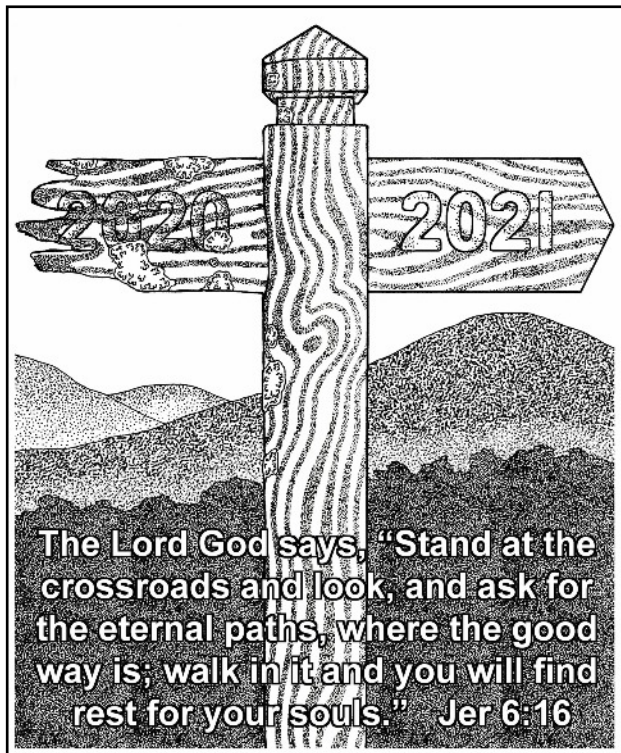


PEWTALK 50_P

January 2021



EAST & WEST TILBURY AND LINFORD PARISH MAGAZINE

Parish web site: www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk

BITs AnD PiECes

IMPORTANT NOTICE Re: COVID-19

Usually, when the PEWTALK distributors deliver the January magazine, they collect the annual subscription of £6. As I write I do not consider it safe for the distributors or our subscribers for this to happen in January 2021. We will therefore arrange to collect the subscription later in the year. In the meantime enjoy reading the magazine.....Ed.

100 Club: As it was not possible to hold the December draw at the cancelled Christmas bazaar it was made at the morning service on Christmas Day when Jason drew the winning ticket belonging to Gina Blackbond - a staunch member of the St. Catherine's congregation.

Downing Street announced on 17th December that the Right Reverend Dr. Guli Francis-Dehqani will be the next Bishop of Chelmsford. Bishop Guli is currently Bishop of Loughborough in the Diocese of Leicester, a post she has held since late 2017. Elsewhere in this edition there is a message from Bishop Guli.

This year Christmas was very different both in church and out. At St. Catherine's we were not able to have our traditional "Christingle", "Lessons and Carols", or Christmas Eve "Midnight" services because of the need to keep St. Catherine's a safe place in these COVID times. However we were able to celebrate Christmas with services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day both of which were well attended given the circumstances. Revd. Michèle also officiated at a funeral and an interment of ashes over the Christmas period. For many of us our plans to meet with other family

members during the holiday were belatedly changed when we entered the "tier 4" COVID restrictions and we were effectively locked down.

The Foodbank distribution centre at St. Francis continues to operate and at present this is the only use of the building. Demand has grown during the past few months but thankfully donations of food have continued to meet the demand. In particular it is worth mentioning that many of the residents of East Tilbury Village have joined together to donate a significant quantity of food on a weekly basis. Given the need to stay safe several folk that used to donate food and are now less able to, have switched to donating cash instead. This is a great help as the foodbank has many costs - not least that required to run their van which is used to collect food and deliver it to the various distribution centres.

In their Christmas message the Trussell Trust (under whose auspices the Thurrock foodbank operate) included this information: "2020 hasn't been the year any of us expected. We have all faced huge challenges and the need for emergency food has risen across the country – *in the first six months of the pandemic, the food banks in our network gave out 1.2 million emergency food parcels, and this winter is expected to be busier still*".

And finally as we enter this New Year we all hope and pray that 2021 will see the start of a return to some semblance of what our lives used to be before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. So let us all resolve to stay safe and well.....Ed

Reflections from The Rectory



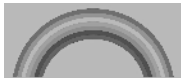
Well, what a year 2020 turned out to be! You do not of course need me to tell you just how difficult it was and the challenges we all faced. So many new things added to our lives in order to keep us safe but not necessarily welcomed by anyone. I refer to things such as social distancing, handgel, facemasks, Tiers 1, 2, 3 & 4 and complete lockdowns. Working from home became the norm for many as did meetings via technology such as Zoom. Churches were closed and reopened several times and the numbers able to attend life events in

a place of worship changed constantly. The major festivals for all faiths had to be observed differently in 2020.

But, these restrictions and changes to our lives, as frustrating as they were and continue to be, are nothing compared to those who have lost loved ones as a result of Covid-19 or the exhaustion experienced by front line workers in the NHS and other key workers.

And oh how I wish I was writing this reflection with the situation having turned the corner and life about to get back to normal. The vaccination programme will undoubtedly be a game changer but it will take some time to roll out to all of the population so we must continue to be patient for a while yet. As we do so let us give thanks to God for the skill and collaborative working in the scientific research communities that has taken place.

When life is so full of challenge, and we are all so weary, it is difficult not to be overwhelmed by it all. But we must not let this be so. We must continue to look forward and believe that things will eventually change for the better and I have three special moments that have taken place recently for me which might be of help to you.



The first is this: during the week leading up to Christmas I happened to be in the right place at the right time to see the most beautiful and complete rainbow in the sky. It filled my heart with joy and reminded me of God's words in the Book of Genesis, 'I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.' God is forever with us.

Secondly, I heard again some rather wonderful words that King George VI included in his 1939 Christmas broadcast to the British Empire. They are as follows: *"And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: "Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown." And he replied: "Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way."* The words come from the poem 'God Knows' by Minnie Louise Haskins. They were inspiring words in 1939 and remain so as we move into 2021.



And lastly, on a walk around RHS Hyde Hall in the last week of the year I saw little clusters of snowdrops emerging from the cold wintry soil. They made me smile and they made me cry all in the same moment. For me the humble Snowdrop is such a sign of hope and reassurance that from the darkness of the winter months Spring will emerge.

My prayer for everyone is that *soon* we shall be able to hug the ones we love, that face masks and handgel can be put away and social distancing optional and not compulsory.

Let us hope that in 2021 all of the major religious festivals can take place once again in places of worship with the whole worshipping community gathered together. Let's look forward to the return of Afternoon Teas at St Catherine's, the Summer Fete and the Christmas Bazaar. And weddings, baptisms and funerals the life events they once were where the whole family can attend.

In the meantime do please keep checking the Church website and weekly newsletters for details of Sunday services and the Foodbank shopping list. During January St. Francis will continue to run for the Foodbank alone and St. Catherine's will be open for Sunday Services when it is safe to do so.

Take care, stay safe and keep smiling,

I wish you and your families Every Blessing for 2021,

Revd Michèle.

Christmas at the Seafarers Centre at Tilbury

2020 has been very different for all of us. But at the seafarers centre the decision was made to provide the seafarers visiting Tilbury with a Christmas present.

Usually we would allocate days for our loyal volunteers to join us at the centre to wrap presents and enjoy lunch.

This year the when the first lock down had finished we delivered bags of presents to be wrapped by our volunteers at home. So..... we managed to reach 200-300 wrapped. But this was a far cry from our target of 2020 presents for 2020.

So what do we do, it was decided by Julie Hobby and myself that 'we could do it'.

With the aid of one approved volunteer Bob, Julie and I made up the parcels, wrapped parcels during our allocated hours and many voluntary hours.

The magic number of presents wrapped was 2,514. With as huge thank-you to our funders for their support, for the knitted hats, gloves, scarves, and the donation of toiletries. We also include a hand written Christmas card which is also written by volunteers.

If you have any wrapping paper or Christmas cards left over they can be donated for next year.

Bishop Peter's New Year Message: The Quality of Life

2020 has been a truly tough year for everyone and as 2021 dawns it seems unrelenting. The brutal coronavirus remains, and even though vaccines are gradually becoming available, many have lost jobs, schools are still disrupted, the economy is uncertain, desperate refugees still arrive and we don't know how our new relationships with Europe and the USA will pan out. Many are anxious and our quality of life is deeply challenged. As the journey of 2021 begins how will we handle it?

All of life is a pilgrimage, a journey through time with God and others. As human beings we are bound by chronological time: past, present, and future. But a Christian is called to view time from the perspective of eternity. Christian eternity is essentially about quality of life rather than quantity. That is what defines our pilgrimage.

In English we have one word for time, but the original Greek of the New Testament uses two very different words. First of all "chronos", where we get the word chronological, meaning measured time, a period of time, say for a journey. The other Biblical word is "kairos". Here the meaning is about the content and quality of time rather than its length: what's going on within the time, eg a time of harvest, a time of temptation.... Even more importantly it's about opportunity and fulfilment, 'the Kingdom of God is at hand!'. What we do for God and others in the time he gives us. How do we use it? What do we put into it?

This is the idea of time that is crucial in Christian thinking and discipleship.

As we journey into a new year it is this more Christian view of time I would encourage us all to reflect on. What are we going to put into each day in our pilgrimage through 2021? How are we going to use the time for others? God is concerned about the quality of our lives rather than their length. That is hard for us to accept, but I believe this is real time as God created it. From the eternal perspective it is relationships, love, and friendship that last, that count most and can change us for the better. Kairos is a life word whereas chronos, by definition, is a death word. In Ecclesiastes 3 the Bible tells us "there is a time for everything, a season for every activity under heaven". There is a time for everything God wants us to do in our lives.

Some of those things are positive: birth, planting, healing, laughing; while some are negative: uprooting, weeping, death Both can lead us to God if we throw ourselves wholeheartedly into life's experience. A verse I came across a few years ago seems to sum it up.

Time is too slow for those who wait,
too swift for those who fear,
too long for those who grieve,
too short for those who rejoice,
but for those who love.... time is eternity
(Henry Van Dyke)

The longest journey is the journey inward. Have a good journey in 2021.

+ Peter



A message from Bishop Guli
the 11th Bishop of Chelmsford

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am writing to thank you for your warm welcome following my announcement as the next Bishop of Chelmsford this morning.

Despite the fact I have not been able to visit the diocese in person, I have had a wonderful day, meeting with and starting to get to know people on Zoom.

I thoroughly enjoyed meeting teachers and children at St Mary's Prittlewell and watching the children's musical performance. I have also had a chance to start to learn about your ministry in my meetings with curates and lay ministers in training and with those who are involved in the diocese's refugee ministry.

I am very much looking forward to the New Year and a time when I can visit Essex and East London to continue meeting people face to face and getting to know you.

In the meantime, I want to assure you of my prayers and wish you and your loved ones a happy and peaceful Christmas.

+ Guli

Yours in Christ

Bishop Guli

You can find out more and watch highlights of Bishop Guli's announcement as the next Bishop of Chelmsford in a series of videos on the Diocesan website.

A prayer for all those affected by corona virus

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy. Sustain and support the anxious, be with those who care for the sick, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may find comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

Christmas Giving

Christmas has always been a time to give both presents and thanks for our friends and family. In so many ways 2020 has been both a difficult and disappointing year. But there are still good things to remember as we have overcome the difficulties.

As Parish Treasurer I have been particularly concerned since the March lock down that we would still be able to meet the biggest items of expenditure including The Family Purse (our monthly contribution to the Diocese), Insurance, and Utility bills whilst we could not meet to hold our regular Sunday services and all other services were severely restricted.

I have been delighted that the response of our Church Family has been heart-warming as you would hope to see from a true Christian Family.

Members have continued their generous and regular free will weekly offerings and all the regular payments by BACS have been received.

In addition we have not forgotten to remember our Charitable Donations, 42 boxes were donate to Samaritans Purse for children who live Overseas many of whom will receive a box of presents for the first time (perhaps their only present). They will be told that the boxes have been given by Christians who hope that they enjoy the gifts from people they don't know and that they will be interested in learning about the love of Jesus.

As in previous years we have supported St. Luke's Hospice by signing a card instead of, or in some cases in addition to, sending individual cards and this has raised over £100 for the Hospice which has had great difficulties with their fund raising events being restricted.

In addition the Thurrock Foodbank distribution centre at St. Francis', manned by Parishioners, has been extremely well supported including monetary donations from Parishioners who are shielding and unable to shop as well as regular donations of food, toiletries etc. from many generous friends and people living in the Parish.

The caring and kindness for all struggling at this time is most appreciated.

Norman King

Fire?

The team at the local fire station had assembled to hear their training officer discuss the behaviours of various kinds of fire. He began: "You pull up to a house and notice puffs of smoke coming from the eaves. But the windows are blackened out and there is little or no visible flame. What does this tell you?" he asked.

Hoping the men recognised signs of a possible 'back draft', a condition very dangerous to fire fighters, he heard instead: "It tells me I've got the right house."

A Scientist's Letter to the UK Church: Power, love and self-control by Dr Ruth M Bancewicz, who is Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge.

I want to share a message of hope that Christians in the sciences around the world can bring to the church. Dr Francis Collins, who leads medical research in the US, spoke earlier in the pandemic about his faith and his hope in God to help us through this time. He expressed the grief that so many are experiencing, described an intensity of scientific work he has never experienced before, and shared his conviction that he is in exactly the right place just now - serving God with science. He is holding on tight to the words of Paul in 2 Timothy 1:7, 'for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.'



Power

In 2 Timothy the apostle Paul encourages his friend to 'fan into flame the gift of God' that is in him. I am thankful that scientists like Francis are using their own particular talents to understand this virus, and to help prevent or treat infection. The things they discover are not just useful, but at times they can also display the beauty and wonder of God's creation.

Love

A scientist shows their love for God, for people and for the rest of creation through their work in the lab. One scientist described his experiences to me: "I study God's fingerprints in His creation to learn more of Him and the world He placed us in and to learn how we should take care of it and each other...I pray for inspiration and insight into how His creation works...and that He provides the opportunities to give the glory to Him."

Self-Control

It is largely our own and others' selfish actions that can turn one animal's friendly virus into our own species' personal nightmare. Thankfully Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection are the solution to evil. Our ultimate and certain hope is that one day all Creation will be renewed. We can also have hope for today, that God is with us in our suffering. When we respond in positive ways to painful events, that is evidence that Jesus is alive and working in our lives.

Science will not solve all our problems, but with God's help and wisdom we can use the tools of science to serve him and love others. Let's pray together for the strength to cope, and for an end to this pandemic.



What happened after Jesus had been born in Bethlehem?

READ Matthew 2:1-12

Who came from the East?

Why had they come?

What were they following?

Who was alarmed by their arrival?

Who had the prophet written about?

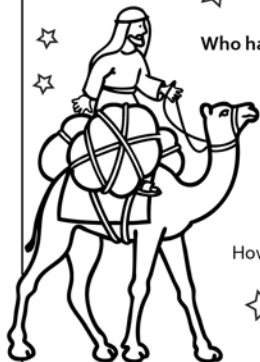
Where were they then sent?

What were they to look for?
..... and why?

Where did the star lead them?

Who did they see? What did they do?

How were they warned to go home another way?



READ Matthew 2:13-23

Who appeared to Joseph?

What was he told? Why? What did he do?

Who then became angry?.... and why? What horrible thing did he then do?

When Herod died where was Joseph told to take his family?

Where did Jesus finally grow up?





As a result of the Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic there will be no public worship at St. Francis for the time being as we dedicate the premises to the foodbank distribution centre. It has also been decided not to have our usual services at St. Catherine's for the time being, as we attempt to minimise the risk of virus transmission. The church is however still available for funerals (at the time of writing). To find the latest information please look at the weekly newsletter, copies of which can be found on the gate at St. Francis and St. Catherine or on the church website:-

(www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk/weeklythought.pdf)

Some of Norman's Christmas memories

The Czechoslovakian Influence on Christmas

As a child growing up on the Bata Estate I was fortunate to enjoy the influence of the Czech people living on the Estate especially at Christmas. Carol singing always featured "Good King Wenceslas" and "We will Rock You" which resulted much clapping, a generous donation and occasionally a special, different and very tasty pastry. The carol "rocking" was always included in the Sunday School Nativity Play in the old cinema (Village Hall) and my mum referred to the younger children sitting at the front of the stage to sing the carol as "Rockers" and that was long before the "Mods".



Traditionally the Czech families had Goose stuffed with Caraway seeds for their Christmas day meal but thankfully at the Children's Party we had Turkey served by ladies some of whom wore traditional dresses.

Carols misheard by Children

Michael the son of my friend Maureen O'Neill (Nee Moss) used to visit us in Princess Margaret Road. I remember one Sunday near Christmas he asked my Mum to play his favourite Carol "Jesus had another brother". After a few puzzled looks and Michael whistling the tune we solved the riddle. The Carol was "Jesu Good Above All Other" which is very rarely heard these days .

How we will enjoy singing Carols next Christmas.

Occasional Offices during December

Baptisms

None

Weddings

None

Committal of ashes

30 Dec Committal of Ashes of the late Derek and Zona Turner

Funeral

8 Dec Funeral and Burial of the late John Dobson

22 Dec Funeral and Burial of the late Joyce Garrod

The first man to get stopped for speeding...by Tim Lenton

It was 125 years ago, on 28th January 1896, that Walter Arnold of Kent became the first person in the world to be convicted of speeding. The speed limit was 2mph at the time, and a man carrying a red flag had to walk in front of the vehicle. But one day Mr Arnold took off at 8mph, without a flag bearer. He was chased by a policeman on a bicycle for five miles, arrested, and fined one shilling.

Mr Arnold was four times over the rather modest 2 mph limit in the streets of Paddock Wood, near Tunbridge Wells in Kent. To achieve this feat today, a driver in most towns or cities would have to be travelling at over 100 mph, which is probably a bit excessive.

The speed limit was changed later that same year to 14 mph, but there is no record of Mr Arnold getting his money back. Nor is there any evidence that he was endangering life and limb, which used to be the criterion: the 1832 Stage Carriage Act introduced the offence of endangering someone's safety by "furious driving".

Just over 100 years later, the road safety charity Brake reports that male motorists are more than three times as likely as women to having driven at more than 100 mph, because 'boy racers' believe they have more talent than the average driver. Police have caught one driver doing 120 mph in a 20 mph zone, another doing 152 mph in a 30 mph zone, and one doing an astonishing 180 mph on a motorway. As Edmund King, AA president, points out: "Generally men have riskier attitudes towards driving than their female counterparts."

Let's just hope that nobody likes the idea of driving at 120 mph in our new 20 mph limited road past the Linford shops and East Tilbury station.....Ed

The Parish

The Priest in charge

REVD. MICHÈLE MARSHALL

The Rectory

24, Somerset Road, Linford

Stanford-le-Hope

Essex, SS17 0QA.

Telephone: 01375 671754

email: mjmarshall@fastmail.co.uk

The Services

Sunday 10.00 a.m. Holy Communion service at St. Catherine's
Except 1st Sunday of the month when we have
"The Family Service"

Wednesday 10.00 a.m. Holy Communion at St. Francis
For Baptisms, Weddings or Funerals please contact the Priest in Charge.

The Churchwarden

COLIN STRONG T: 07591 708955

E:- warden.colin.stcatherines@gmail.com

KATHY BIRD T: 07920 794716

E:- warden.kathleenbird@yahoo.com

Pastoral Assistant

David Gunn T: 01375 768202

PEWTALK Editor

Chris Ford

44, Northumberland Road
Linford

Stanford le Hope

SS17 0PU

Tel: 01375 675863

e-mail: pewtalk@talktalk.net

St. Francis Centre

The centre is *currently not* available for hire for regular events when not used by the Church. To check availability please contact:

PATRICIA STRONG

patricia.a.strong@outlook.com

Copy Dates for Pewtalk

24th January 2021

22nd February 2021

24th March 2021