick's Disease with palsy – a type of frontotemporal dementia. Unfortunately it is incurable and Peter's health progressively deteriorated. In

2011, when Margaret herself became ill, Peter moved to a good care home in Oxted. He died on Easter Day 2014.

Margaret has always been a churchgoer and, all through this difficult time with Peter, she knew she was not alone; she felt that God had her by the hand and was gently guiding her. Her father, a Scottish Presbyterian, was the main influence in her Christian upbringing. As a small child he would pray with her, read her bible stories and take her with him to church. In her teenage years in Scotland, Margaret attended the local Episcopal Church where there was an excellent youth group. Margaret has been a member of St Bartholomew's since coming to Otford and spoke warmly about the fellowship offered by the church. Both during the period when Peter was ill and after his death, she said that the support provided by others was 'tremendous'. Meeting up with those in a similar situation to herself, through Cameo and the Wednesday morning service, has been a huge source of comfort.

With three young grandchildren and a host of interests, Margaret is never short of things to do. She is the treasurer of the Otford Lunch Club and belongs to the U3A, NADFAS, the Soroptimists, the Trefoil Guild and the Historical Society. She also enjoys art exhibitions, walking, and her garden. She told me she is, 'a bit like my dad in being fascinated by many subjects'



Christeen Malan

ANCIENT WISDOM - MODERN LIVES

The Day of Pentecost – Peter’s Story

‘When did the Church begin? I’d say it was the day God’s Holy Spirit was sent to us. That’s when we disciples came alive and burst into action. I shall never forget it. . .

‘After the resurrection, Jesus had explained why he’d had to die on the Cross. In our heads, we understood the reason for it. Yet we still half hoped that he would now be crowned as king. But no, Jesus was going back to his Father in heaven. We were to teach everyone to follow him, first in Jerusalem and then throughout the whole world! But first he asked us to wait in Jerusalem for his Holy Spirit to come to us.

‘As we waited, we met to chat and pray. I suppose we felt rather flat. We knew the task ahead, but mostly we were just ordinary men – how could we stand up in front of crowds and explain what we hardly understood ourselves? A fisherman, I felt like my boat when there was no wind in the sails, out on the lake going nowhere.

‘Everything changed on that Sunday morning. Outside in the city, the streets were filled with pilgrims from all over, come to celebrate the first ripe crops. We sat inside, quietly praying. I think we all heard it at once. Our eyes met, questioning. What was that rushing sound, like a great wind blowing straight down from heaven, filling the house? Startled, I saw tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each one of us.

‘And suddenly, each of us flickered into life. We felt the warmth of the truth within our hearts as well as knowing it in our minds. Oh, how the Spirit flowed out of us as we found bold words to declare the wonders of God in languages as diverse as the countries of those pilgrims outside.

‘A crowd gathered, listening to our shouts and declarations, amazed that they each heard their native languages. “What does this mean?” I heard them ask. “It means they have had too much wine,” replied another.

‘I couldn’t let that pass. Looking at those people, I saw them for the first time as Jesus would have done – bewildered, like sheep in need of a shepherd. Standing up, I raised my voice. I started to explain who Jesus was and how he had died for each one of us for the forgiveness of our sins. I urged them to be baptized and to follow Jesus and I told them that they and their children would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, too. Yes, that was when it all began, for our numbers swelled to more than three thousand that amazing day.’

Vicki Howie



THROUGH THE EYES OF AN ARTIST

Picking up the Pieces

An original print by Ann Bridges

A spice jar fell from my kitchen cupboard the other day. It landed on a dish, breaking the dish somewhat neatly into several pieces. My response to the mishap was “I’ll draw the broken bits” because, to me, they looked interesting. So I did, making several drawings in my sketch book. I like broken things and discarded items. They all get a moment of glory on paper. I rarely try to mend the broken necklace, or fruitlessly search for the missing earring, preferring instead to create something new from it, usually a drawing.

I made an image a few years ago called Picking up the Pieces. It was bought by a lady who wanted to give a gift to her daughter who was grieving over a relationship that had ended. It’s an arrangement of fragments of broken china, forming an attractive pattern from what might

otherwise have been thrown away. Perhaps it represented hope for the future.

There is a Japanese tradition called Kintsugi (golden joinery) or Kintsukuroi (golden repair) which treats breakage as part of an object’s history rather than as an accident that must be disguised. The cracks are mended with gold.

“Not only is there no attempt to hide the damage, but the repair is literally illuminated”: Christy Bartlett (The Aesthetics of Mended Japanese Ceramics).

I mixed some gold coloured acrylic with some glue and attempted a repair of my dish. It will never go in the oven again, but it just might become a table centrepiece for a candle or two and be a reminder of the beauty of imperfection.

Ann Bridges
Local artist and designer
www.ann-bridges.com



70273 PROJECT - ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL

Knowing Rochester very well, Kevin and I decided to have a day there viewing the two exhibitions, the newly refurbished crypt, have lunch, explore the shops and enjoy evensong – seemed a good plan at the time! We did have lunch – coffee and cake – we had 40 minutes to shop (by the way, there is an amazing, quite large shop near the crossroads about two minutes' walk from the Cathedral, absolutely full of fabrics, items appertaining to quilting, patchwork, crafts etc – I will of course revisit, but in the short time I had, I managed to buy some items!). The crypt is light and has a very interesting exhibition of Rochester's bridges, from the Roman bridge to today, a children's area, some ancient ceiling paintings and two pictures of ecclesiastical embroidery. Most of our day was spent viewing the main exhibition, the 70273 Project, whose ambitious aim is to blanket the world in love – oh, if only!

The number that lies behind the Project is the number of babies, children, men and women who were deemed unfit, during 1940-41, to belong to the German master race, by reason of any kind of disability; each individual was assessed by two doctors, and a cross added by each doctor to the medical form meant death for that person, by lethal injection, gassing, starvation or being shot. The Aktion T4 programme is the only death programme bearing Hitler's signature, and stems from a farmer's letter asking for permission to kill his useless, disabled son. For Hitler, it was an opportunity to dispense with individuals judged to be an economic burden or unfit for Nazi society – the pure Aryan race desired by Hitler. It also became the precursor to The Final Solution. It was only as recently as 2014 that a

monument was set up in Berlin at Tiergartenstrasse 4. A German minister, Bernd Neumann, laying the foundation stone, said that the monument should set a sign against hate, delusion and cold-heartedness, and for tolerance, empathy and respect for life.

And that is what the Project is all about: a mass petition for love and humanity, being signed in stitches from people all over the world, in over 100 countries. The white fabric represents the sheet of paper, and the two crosses the doctors' evaluation. It was such a simple way to end someone's life with the stroke of a pen, but in the 70273 Project, this simple symbol takes on a new strength and symbolism; it becomes a mark of love, a celebration of being unique and being perfectly imperfect. Each block of fabric is as different as its maker, and the person being commemorated.

The crosses seen in the Cathedral nave represented 13,817 lives. The individual blocks had been made by thousands of people across the south-east and beyond, and had been sent by post or collected at block-making gatherings, and then sewn into quilts and pelmets at community stitch-ins and get-togethers, and worked on for weeks by individuals. The centrepiece of the Cathedral's display is two huge banners, each bearing two crosses, each made up of individual three-dimensional crosses. I lost count of how many more banners were hanging; it was all a truly impressive display.

As I stood gazing at those thousands of crosses, I felt sad that there were no pictures of the people they represented, which might have put a human connection into the displays, but most

of all, I felt a weariness and heartfelt sorrow that, even today, people are being killed in various ways, just because their face does not fit, they are the 'wrong' colour, race or creed. Who gives anyone the right to decide if another human being is not worthy of life?

Each visitor received a postcard with two crosses on one side, and on the other the words: 'We are blanketing the world in love and remembering the 70,273 victims of the Aktion T4 programme'. I took a lot, and have been sending them to many people in various places,

doing as it says at the top of the card: 'sending you love'.

One final comment on the whole project: it has been a very personal and emotional response to something huge; in its simplest form, it is an individual giving their appreciation of another individual, and using their time, energy and creativity to do so.

Sylvia Grafton



OUT AND ABOUT



KEMSING SINGERS 19th MAY:
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OTFORD EVENING W.I.

Our next meeting on the 10th of May at 7.30pm in the Club Room of the

Memorial Hall is our Annual Meeting and we hope as many members as possible will be able to attend. Linda will be doing one of her fantastic quizzes - not to be missed.

For any further information please contact our President on 01959 524831.



There was no more dozing off after the vicar started serving the extra-strength coffee *before* the service

MAY PUZZLE PAGE

After the Ascension

The disciples had spent 40 days with Jesus and now they were called to share that experience with others. Jesus told them to wait for the gift of the Spirit to empower them as witnesses. *'Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.'* The Spirit also equips

us to display Jesus' character (fruit) and enables us to witness (gifts). How does our life demonstrate the difference Jesus makes? The early Christians were called to witness for Jesus in ever-increasing circles of influence. For us, this will mean family and friends, workplace and community, and the wider world. Where is God calling us to serve Him?



Ascension
Disciples
Forty
Jesus
Share
Experience
Wait
Gift
Spirit

Empower
equip
Witnesses
Jerusalem
Father
Early
Christians
Demonstrate
Difference

Family
Friends
Workplace
Community
World
Calling
serve

GARDENING THROUGH THE YEAR WITH MEMBERS OF OTFORD GARDENERS' SOCIETY

David and I both came from families who were keen gardeners and as children we both had our own patch of ground to tend and grow what most appealed to us.

When we bought our first home, we were so excited that it had a greenhouse in the back garden – this was a new experience for both of us, and one which we were very keen to explore. We would even be able to potter in the garden in the rain. We moved to our present home 38 years ago and one of the first things we did was to install a greenhouse. From then onwards we have become gardening nuts.

With advice from parents, family and friends we set about changing what was a rather plain garden into what we have now - a tranquil haven which welcomes both birds as well as bees and butterflies. We also created a vegetable garden which, due to a rather hungry Labrador puppy, had to be fenced off quickly!

Using the greenhouse we are able to make an early start each season, sowing seeds, taking cuttings and starting off pots and hanging baskets to adorn the patio area. We also raise a lot of our vegetable plants from seed – the most magical moment of all each year is when the first seed leaves appear above the surface of the soil – how wonderful nature is!

One of our aims is to be able to eat something we have grown either from the garden or one of our allotments every day of the year, whether it is lovely crunchy mangetout or sugar snaps in early summer, fragrant tomatoes and delicious runner beans later on in the year, borlotti beans, chard, or cavalo nero as autumn approaches, or winter vegetables carrots, sprouts, parsnips or squash.

Best of all though are all the salad leaves we grow all year round (in a cold greenhouse during the winter months) accompanied by an assortment of fresh herbs and all grown by us!

Another challenge we give ourselves is to try to always have something scented in the garden. As we are heading into May we are looking forward to the *Viburnum burkwoodii*, *clematis armandii*, followed on by the lilacs and *philadelphus Belle Etoile*.

We spend increasing amounts of time in the garden especially as the weather improves. It is a lovely place to spend time working and relaxing and during the summer becomes an outdoor dining and entertaining area.

Tips for May – be patient and don't plant tender plants out until all danger of frost has passed. The middle of May is the ideal time to make a first sowing of runner beans.



Mary and David Evans

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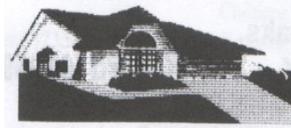
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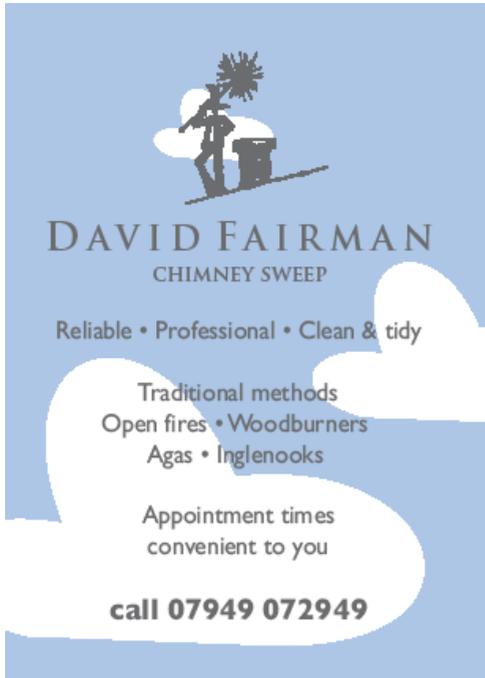
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