

St Peter & St Paul

Little Horkesley

Parish Magazine

December 2020/January 2021



Merry Christmas



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AN APPEAL FROM THE TREASURER

We all know that as a consequence the Corona Virus Pandemic all places of worship had to close for several months. When we were able to re-instate services, we could only have one service each week.

In summary, the 52 Sundays were as follows:

Normal pattern of services i.e. morning and evening services.	11
One service each Sunday.	13
Church closed – no service.	28

Although we have had 28 weeks with no services, I acknowledge that many of our congregation have made up 100% of their weekly giving, for which, on behalf of the PCC, I am very grateful.

However, the loss of income from giving is forecast to amount to £3,500, and I would appeal to anyone who has not made up their weekly giving, to do so if possible.

It is important to note that the Parish Share, Church running and maintenance expenditure (with the sole exception of a small saving on electricity and cleaning costs) remain the same, despite the church closures. These costs are budgeted to amount to £30,000.

John L Sparkes

Merry Christmas



CHURCH MAGAZINE DONATIONS

Although we have missed some issues this year and will now only have two/monthly editions our costs are still high We had no income from advertisements this year as everything was in Lockdown at the time when we normally contact our advertisers.

I will therefore leave the suggested amount the same as last year - £7.50 if it is delivered or if you pick it up at church and £12 if it is posted to you. Please be as generous as you can.

DETAILS REGARDING PAYMENT ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Payments can be made in cash or by cheque, made payable to Little Horkesley PCC, and can be given to John Sparkes or sent to his home address, 13 Keepers Green, Braiswick, Colchester, CO4 5UT. They can also be made by Bank transfer as follows: HSBC plc, sort code 40-18-51, account no. 71027395, reference – your name.

IN EARLY NOVEMBER, AFTER WRITING MUCH OF MY REPORT, WE WERE PLUNGED INTO ANOTHER 'LOCKDOWN'.



SERVICES HAD TO BE SUSPENDED FROM NOVEMEER 8TH UNTIL NOVEMBER 29TH. THEY WILL HOPEFULLY RE-COMMENCE ON DECEMBER 6TH WITH A MORNING SERVICE AT 11 AM. THIS MAY, OF COURSE, CHANGE.

I AM HOPING THAT THIS MAGAZINE WILL BE ABLE TO BE DELIVERED. MY THANKS TO THOSE WHO TAKE IT ROUND THE VILLAGE.

Meriel's Report



JEAN BROWN

On October 1st we received the sad and totally unexpected news that our friend Jean had died suddenly. She had attended our first Communion Service, with Anthea, on the previous Sunday and on the following Thursday was taken ill, dying in the early hours of Friday morning. It was such a sad loss to us all but most of all, of course, for her family.

Jean was central to our church life, quietly supporting and helping with everything that she could – up to the end. She was a member of the PCC for many years. She helped with all of our social events, hosting most of our Farm Walks in recent years. Nothing was every too much trouble. She was also a member of the Handbell Team until ill-heath forced her to retire. She attended all of our Study Groups and always hosted one of them. She made her legendary fruit cakes for every occasion and I, for one, am going to miss being able to go to my freezer to get half a cake out when I need it. When I ran the Cake Stalls for the Village Hall a vast majority of the profits came from her cakes. Even after her bout of ill-heath last winter, when things had become difficult, she found that she could still make them and they appeared again at our Community Coffee Mornings thus contributing greatly to the donations we made to the charity, Faith in Action, Malawi. Many of us will also remember her for her generosity with her lovely farm eggs – a tradition she carried on from her husband Duncan. Very few left the farm without at least six beautiful fresh eggs.

Our church was enormously important to her and her weekly attendance was unfailing. She was also extremely generous towards the church.

Her funeral was arranged for October 30th. There was to be a service in church, very important for Jean, followed by cremation. As we have no vicar the family asked if John Chandler could officiate and this was eventually agreed. He came to see me, at my home, prior to us both meeting up with Sally, Phil and Anthea (Colin was away) on the following Monday and a lovely service was arranged. This was when things begun to get complicated. A few days later Vicar John contacted us all to say he and his wife, June, had tested positive for the dreaded corona virus. This meant that I and my husband had to self-isolate for 2 weeks from when we had been in contact with him. We discovered that the family could still attend the funeral as close relatives of Jean but my John and I could not. I managed to get another organist but was so sad not to be able to attend.



Only 30 people are allowed at a funeral, along with any there in an official capacity. To make this an occasion worthy of Jean the family arranged that riders from the livery at Maltings Farm, which Jean started, and many other relatives, neighbours and friends followed the cortege from the farm to the church. This was a truly wonderful tribute to a lady who was loved by so many.

The simple service, led by the Revd Ray Gibbs, was lovely and included tributes from the family and the poem/letter written by Brenda to the family and read by Brenda at their request (We have printed Brenda's poem below).

The family then proceeded to the crematorium. Jean's ashes will be interred in our churchyard, as she requested, at a later date.

Jean was a dearly loved lady who will be remembered and missed for a very long time. We send our prayers and love to all her family.



I went to bed saddened by the news of Jean's sudden death and wondering how I was going to convey my thoughts and memories of Jean in a suitable way to the family, whom I have known for so long. Two words kept ping-ponging in my head which were, for me, synonymous with dear Jean; one fruit cakes and the other farm walks! I decided on the first word because of all the ingredients in her cakes.

I felt very humbled when the family asked me to read what I wrote at Jean's funeral. (October 30th 2020). Brenda

JEAN'S CAKES

Jean's fruit cakes, available on demand as she was,

Firm on the outside but inside full of goodness and blessings.

Chopped nuts, nuggets of her wisdom and common-sense approach to life.

Currants, the darkest ingredients, reflecting her deep sense of duty, responsibility and care for all.

The more solid raisins, her strength of mind to remain positive when life showed its raw edges.

Softer sultanas possibly her more hidden, vulnerable side?

Spice and chopped cherries akin to the merriment, fun and laughter shared with family and friends.

Eggs the binding agent, Jean's loyalty and enduring love of her family of whom she was so proud.

The butter and flour her strength to hold life together whatever befell.

Sugar, the sweetener; Jean's friendship and ability to offer support and advice when required.

Her cakes, a prized reception likened to the respect and love in which Jean was held by all who knew her.....

Yes, sadly Jean has left us, but like her fruit cakes, leaves behind lingering and enriched memories on the taste buds of life.

May she know the peace and rest she so richly deserves.



ASIA

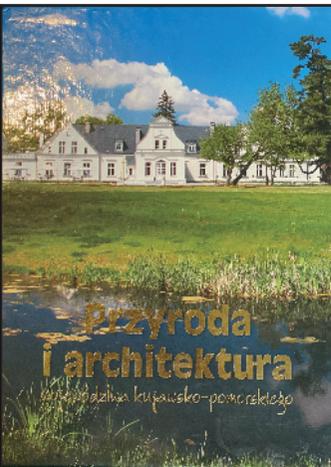
In the last Magazine I wrote about good things which had happened during the lockdown and there was one which I totally forgot to record. Those of our regular evening congregation will remember Asia, the Polish girl, who had come over to this country to work for Polly Eddis at Little Horkesley Hall. She was a devout Roman Catholic but, in the dark evenings earlier this year, she came to our evening services. She spoke particularly good English and we all tried to make her welcome. Obviously, our services were totally unlike anything she was accustomed to, but she seemed pleased to come. John and I found out details of the Polish Mass held in Colchester and gave them to her. She did attend those services but continued to come to our church as she found it more friendly. She helped Polly when she used the church for her Snowdrop Weekend which I wrote about in an earlier issue.



When corona virus struck, Asia managed to get a flight and returned to Poland but before she went, she left a note in the church porch which I have copied here. I was so touched by this that I got her address from Polly and wrote to her in Poland, sending her a copy of the Magazine in which I had mentioned her when she was helping at the Snowdrop Weekend. Much to my surprise she, in return, sent me a beautiful book of photographs of the countryside around where she lives. If anyone would like to borrow it please let me know.

We have exchanged a number of emails since and I found that she is going to University this autumn where she

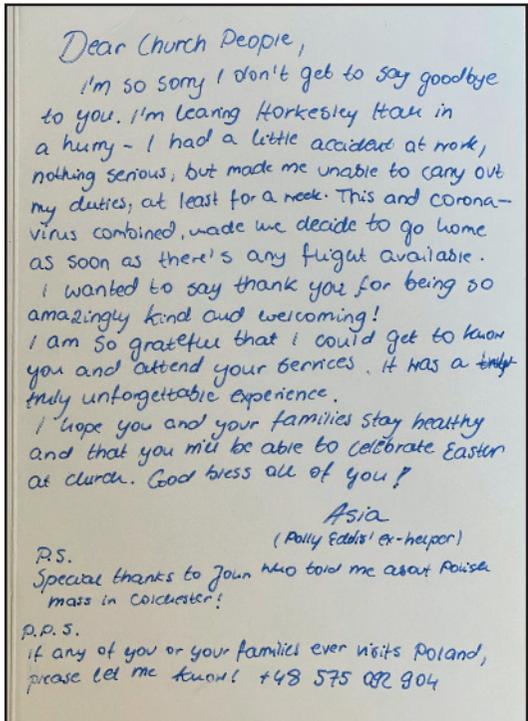
will be studying Forestry with a view to eventually living and working in woodland which is very important in Poland. She also sent me this lovely snapshots of her and cat.



The gorgeous book sent to Meriel.



The letter Asia left in the church porch



Regarding welcome and fellowship at church this is one aspect that I find so difficult during this trying time. We have had a number of visitors to our services who we would normally be able to chat to and make welcome but with masks and distancing it really is very difficult. If you are someone who has come to our services recently please be assured of how pleased we are that you have joined us. I hope that you have maybe got some help, comfort and enjoyment in these strange times.

HARVEST FESTIVAL

The response to the Harvest Appeal for the Colchester Food Bank was very good. I was very pleased as things are all so very different. The church also looked lovely. The flower arrangers are getting very few, but we still managed to make things look festive. Roger's altar flowers, all from his own garden, were fantastic, as usual. This was despite a van driving into his house the previous week and doing a great deal of structural damage.

We had a lovely Evening Harvest Service which was well attended, and Christopher later kindly took all the groceries and toiletries along to the Food Bank. I also received some monetary donations which were also given to them. We received an email of thanks from the Food Bank.

Thank you, everyone for your support, help and donations



An amazing amount of food was donated for the Colchester Food Bank.



Beautiful flower arrangements made for Harvest



REMEMBRANCE

Our Remembrance Service had to be cancelled because of the new Lockdown. A tiny group gathered to the War Memorial and wreaths were laid by Chris Jacobs for the Parish Council and Michael Culham in memory of his uncle.

The ceremony lasted about seven minutes but included the important words and the silence. Brian Lord rung the church bell on Sunday and again on the 11th November. Despite having no service in church Fionna did some lovely arrangements of poppies.



SADE

While I was starting to think of things to say in this Magazine my husband was reading the Review section in the Telegraph. There was a page of 'Reasons to be Cheerful' under the headings of Film, Pop, Art, Comedy and Classical. Under Pop it said that Sade Adu is Britain's greatest global, black, superstar. Her band, Sade, have sold over 60 million albums and her back catalogue from 1984's *Diamond Life* to 2010's *Soldier of Love* has been remastered for vinyl and brought together on *This Far*, a six-disc box set by Sony.



I have said this once before, a few years ago, but for those who go back far enough we remember Sade as a small child in our church choir. She, her mother, Ann, who was a district nurse, and her brother Benji lived in Great Horkesley and all attended our church.

That's quite an achievement for a one-time chorister at our church.



CHURCH FLOWERS

There is a new flower rota in the church for 2021. **Please, please** fill it in if you are able covering as many weeks as you can. 2020 has been so unusual. We obviously did not have flowers at all when the church was kept locked. When we opened up in June I endeavoured to have flowers to make the church look loved and when services re-commenced our normal rota came back into force. I am so grateful to everyone who helped.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES AND FORWARD

The services for December and January are shown in the Calendar but we really are not at all sure about what may be allowed after (and if) we come out of this current lockdown. I hope that we shall be able to hold the Christmas services as shown in the Calendar but can only suggest that you listen to notices given out in church and look at any notices in the church. I try to keep in touch with as many people as I can by email and if you do not currently get my emails, and would like to, please let me know. My email address is in the front of this magazine.

CHURCHWARDENS

At the Annual Church Meeting on October 26th David Lewis and I were elected churchwardens for the current year. The meeting had been postponed from April.

Christopher Orme, who had been church warden for about 15 years, decided not to stand again and I would like to thank him for his years of sterling service. I welcome David as my co/churchwarden.

After this strange and troubling time I wish you all as peaceful a Christmas as possible and I look forward with hope that 2021 will be a much better year.

MERIEL



A prayer for you to use during December

O sweet Child of Bethlehem, grant that we may share with all our hearts in this profound mystery of Christmas. Put into our hearts the peace for which we sometimes seek so desperately and which you alone can give us . . . Reveal to us also your beauty, holiness and purity. Awaken in our hearts love and gratitude for your infinite goodness. Join us all together in your love. And give us your heavenly peace. **Amen**

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK'S PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

As most of you know the new Archbishop of York was previously the Bishop of Chelmsford and in that capacity he visited our church in 2018. Mary Perrins gave me this copy of his presidential address which we thought you might like to see.

Archbishop shares Presidential address at special session of General Synod

24/09/2020

The Archbishop of York today shared the opening Presidential address with the Archbishop of Canterbury at a special session of the Church of England General Synod. The Archbishop of York's speech follows in full...

I hate this Coronavirus. I hate it because not only so many have died, but because so many people have died alone, unable to hold the hand of a dear beloved. I hate it because our health service has been stretched to the limit. I hate it because so many are bereaved and could not sit next to a family member at a funeral or embrace each other. I hate it because weddings and baptisms and ordinations have been postponed or have gone ahead without the parties that have meant to be with them. I hate it because children's schooling has been disrupted. I hate it because so many people have been so ill, crying out in pain, so many isolated, lonely, fearful, depressed. I hate it because behind locked doors terrible things have happened. I hate it because the poor and the disadvantaged have been hit the hardest. I hate it because it has left so many people across the world feeling hopeless as if life itself has been taken from us.

I hate this Coronavirus and I reluctantly acknowledge that because of this Coronavirus we have learned some hard lessons about ourselves. We have learned that we belong to each other and my interest is tied up with your interest. We have learned again that death is real. We have learned that progress does not mean living in a pain-free world. We have learned that those jobs that we had thought of as menial or inconsequential are vital and essential. We have learned that at the moment the best way to love one another is to keep a distance. And we have learned that love transcends boundaries and can happily easily jump 2 metres.

And in the Church, even without the much grieved for assurance of sacrament and congregation and all the other happy familiarities of worship, we have learned that Christ is with us. With us, as He has always been, present in the midst of endeavour, suffering and ministry. We have learned that the local Church is the centre, and that pastoral care, and all sorts of worship – old and new – can go on in old and in new ways and loving your neighbour is after all what this is all about. And I reluctantly acknowledge that although there is nothing good about Covid 19, good can come out of it, if we respect and love each other, and learn how to inhabit the world differently so that the spread of the virus can be kept under control. We, the church of Jesus Christ, have an opportunity to take the lead in this, speaking out for the poor. Making sure that the restrictions that we live by are administered fairly and work for the common good. And making sure that other things like the curse of racism, the way that we inhabit the planet, and our relationships with each other within the UK and in Europe do not slip from the agenda.

Therefore, despite all this, I am thankful. I am thankful for the faithfulness and hard work and ingenuity of all those who serve in our health and emergency services. I am thankful for all in public office who have made hard decisions, inevitably come in for sharp criticism but who continue to give themselves to serve us and keep us safe. I am thankful for the witness and service of the local church in our parishes, chaplaincies and in other various expressions of Church life, for peoples' creativity and tenacity – especially for care of the vulnerable and in sustaining the life of worship. I am thankful for those in the national church who have sought to interpret Government advice and guide the Church through these difficult times. I am thankful that despite all the horrors of a Covid world that we are learning a new commitment to Christ and how to be a humbler, simpler Church. That we are putting Christ at the centre of our lives and learning very very painfully what it really means to be a Church that is dependent on Christ alone. And, I am filled with longing. I long for us to find ways of affirming and thanking all the people who work for us and with us. I long for us to find our voice in the building of a better world. I long for us to be a more Christ-centred and Jesus shaped Church, witnessing to Christ and bringing the healing balm of the Gospel to our nation, for this is our vocation.

Synod, I hate this coronavirus. Nevertheless, I reluctantly acknowledge that there are important things for us to learn. I am thankful for the good things that have emerged, not least our dependence on each other and on God. And I long for us to share this more effectively in the world. Finally, I am sorry for the inevitable mistakes we have made along the way but confident in God's mercy and of your own forbearance. I invite us now even in this strange synod to do no other than to boldly and humbly share the Gospel in deed and in word across the life of our nation. Therefore, I cry out and invite you to cry out with me: 'Death, where is your sting? Grave, where is your victory? For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.'



ROME TO DUBAI

February– March 2020

By Gill McInnes

Part 2- final part

February 20 (I've nailed a date!!)

At 3.30am we'd started going through The Suez Canal and at 12.25pm we're still going. I'm writing this on the balcony in the sun – very quickly – writing, not the speed of the ship! It was a really interesting journey – particularly finding how wide it was. Mind you it needed to be for our cruise ship (not one of the biggest by any means) but still big. The widening was completed three years ago. There's lots of sand at the edges with the occasional agricultural part, where it was apparently, flooded. It was dotted with some old buildings and the occasional house.

After we came out of the Canal, we arrived at Safaga, Egypt and yesterday we ventured ashore. The trips from here, were again 13 plus hours to The Valley of the Kings but we decided the length of time AND the exhorbitant \$200 + that was the ship's offering, we would decline.



Bridge over the Suez Canal

The officials were very scrupulous in going through our passports to make sure we hadn't got an Israeli stamp. Our stamp had been on a piece of paper. Odd really as they

only had to look at the ship's itinerary to know we'd been to Israel. Once ashore, we took a very long walk through the Terminal Building –all very new. We took a taxi, with an American couple and went round the town. The roads were very quiet as it was Friday, and everyone was at prayers. We had coffee in a 'café' suggested by our driver. It was really interesting. We could have sat on cushions on the floor but decided chairs were better. The coffee was very strong with lots of grounds. There were men smoking hookahs, whilst lounging on sofas. It was quite odd as they held the pipe in one hand and a phone to their ear with the other. Very ancient and modern.



Our driver also took us to a small shop – the only one open which was probably owned by a relative. They were very pleased to see us, but we filled the shop.

We were then driven right down to the sea – a lot of ground had been cleared for new building. While we were there a lady with an Alsatian came down to the beach and both went for a swim.

Monday, 23 February – Aqaba, Jordan

We were due to leave the ship at 7.30am for a trip. All the instructions worked like a dream and, once again we were only five people in a minibus, with Abdullah as our guide and a very pleasant driver.



We set off through sandstone mountains, no greenery, on our way to Petra. The rock formations were amazing and after about an hour we got into desert. There were very few settlements and one long straight main road. After a while the rock formations started again – extraordinary shapes, developed over 1000's of years.

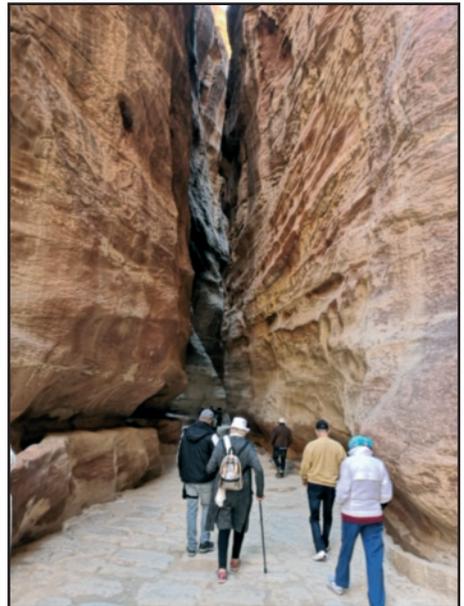
After some time, having seen very little traffic, we turned off onto a side road and headed towards Petra. Our guide talked of a waterway which started off in the mountains, in about 1000 BC. Sounded incredible but later it became even more so.

Jordan is developed into three areas; Mountain, Desert and Fertile which is near the Dead Sea, which unfortunately we didn't see. It had been 72 degrees when we left the ship but going towards Petra, and high up we had a short photo stop. It was very windy, and the temperature was 5 degrees, but the rock formations were just incredible. Apparently, Jordan is likely to run out water by 2040 and cannot afford to set up desalination plants.

Abdullah was asked what 'Rum' as in Rum Wadi, meant. He didn't know, so rang one of his Professors, who came back and said it was a Semitic word, going back 1000 years and meant "High Ground" and Wadi means Valley.

We came through very large hills/cum mountains and arrived at Petra, with houses falling down the mountain road towards a valley. Snow was apparently due the next day. Abdullah left us to go and get tickets, then on our way, via a Hotel, where Abdullah collected lunch boxes for us and there started our adventure.

We were to walk into the gorge – again amazing. I seem to have used this word a lot. There were lots of carvings on the stones, but weather worn. The earliest Gods apparently had no features. The ground was stony and sometimes, original Roman Cobbles. In some places it was narrow, but you had to be alert as small horse and carts would come down at full gallop and we had to scatter.





Carvings on rocks - Petra

This is where the water system, mentioned some 100 miles ago, really came into its own. It had a water course, but every now and then it went into a deeper 'pond' so that the sand would sink to the bottom and the clean water would continue. Even more amazing were the remains of clay pipes, some large, some small to regulate the flow of the water – 1000BC!

We kept going down and eventually got to the bottom to find The Treasury which had been carved into the mountain. Apparently, the stone columns either side were perfectly symmetrical. There was a door, but entry only went in 7 metres, with no carving. Nobody knows why.

In the longish square, in front of the Treasury there were numerous camels, mules etc and lots of stalls but we had no time to browse except for one where they had multi coloured sand from the region and we watched how they made pictures of camels, sunrises etc. It was done by using just a pin. Totally mind blowing!

We carried on walking downhill – eyes down as we walked where lots of animals were! – We passed lots of tombs towards the theatre which had a perfect semi circle of seats. It was agreed we stopped there as we had to do the return climb. It was strenuous and we had to have ears alert for the sound of those horse and

carts. Think we had our exercise for the day. The canyon, with all its history, was so unexpected. Interesting though, ships tours had been categorized from easy to hard. We chose not to do a 4x4 in the desert as it had 'strenuous' and the highest grade. We all agreed it can never have been anything like as strenuous as our five mile plus walk on Roman Cobbles and very uneven and slippery ground while dodging galloping horses and carts, often in very narrow ways. BUT we did it'

Back in the minibus we went just outside Petra, where we stopped for our lunch and sat on walls with most amazing views of the rocks. The lunches were very good. -fresh sandwiches, masses of fruit, water, fruit juice. Unfortunately, with little time, lots of it was not used, but we amassed all fruit etc and Abdullah said he would have no trouble finding a home for it.

We had one more stop, where we'd had a photo stop in the morning. It wasn't so cold, but the shop had a man sitting by an oil stove. It really was an Aladdin's cave but as usual no time to browse but we did have a lovely cup of coffee.

I'm now trying to catch up on my diary on our second day at sea. Yesterday the wind was surprisingly chilly but today we've sat on deck reading. It was misty this morning when we were level with Mecca. We've discovered The Red Sea is so named because of algae, which eventually has a red flower, which makes the sea appear red. Today the sea is very blue.

We've now had lunch and are sitting on our balcony. The sea has a few ships in the distance, but we have a letter about locking our doors and cutting lights down at night. Thought you'd like to see this sentence, 'During this transit (to Oman) we will be entering a High-Risk Area (HRA) for Piracy. While travelling through the HRA, we will in

constant contact with an International Task Force, including US and UK naval forces that are assigned to protect merchant vessels from Pirate Attack by a UN mandate'. In the unlikely event of Pirate Activity announcements will be made the bridge. The crew have been practicing with hoses from the decks!!

After my Japanese appraisals of loos, you may think, I have a 'loo' fetish. However there has been lots of problems on board, despite sailing four days late. The refit really wasn't finished. We now see what fault can be found! For the first few days the toilets outside our Dining Room had; one., no light, one working and one no lock. It had improved on our last visit to two working and one 'out of order'. Last night, before dinner, we came across; one okay; one the squeakiest door ever. We're always asked to open the outer door with paper from a dispenser and then deposit the paper in a basket. Usually this works well but in this case the paper dispenser and container were 8ft from the door. I used the paper to open the door, but my throw bounced out of the basket! We've had lots of laughs with people from many countries, when someone finds an odd quirk of which there are many.

We did have intermittent problems with our cabin loo, when suddenly it wouldn't flush. Bit scary when a few minutes later it flushes of its own accord! One night we had been to The Theatre and came back at 10ish and hadn't been in long when there was a knock on the door. There stood a little man in uniform saying we had a problem. We could only answer that the Cabin Steward must have reported something as we didn't know we had a problem. He fiddled around for a couple of minutes and then he gave us the 'thumbs up' sign and went.

Tuesday.

We've just got back from dinner. Yesterday we had a wonderful table by a huge window

at the back of the ship and watched the water. Tonight, every window has a blind so no light goes out SO Pirate alert has started. We have to keep curtains closed and low light.

Yesterday we were treated to a 'stone' therapy massage. It was amazing, slightly spoiled as into the silence and mood music with wonderful aromas, came the sound on an engineer banging on the ceiling below my head – sporadically! The therapist did contact her manager, but nothing happened – I guess repairs took priority over therapies! It was a day of a high level of engineers going methodically through the ship to visit every cabin. We were told we could choose a slot, so I followed instructions and said morning, because we were likely to be on deck. We popped back at lunch time and assumed they'd been. NO at 6pm, luckily, we'd showered and were dressed, a knock on the door revealed five people wanting to come in. They took it in turns to come in and out. Space was tight. One did bang on the safe – we're not sure why -, one stuck some plastic in the bathroom and so they disappeared without a word!!

I'm sitting on deck under a canopy. The sky and sea are blue and there's a strong wind which keeps it pleasant to sit. At the moment we are sailing through the Gulf of Aden on our way to Oman, unfortunately we're only in dock for half a day instead our original two days and two different ports.

29th February 2020

And so, we arrived in Muscat, Oman. Not a good view from our balcony (a crane's in the way) but there are mountains right down to the coast. Things having all been altered, we have tickets for a trip at 9am. Problem – ours is a 4.5 trip starting at 9am BUT the ships leaves before we would be back. So, after lots of discussion we decided we would leave the ship before 8am. We had to be shuttled to the dock gate. Buses had arrived as soon as we docked.

We left the ship at 7.45 but just missed a shuttle bus which was full, so we were first on the next one. Unfortunately, it took ages to fill. We were then taken 100 yds, where we all go off, went through customs and got back on the bus. We had wondered earlier why all the buses seemed to turn round.

At the dock gate we were met by lots of men in traditional white robes and different patterned hats. I did ask it if was their choice – it was, and different patterns didn't denote anything. 'Cruise Excursions' man was charming and sat us on a minibus with two people who were quite cross that they hadn't already left. After some time, another man appeared and said we should be under a tree in the shade with lots of others so off we went and joined them. After some time, it became clear that they were from a Celebrity Ship, with a totally different and later time of sailing, so we thought we should return to our original minibus!! Anyway, the couple were still sitting there in solitary state! We learned later that she had Diplomatic Immunity and had caused trouble on all tours. First time we'd come across them. Anyway, just before 9am Bobby and Ginger, with whom we'd shared three other tours, arrived. They'd gone by the time on the ticket. So off we set to The Golden Mosque. It was unbelievable. Our shoes had to be taken off quite soon and then lots of walking. The grounds were full of flowers but apparently this is the only time of the year because in Summer they wouldn't survive so then its only grass. The last Sultan had recently died, having reigned for 70 years. All the modern transformation of Muscat had taken place during his reign. Our guide said, before that Oman had nothing. When the Sultan died, in his will he named a cousin who would succeed him. Our guide said that he was really good, being well educated and the choice was very much approved of. The Mosque was amazing and a bit reminiscent of a large Taj Mahal - lots of water and marble. Really beautiful.



The Mosque, Oman



The Sultan's palace, Oman
The grass & flowers are seen together only in march - it is too hot after that.

Eventually we went off to the Gold Souk. We had one hour only. So, we went down one alleyway only, as it's incredibly easy to get lost. We were back on time, but Mr and Mrs 'Diplomat' weren't. So, parking time up, we had a ride down the coast and back again – we could see the ship – and get a feel of the ring of mountains. We returned, picked up the missing people and guide and went off to a Museum which should have been fascinating but we had no time and so we went to The Palace for a photo shoot only. Its a shame it was a rush because it looked lovely with flowers everywhere. The ring of mountains was all around us, many with towers on them. Apparently, they used to be close enough for verbal warnings of enemies. Back on-board

board ship we got ready for dinner as the ship sailed on its way to Abu Dhabi, the last day of our cruise.

Next morning, we packed a bit, sat in the sun and had an early lunch.

We'd booked a trip, which didn't start until 2pm. We all had to go through an eye identification and had our passports taken away. Odd! We thought we'd booked a trip on a hop on hop off bus, but it turned out we were on a coach tour. As it happened, we think we had the best tour. The highlight was a visit to The Mosque – a most amazing building paid for by one Sultan. The marble was decorated like The Taj Mahal. The glass was from Murano in Italy and chandeliers were made from Swarovski Crystals. Apparently 7000 people can pray at the same time. Unlike our visit to The Mosque in Oman, we didn't have to remove our shoes as we didn't actually go into the prayer rooms but were able to take photos. It really was as usual amazing.

Then back on the coach, we went to see where the Sultan lived. It was very impressive, but as we drove – another entrance to another palace for another brother. Apparently, The Ruling Sheik had nineteen brothers and fifteen sisters. We never did know where the sisters lived but we saw the entrance to many brothers' palaces. Totally crazy!

In the October/November issue of this magazine, we had part 1 of Gill's Rome to Dubai trip. In confusion (yes team, it happens to me too!) I failed to publish all of Gill's photos of her (part 1) adventures.

Here they are. My apologies to Gill McInnes, thank you for sharing another wonderful holiday with us.

Ed.

Then, before going back to the ship, we went out to the Island where the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix takes place – interesting, but we were keen to get back on board.

On arrival back at the dock, very late, we had to rush by lots of stalls, where it would have been lovely to browse **but** we had to queue for the return of our passports. We had to finish packing because we were getting off the ship at 8.30am next morning. It is very unusual not to have a last day at sea, when packing can be done calmly.

Its been an unusual itinerary and we've visited many and varied lovely places. I think, for me, Capernaum was the highlight. I guess walking on cobbles in the square where many of the people from the bible, included Jesus would have walked was a 'tingly' moment.

It was a chaotic start, unfinished ship, lots of problems but we had lovely weather. Our trips were amazing. Even the five days at sea passed quickly and were relaxing. I wouldn't have missed it. It's a pity we missed all our Mediterranean stops but the ones we did were great AND I got to see The Sea of Galilee and unexpectedly, Capernaum. I wish we'd had our two days in Oman instead of under 4 hours, but it was a good itinerary and I'm so glad I've seen all of it.



On the way to The Church of the Beautitudes



The Church of the Beatitudes



The Sea of Galilee



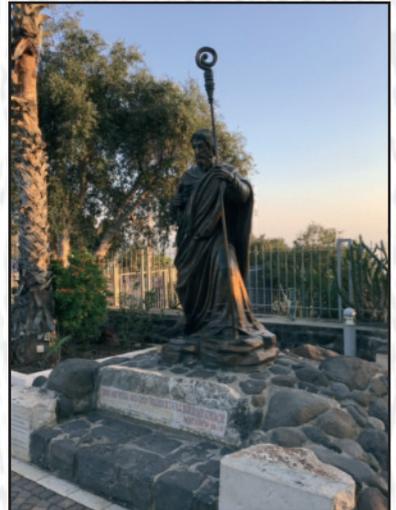
Baptism on the River Jordan



At entry to Capernaum - Jesus as a homeless person on a park bench



St Peter's house, under the new church



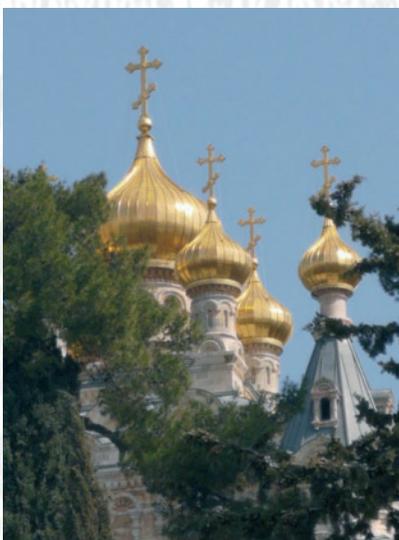
Opposite St Peter's house is this statue of Jesus with loaves and fish, backing onto the Sea of Galilee



Carving on a door, Nazareth



These two photos show a church made in a cave above the stable in Bethlehem



Mary Magdalen Church, Jerusalem



The scary staircase with two-way traffic, and no handrail!



The stairs leading down to Joseph's workshop

Sudoku

Enter a number from 1 to 9 in each square starting from the numbers given in some square. Each row, column, and region must contain only one instance of each numeral.

		5	7		1		3	6
					6		8	1
6				3		2		7
					6	7	4	3
	5			9			2	
1	3	7	4					
7		9		4				2
5	1			7				
2	4		6		5	3		

Easy



				4		2		
			6	9	3			5
5	3	6	2			9		
	9	5	7			6		1
2		1			5	8	9	
		9			6	7	5	2
7			8	5	1			
		4		7				



Very Hard

Solution on page 31

Altar Flowers



<i>Month</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Arranger</i>
December	20	Meriel Sparkes
	27	Meriel Sparkes
	31	Fionna Morrison
January	3	Meriel Sparkes
	10	Meriel Sparkes
	17	Brenda Green
	24	Brenda Green
February	7	Fionna Morrison
	14	Fionna Morrison



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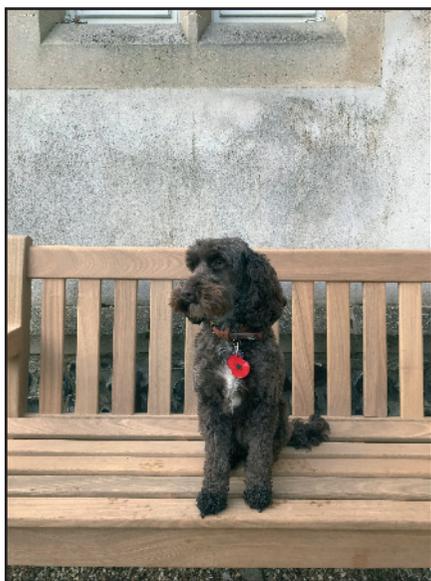
Last week we took delivery of a very special bench. For Lizzie. Mark and I are grateful to the PCC and the Archdeacon for their permission to site Lizzie's bench nestled under the kitchen window in a lovely spot that catches the afternoon sun in the Churchyard.

It arrived last week, in time to commemorate the difficult anniversaries that November brings us. Ella is already making herself comfortable on the bench in this lovely photo.

It is two years since Lizzie passed away, just a week before her 10th birthday. As I write, tomorrow is Lizzie's heavenly birthday. I will still bake her a cake, and we are looking forward to taking a flask of tea and her cake to enjoy the sun in her corner of the churchyard. We hope many of you will enjoy this reflective place over the years to come as well.

This is one of my most treasured photos of Lizzie on her 9th birthday, enjoying a baking party with her friends. A very special day.

Sally



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'Twas the month after Christmas,

and all through the house,
Nothing would fit me,
not even a blouse.

The cookies I'd nibbled,
the eggnog I'd taste,
At the holiday parties,
had gone to my waist.

When I got on the scales,
there arose such a number!
When I walked to the store,
(less a walk than a lumber).

I'd remember the marvelous,
meals I'd prepared;
The gravies and sauces,
and beef nicely rared,

The wine and the rum balls,
the bread and the cheese,
And the way I'd never said,
"No, thank you, please."

As I dressed myself,
in my husband's old shirt,
And prepared once again,
to do battle with dirt,



I said to myself,
as I only can

"You can spend a winter
disguised as a man!"

So-away with the last,
of the sour cream dip,
Get rid of the fruit cake,
every cracker and chip.

Every last bit of food,
that I like must be banished
Till all the additional,
ounces have vanished.

I won't have a cookie,
not even a lick.

I'll want only to chew,
on a long celery stick.

I won't have hot biscuits,,
or corn bread, or pie,
I'll munch on a carrot,
and quietly cry.

I'm hungry, I'm lonesome,
and life is a bore-
But isn't that what,
January is for?

Unable to giggle,
no longer a riot.
Happy New Year to all,
and to all a good diet!

Author: Unknown.

Theft of Metals – A crime that affects us all?

You may well think “theft of metal” how does that affect me? Just look around you, your car has a very desirable catalytic converter on its exhaust system, a roof has lead if not for the whole roof then it's there in places, in the ground there is cabling for utilities such as telecommunications and many other examples where around us there are valuable metals. It does not take a lot then to see that the loss of a catalytic converter means a trader cannot work resulting in a loss of income to him and your delivery or work delayed or the trip you were taking is cancelled as vehicle cannot be used, the theft of lead from a roof and its resultant water damage catastrophic to a heritage building and potentially also causing the cancellation of a wedding or other function, theft of utility or telecommunication cabling can effectively cut off a village or whole area causing a loss of business or connectivity for the vulnerable, these just but a few of the results of metal theft. So, what can be done? We can make it more difficult to steal and we can make it more difficult to dispose of.

Making it more difficult to steal or dispose of:

- Report any suspicious activity: i.e. the unmarked van or other vehicle parked with activity around a manhole or sub-station etc, an unknown person working under a car late at night/early hours of the morning, activity around a church, heritage or other building when it's not normal especially on a roof. Protect your neighbourhood by setting up a Neighbourhood Watch, Heritage Watch or Business Watch if you have not got one, the signage deters, and many eyes are better than one pair. NB – If you have planned building work let your neighbours/parishioners/employees know including who they are and what hours they will be there.
- Make it harder to steal: i.e. where your vehicle is parked – choose an area where people can see it or put it “under lock and key”, in a yard park vehicles with high ground clearance parked between those with low ground clearance, look at security devices with a vehicle it could be a protective cage, reduce access make them walk further and into public view especially when protecting buildings and their roofs, remove aids to the thief i.e. tools to do the job and climbing aids or something to carry their ill-gotten gains away, consider an alarm, with lead from roofs especially try and make access difficult subject to certain conditions you could use a spiky topping around downpipes fencing and roofs.
- Making it harder to dispose of: to start off with if its less attractive its less likely to be stolen so property marking and signage of this and other security devices may deter. Property marking makes it harder to dispose of, and there is something for almost everything from historic artefacts on the seabed to catalytic converter to roofing material to your day to day property. An unmarked piece of property can be anonymous when stolen, in most cases we don't know where it came from and therefore any prosecution is that much more difficult. A thief will know this and therefore anything that ties it back to the owner presents a risk not only to the thief but also to the handler, if the handler will not take it or it causes difficult questions at a boot fair or other then it's not worth stealing it in the first place.

For further advice on crime prevention of crime prevention products see: www.essex.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/ or www.securedbydesign.com/member-companies/accredited-product-search .

PARISH MEETINGS 27TH OCTOBER 2020

The Annual meetings of the Parish were held in the Church on October 27th having been postponed from April due to the coronavirus situation. All three meetings were attended by eight members of the congregation and chaired by the PCC Secretary, Mr Pavry.

The Annual Meeting of Parishioners elected Meriel Sparkes and David Lewis as Churchwardens for the next year. David Lewis has kindly agreed to offer his services following the decision of Christopher Orme not to stand for re-election.

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting started with a statement and silence to remember Jean Brown who died on October 1st. She was a much-loved member of the Church and had served on the PCC for many years.

The Treasurer reported (in absentia) that the Financial Statements for 2019 previously submitted to the PCC in January had been independently examined and approved. The Financial Statements are on display in the Church.

With regard to the Quinquennial inspection the PCC had previously agree that only essential work would be done and that this has now been done by Pilgrim Builders of Bures. In addition, it had been found necessary to earth the new heaters. This has been completed and a certificate issued in July.

Meriel Sparkes reported in writing that this year has been an extremely difficult period for everyone because of the Covid-19 epidemic. The Church has been affected enormously. It closed completely from the middle of March. It re-opened for prayer and visitors in the middle of June and no more services were held until 16th August when fortnightly services were held until the beginning of October. Observing all the regulations, keeping the church cleaned, sanitized and Risk Assessed and keeping records of visitors for Test and Trace had been a huge job. With the help of Rev James Ridge, we restarted communion services and Phyll Wood, a lay-reader has helped with Christopher Orme leading other services. Rev Henry Heath is taking our communion in November.

Members of the Parochial Church Council due to stand down by rotation were re-elected. Ray and Janet Woodnott have decided to stand down for health reasons and they were thanked for their very long service and major contribution over many years. Mrs Sally Bramall was welcomed as a new member of the PCC. Sidesmen and Readers were generally re-elected as before, and their names are displayed in the Church Porch.

The meeting expressed its heartfelt thanks to Meriel and John Sparkes for keeping the Church together in the current very difficult circumstances caused by the Coronavirus pandemic. Their efforts have been truly heroic.

The Meeting of the Parochial Church Council reconfirmed the appointments referred to above. It also noted that John Sparkes had kindly agreed to stay on as Treasurer at least until the next APCM, having previously expressed his wish to stand down.

At the request of the Diocese, it was agreed that the Revd Hazel Greenland should be licensed as an Associate Priest. This was warmly welcomed by the PCC.

Mr and Mrs Bramall have kindly offered to install a bench in the Churchyard in memory of their daughter Lizzie.

It was agreed that the lime trees on the path to the Church should be pollarded and competitive quotes had been received. A contract will be awarded

The next meeting of the PCC will be on 26th January 2021.

The meetings closed with prayers.

WILL PAVRY



Christmas Mincemeat Biscuits



Ingredients

125g softened butter
100g dark brown soft sugar
50g golden caster sugar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ heaped tsp fine sea salt
1 medium egg
1 tsp vanilla extract
5 tbsp mincemeat
220g plain flour
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp bicarbonate of soda

Method

STEP 1

Heat oven to 180c/160c fan/gas 4
Beat the butter with both types of sugar and the salt. Beat in the

egg, vanilla extract and mincemeat. Stir in the flour and the bicarbonate of soda, then chill for 20 mins.

STEP 2

Scoop tablespoons of the mixture onto two lined baking sheets, leave a bit of space between each so they can spread. Bake for 10-12 mins, or until the cookies are just firm around the edges but still soft in the middle - they will firm up as they cool. Transfer to a wire rack and leave to cool.



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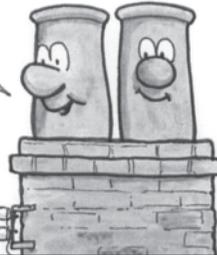
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Pet Of The Month

Nature is a truly wonderful thing.

I want to tell you a wonderful, moving story about a beautiful, golden labrador called Willow, who despite being spayed three weeks earlier, took on the roll of surrogate mum to seven (of fourteen!) pups that were tragically orphaned soon after being born.

These puppies aren't labradors, they are Tolley's - or, Nova Scotia Duck Tolling



Retrievers to be precise, and despite originally having no milk of her own, the perseverance of the nuzzling pups has brought on Willows milk so she can care for them completely (no further help needed with feeding from their human mum).

Willow had previously had a litter of her own so knew instinctively how to care for

these newborns. She just stepped in and took over.

I hope you can agree with me that darling Willow more than deserves to be our **Pet Of The Month** for December and January.





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Sudoku

Solutions - how did you do?

9	2	5	7	8	1	4	3	6
3	7	4	5	6	2	9	8	1
6	8	1	9	3	4	2	5	7
8	9	2	1	5	6	7	4	3
4	5	6	3	9	7	1	2	8
1	3	7	4	2	8	6	9	5
7	6	9	8	4	3	5	1	2
5	1	3	2	7	9	8	6	4
2	4	8	6	1	5	3	7	9

Easy

Very Hard

9	1	8	5	4	7	2	3	6
4	7	2	6	9	3	1	8	5
5	3	6	2	1	8	9	7	4
3	9	5	7	8	4	6	2	1
8	6	7	1	2	9	5	4	3
2	4	1	3	6	5	8	9	7
1	8	9	4	3	6	7	5	2
7	2	3	8	5	1	4	6	9
6	5	4	9	7	2	3	1	8

Sidesmen & Readers : December 2020

	Sidesmen	Readers	Readings
6th December			
Morning	Will Pavry Vicky Minet	Will Pavry Vicky Minet	Isaiah 40: 1-11 Mark 1: 1-8
Evening	NO SERVICE		
13th December			
Morning	NO MORNING SERVICE		
Evening	PARISH COMMUNION Christopher Orme Mary Perrins	Christopher Orme Mary Perrins	1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24 Matthew 22: 1-14
20th December			
Morning	NO MORNING SERVICE		
Evening	LESSONS AND CAROLS Sue Carbutt Ann Garnett	TBA	TBA
			
24th December CHRISTMAS EVE			
Morning	NO MORNING SERVICE		
Evening <u>7.30 pm</u>	BENEFICE MIDNIGHT IN BETHLEHEM EUCHARIST Brian Lord John Sparkes	Brian Lord John Sparkes	Titus 3: 3-7 John 1: 6-8; 19-28
25th December CHRISTMAS DAY			
NO SERVICES			
27th December			
NO SERVICES			



Church Calendar: December 2020

- December 6th** **Advent 2**
11.00 am Morning Service
- December 13th** **Advent**
6.30 am Holy Communion
- December 20th**
6.30 pm SERVICE OF LESSONS AND
CAROLS
- December 24th** **Christmas Eve**
4.30 pm Crib Service at Mount Bures
7.30 pm Christmas Eve Communion at
Little Horkesley
- December 25th** **Christmas Day**
10.00 am Benefice Christmas
Communion at Wormingford
- December 27th** **NO SERVICES IN THE BENEFICE**



Sidesmen & Readers : January 2021

Sunday	Sidesmen	Readers	Readings
3rd January			
Morning	Vicky Minet Will Pavry	Vicky Minet Julia Orme	Isaiah 60: 1-6 Matthew 2: 1-12
Evening	NO EVENING SERVICE		
10th January			
Morning	NO MORNING SERVICE		
Evening	Ann Garnett Brian Lord	Ann Garnett Brian Lord	Genesis 1: 1-5 Mark 1: 4-11
	<i>Intercessor: Brenda Green</i>		
17th January			
Morning	NO MORNING SERVICE		
Evening	PARISH COMMUNION Margaret Thomas Harold Thomas	Margaret Thomas Harold Thomas	Revelation 5: 1-10 John 1: 43-51
24th January			
Morning	NO MORNING SERVICE		
Evening	PATRONAL FESTIVAL John Sparkes Sue Carbutt	TBA	TBA
31st January			
Morning	NO MORNING SERVICE		
Evening	Mary Perrins Christopher Orme	Mary Perrins Christopher Orme	Malachi 3: 1-5 Luke 2: 22-40
7th February			
Morning	Will Pavry Vicky Minet	Will Pavry Sally Bramall	Proverbs 8: 1 and 22-31 John 1: 1-14
Evening	NO EVENING SERVICE		



Church Calendar:
January 2021

- January 3rd** **Epiphany**
11.00 am Morning Service
- January 10th** **1st Sunday of Epiphany Baptism of Christ**
6.30 pm Evening Service
- January 17th** **2nd Sunday of Epiphany**
6.30 pm Holy Communion
- January 24th** **3rd Sunday of Epiphany and PATRONAL FESTIVAL**
6.30 pm PATRONAL FESTIVAL SERVICE
- January 31st** **Presentation of Christ in the Temple**
6.30 pm Benefice Evening Service
- February 7th** **2nd Sunday before Lent**
11.00 am Morning Service

