

St Bartholomew's Church, Otford Parish News



SERVICES AT ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

April	8.00am	10.00am	2.00pm	6.30pm
2th April Lent 5	Holy Communion	All Together Worship	-	Evensong
9th April Palm Sunday	Holy Communion	Palm Sunday Procession (10.45am) and Service on the	-	-
13th April Maundy Thursday				Re-enactment of the Last Supper (8 pm) and the
14th April Good Friday		All Together Worship for Good Friday	The Last Hour	
16th April Easter Sunday	Easter Communion	Easter All Together Communion	-	Festal Evensong
23rd April Easter 2	Holy Communion (BCP)	Holy Communion	-	-
30th April Easter 3	Holy Communion	Morning Worship	-	-

SUNDAY CLUB (FOR AGES 0-14, during the 10 am service, except on the 1st Sunday)

INFANT: 3-7

JUNIOR: 8-11

SENIOR: 12-14

EPIC (FOR SCHOOL YEARS 5-7) meets on the 2nd Saturday in the month, 6-8 pm in the Church Centre.

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

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

Cover photo: Joe and Anna's Wedding, taken by Richard Worssam
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VICAR'S VIEWPOINT



Fake news - there seems to be a lot of it around at the moment. It's certainly making the headlines. It is also a genuine cause for concern. Just recently I read an interview with the Education Director of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Andreas Schleicher, in which he said that it was now vital for schools to teach young people how to identify fake news.

Currently the OECD runs tests which assess pupils' skills in maths, science and reading. But now its going to introduce tests to assess the ability of teenagers to navigate the digital world and distinguish what is true from what are unreliable claims on social media. Gone are the days when you could simply look up something in the Encyclopaedia Britannica and have a fair degree of confidence that what you were reading was true.

Fake news has hit the headlines recently primarily due to the activities and pronouncements of Donald Trump and his team. There are so many examples I could mention from the claims made by Sean Spicer, the White House press secretary, regarding the size of the crowds at the Presidential Inauguration in comparison with previous presidents, to Donald Trump saying that the rollout of his travel ban was very smooth, despite legal challenges and chaos at the airports.

However, Donald Trump has sought to turn the tables by claiming that mainline media organisations, including the BBC, are peddlers of fake news. There was the classic and fractious exchange with Jon Sopel, the North America Editor for the BBC, in which Trump famously exclaimed, in dismissive tones, "Here's another beauty."

Trump has gone on to say that the "Fake News Media" (e.g. CNN & CBS) are not just enemies of the President, but the enemies of the American people. This rings alarm bells. The attempt to threaten, even silence, legitimate questions regarding the handling of power is a threat to democracy. To throw around the term "fake news" is to undermine democracy and

the necessary exchange of views in the search for truth. It is creating a situation which is being exploited by other nations. For example, Russia dismisses as fake news claims that it attempted to interfere in American politics, both during the election campaign and prior to the Presidential Inauguration.

Of course, the phenomenon of fake news is not new. Various countries have used it in times of war in the form of propaganda to spread lies and misinformation and thereby to sway public opinion.

We even find the suggestion of fake news in Matthew's Gospel regarding the explanation for the empty tomb at Easter. "When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they give the soldiers [who had been guarding the tomb] a large sum of money, telling them, 'You are to say, "His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.'" If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.' So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed." (Matthew 28:12-14)

The Gospel literally means "Good News" and the events of the Easter story go to the heart of what this good news is all about. Just as it is now vital for young people to be able to distinguish between fake and genuine news, so also it is vital for all us to assess the good news presented to us in the Gospel: fake news or true? Our answer to this question will make a huge and enduring difference to our lives.

Your friend and Vicar, Richard

- 17 7.45 pm Coffee and chat (17 Leonard Avenue)
- 19 9.30 am 'First Steps' (Otford Free Church, Pilgrims Way West)
- 10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) (Rev. Chris Reed)
- 23 The Second Sunday of Easter**
- 8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)**
- 10.00 am Holy Communion**
- 24 7.45 pm Discussion (17 Leonard Avenue)
- 8.00 pm St. Bartholomew's Fair Committee ('Burway', Sevenoaks Road)
- 25 8.00 pm Readers and Revs teams at the Vicarage
- 26 10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) coffee afterwards
- 7.30 pm Worship Advisory Group at the Vicarage
- 30 The Third Sunday of Easter**
- 8.00 am Holy Communion**
- 10.00 am Morning Worship**
- 11.45 pm APCM (Church Centre)**
- 1.00 pm Parish Lunch**



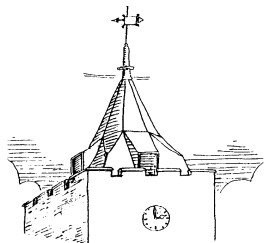
Registers



FUNERALS (our Sympathy)

- 19th February Roy **Chandler** (age 85)
- 3rd March Gwendolen Iris **Delaney** (88)
- 11th March Ann Margaret **Wiltcher** (83)

FROM ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH



CHURCHYARD WORKING PARTY

This will take place on **Saturday, 1st April 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!

BRING AND SHARE LUNCH - 2nd APRIL

Following the presentation at all three services on 19th March on the challenges and opportunities of the 2017 budget and the ministry of St. Barts, there will be an opportunity to continue this discussion over a bring and share lunch on Sunday 2nd April at 12 noon.

THE REAL EASTER EGG

The Real Easter Egg is the only one which has a copy of the Easter story in the box. It communicates the real story of Easter to all generations. The Real Easter Egg was launched in 2010, is made of Fairtrade chocolate and makes a donation to the charity, Traidcraft Exchange, from sales giving at least 10p from the purchase of each 150g egg. Available from Tesco, Morrisons and Waitrose supermarkets. For details see: www.realeasteregg.co.uk

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER EVENTS

Palm Sunday Procession, 9th April, 10.45 am

There will be a united churches' procession, beginning at Otford Methodist Church at 10.45 am and ending with an act of worship on The Green, followed by refreshments in the Church Centre. Palm crosses will be available at all services on that day.

Maundy Thursday, 13th April. There will be a united service of the Last Supper (8pm) and The Watch at St. Bartholomew's Church (9pm).

Good Friday, 14th April. There will be a service for all ages at 10.00 am in the Church Centre and also 'The Last Hour' service of hymns and readings in church from 2-3.00 pm.

EASTER DAY, 16th April. There will be services of Holy Communion at 8.00 and 10.00 am. At 6.30 pm there will be a service of Evensong. Do join us!

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

The APCM will be held after the morning service on Sunday, 30th April at 11.45 am in the Church Centre. This will be followed by a parish lunch at 1.00 pm. At this meeting we will be presenting the Annual Report and Accounts and also electing new members of the PCC and Deanery Synod. We do hope you will join us as we look back with thanksgiving and forward with hope.

COMMEMORATION OF DEPARTED LOVED ONES

The annual service to commemorate departed loved ones will take place in church on Sunday, 7th May at 3.00 pm

CIVIC SERVICE

The date of the annual Civic Service is on Sunday, 21st May, 10.00 am at St. Bartholomew's Church. We warmly invite you to join us at this service.

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH FAIR

This will take place on **Saturday 17th June from 2pm**, on and around The Green. Please put the date in your diary and plan to be with us, if you can.



DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS

Telephone: 01732 227000 www.sevenoaks.gov.uk
Cllr.Lowe@sevenoaks.gov.uk <http://michellelowe.yourcllr.com>

On Thursday 9th March the Cabinet at Sevenoaks District Council agreed to use a six-bedroom West Kent property in Eynsford, to home our first family of Syrian refugees.

Sevenoaks District Council has always been committed to homing a family of Syrian refugees but until now we have not been able to find a suitable property. We are not supposed to use a social rented home as we are not allowed to, nor would we want to, displace a local family in need from living in that home. Our private rented sector is smaller than most other districts and landlords can charge higher rents than that paid by the government for refugees – so, thus far none have come forward.

In October the Council approved the Community Scheme whereby a church or charity group is able to donate a home for two to five years for a Syrian refugee family – we as a council would support their efforts and home one there. Again, so far no community group has come forward either. We will be advertising for private landlords and community groups to come forward in our next edition of 'In Shape'.

In the meantime West Kent Housing Association has had an empty, six-bedroom home that has been adapted for disabled use. Due to the spare room subsidy there has been no local family in either the Sevenoaks District, Dartford, Tonbridge & Malling or Tunbridge Wells Borough Councils that need a six bedroom home either. West Kent decided to sell the property with no guarantee of them reinvesting the money back into social provision in our district – meaning we could

lose a social rented home.

Under these circumstances it is possible to home a family of Syrian refugees under the government approved Kent Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme. West Kent agreed that we could use the home for these purposes and Cabinet approved that decision on 9th March.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, which has already settled six Syrian refugee families, has said that the families they have re-settled in villages have been more successful than those in the towns due to the community support they receive. We have been overwhelmed with the amount of support that has come forward so far, so although Eynsford does not have the facilities of a town, we are confident that this will be a success.

Working with representatives from the village, the Council will identify a suitable family that we all believe will be able to settle in Eynsford and then we can begin planning the preparations, welcome and re-settlement programme.

If any of you have any skills or time that you would like to donate to helping settle our new refugee family please email the council at Refugee.Support@sevenoaks.gov.uk or contact me directly.

With best wishes,
Michelle Lowe





IN MEMORIAM



Sidney Edward Speer

1927 - 2017

Sidney was born in 1927 in New Cross, South London, the eldest of two sons of Elsie and Leonard. His life in London was interrupted when he was evacuated during the Second World War to Wales, Darlington and Burwash in Sussex. Sidney and his brother, Robert, were keen footballers but, unfortunately, Sidney's sporting activities were cut short when, in his late teens, his leg was injured which led to osteomyelitis. He spent two years in hospital until he was given a new drug which led to his eventual recovery.

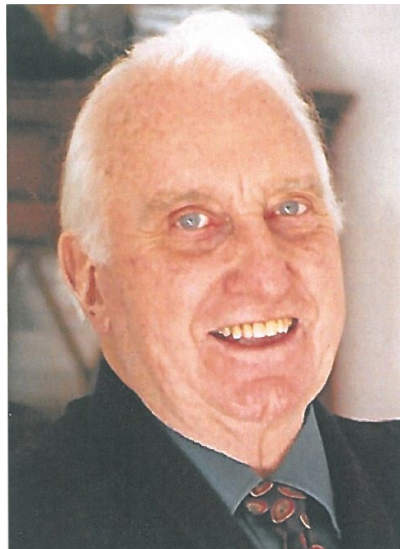
Sidney became an articled clerk at a firm of accountants in the city and attended night school to gain his qualification as a chartered accountant. He married his first wife in 1957 and had two sons, Philip and Roy. In the early 1960's, the family moved out of London to Staplehurst in Kent. Sidney joined an insurance company, working his way up to Company Secretary, and was awarded Freedom of the City of London.

Having divorced his first wife some years earlier, Sidney met Rita in 1971 and they married four years later in a ceremony at the Guildhall in the City. Along with Rita, Sidney gained two stepchildren, Andrew and Liz, and a large extended family.

Sidney and Rita moved to Otford in 1979 and Sidney continued to commute to London until his retirement in the early 1990's. Sidney enjoyed a variety of activities, including gardening, entertaining his eight grandchildren,

spending time with family and friends, holidays and attending events arranged by the Probus club for retired professional people. Sidney and Rita enjoyed a long and happy marriage, celebrating their 40th Wedding Anniversary with their family in 2015.

Sidney lived to a good age. Despite various ailments and mobility problems, he still found a way to enjoy life and to touch the lives of a wide circle of family and friends. In good times and in the face of adversity, he maintained a joy for living, a great sense of humour and lived a rich and full life.





IN MEMORIAM



Richard Eric Dilley, 1949-2016

Richard was born in 1949 and, together with his younger brother, Peter, he grew up in Orpington, attending the Highway Primary School and then Beckenham Penge Grammar School. Richard's connection with Otford began at the age of 16 when the family moved here in 1966. After leaving school, Richard went to St. John's College of Ripon and York, from 1969-1972, where he trained as a P.E. teacher with history as his subsidiary subject. His college dissertation was devoted to the history of Otford.

Upon graduating, Richard gained a job as a P.E. teacher at Wildernesse School, Sevenoaks. He taught successive generations of students there until 1998. His pupils recall how he encouraged them to develop their skills in various sports. He was an all-rounder himself, being good in hockey, football and cricket. In his younger years he was also the West Kent champion in the high jump. Some of the pupils he coached went on to achieve professional level in their sports. He was always fair and he was prepared to give up his free time to take pupils to sports fixtures out of school hours. Richard particularly enjoyed hockey, and he was a member of the Sevenoaks Hockey Club from 1974-1989.

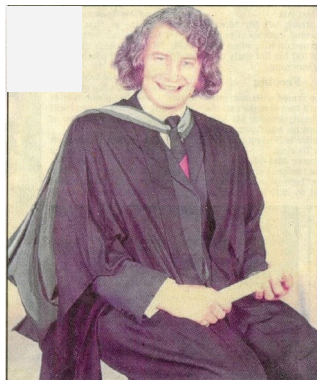
In 1975 Richard got married to Lorna at St. Bartholomew's Church. They had met through mutual friends at Sevenoaks Hospital. Lorna was training as a nurse and Richard worked there as a porter in the holidays while he was a student. At first they lived in a flat in Sevenoaks, and then they moved to Ticehurst in 1976, where Richard lived until 2012. They soon started a family, with the birth of their

son, Andrew, in 1979 and their daughter, Lizzie, in 1982. They enjoyed family holidays going camping and hill walking and visiting English Heritage sites. Over the years, Richard's family grew to include three grandchildren.

The late 90s were a difficult time for Richard with his divorce from Lorna in 1997 and finishing at Wildernesse School in 1998. After this he had a variety of jobs including supply teaching, fruit farming and working as a barman, before he fully retired in 2009. Latterly, from 2012, Richard moved to Tonbridge.

Richard was in many ways a traditionalist with an anarchic and mischievous streak. He was a baby boomer who lived and breathed the spirit of the 1960s and early 70s of fun, hope and freedom. He used to describe himself as an ageing hippy and he enjoyed listening to the Rolling Stones and the Beatles. He had a strong sense of humour, particularly that which poked fun at authority such as Peter Cook, Dudley Moore and Monty Python.

His legacy lives on in his family, students and friends.



FAITH IN THE FAMILY...

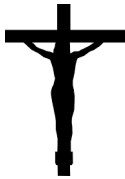
April: Spring back at Easter!



Pause for thought: There is no getting away from the fact that life is full of ups and downs.

We all need a certain amount of resilience or toughness, to be able to survive the bad times and to provide the capacity to bounce back again afterwards.

Throughout his life and particularly at the end of it, Jesus suffered more than most (see the Bible story on p 14). Knowing that he had to face death on the cross, he nevertheless *resolutely* set out for Jerusalem to do his Father's will. Along the way, he faced temptation, rejection of his ministry, threats, betrayal, mocking, insults, he was spat upon, flogged and was killed. He survived it all, even conquering death itself for our sakes.



Children today face a particularly insidious problem in the form of online pressures and bullying. This can be constant since mobile phones go with them everywhere and parents may not be aware of what is happening. In our competitive world, there is also the pressure to succeed in all sorts of subjects and activities set against a background of complicated family set ups.

So how can we help our children to build reservoirs of strength to draw upon? Perhaps we can ensure that they have a positive view of themselves by being generous with praise. At the baptism of Jesus, and at the start of his ministry, Jesus heard God say to him, "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well

pleased." We need to show too that our love is not conditional upon achievement, but that they are loved for themselves.

Jesus surrounded himself with a group of close friends. We can encourage our children to join in with others, perhaps at one of our church groups, and we can welcome their friends into our homes. In such groups they can learn to share problems and support one another.

We know that Jesus often withdrew to a lonely place to pray. Again, we can build quiet times (without phones!) into our hectic lives giving our children the space to think and pray, and allowing them the chance to get things back into perspective.

Psychologists say that resilient people have a sense of purpose, making *realistic* plans and sticking to them. They are flexible enough to embrace change and are able to maintain a hopeful outlook despite what is going on. Here are a few family activities for Easter that might encourage resilience!

Sweet and sour recipe: Prepare an easy family meal using a ready-made sweet and sour sauce from the supermarket. Put any phones away and read the story on p14 together. As you eat, chat about the sweet and sour aspects of Jesus' life on earth.

What do family members find easy or difficult in their lives today? Share how you each deal with these things. Do people agree that a problem shared is a problem halved?

Ups and downs: Start playing some easy board games, such as Snakes and Ladders or Ludo, with young children to get them used to set-backs. At first, they may be upset at having to

move a counter backwards on the board. But persevere and demonstrate a light-hearted attitude yourself at moving your own counter back.



The good news and the bad

news: Play this game on a car journey or a long walk. One person starts a story about a character setting out to achieve a goal, but *unfortunately* . . . they run into a problem. The next person takes over the story, saying *fortunately* . . . and then provides a solution until *unfortunately* . . . etc. Keep the mini-story going for several minutes until the character achieves their goal and it is someone else’s turn to start a new story.

No gain without pain: It can be useful to learn to think positively about things we have to do but may not look forward to! For example, on the way to the dentist, chat about:

What would happen if we did not have our teeth checked

Modern dentistry methods as opposed to earlier ones

The short time in the dentist’s chair compared to the year!

Can everyone think up some positive thoughts about a cold, rainy day in the Easter holidays, an exam, a boring chore, etc!

What did we all gain from the pain Jesus suffered on Good Friday?

How do I look? Make a regular habit of complimenting children on their natural good looks, especially when they are least expecting it! “Your hair looks such a beautiful colour in the sunshine,” etc! When

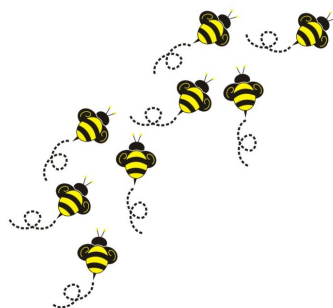


teenagers are getting ready for a party, you could say things like, “I know its fun to wear a bit of makeup, but with your beautiful eyes/lips/cheekbones, you really you don’t need it!” Give them confidence as they set off. “Wow! You look like a film star!”

Try to give young children the words they need to deal with run-of-the-mill hurtful comments from others. For instance, “If I were you, I’d tell him/her to go to Specsavers!” “Well, if they are going to say *that* sort of thing, I should think you ought to say, ‘[name], I’ve had enough of you for the moment’ and walk away.”

A home for bees and bugs: Help the mini-beasts in your garden to be resilient by making them a home. As a family activity, build a stack with various unwanted materials such as wooden pallets (good as a base), bricks (to keep the structure together), old terracotta plant pots, etc. Stuff the layers with bamboo canes, twigs, straw, moss and pinecones. Build in semi-shade and cover with something to keep the rain out, such as roof tiles. Mini-beasts will help keep pests away and also pollinate, helping your garden to be fruitful!

Vicki Howie



IN CONVERSATION WITH...MARIAN WILLS

The Wren who landed in Otford...

Marian will be familiar to many members of St Bart's Church: some will know her as a server at the 8am service, some because of her regular attendance at Evensong and others for her beautiful speaking voice when reading the lesson at funerals and special events. In earlier years she also took part in several of David Matthews' drama productions in church.

Marian grew up in New Eltham where she attended local schools - though her secondary education was badly disrupted by the Second World War. During the war Marian's older sister, who worked for the Civil Service, was evacuated to Wales. As the only child at home Marian had to do many household chores because her parents were so busy. Her father had a company making scientific instruments and would fire watch at night. Her mother was in charge of a Rest Centre Service (a base for bombed out people until they could be rehoused) and also ran a voluntary Red Cross detachment which prepared for emergencies by training and organising volunteers in skills such as home nursing, first aid and basic hospital work. Marian would often go with her mother and told me she became a 'dab hand' at doing a neat bandage anywhere on the body.

When I asked her about the air-raids, Marian said that when she was home alone she had to go to the neighbours' Anderson shelter. If her parents were home, they would all take shelter in the cupboard under the stairs or under the dining table. Despite having seen a German plane strafing the railway line, and having a friend who was killed when a bomb landed on her house, Marian does not remember being afraid.



Marian Wills 1944

After leaving school Marian did a secretarial college course before, aged 17, joining the Wrens and being stationed in Plymouth. This was in 1944 and Marian was pleased to get away from London to meet new people from all walks of life.

She was quartered in a big house where she shared a dormitory with other Wrens. Thanks to her clear and mellifluous voice, Marian was trained as a radio-telegraphist to give instructions for the berthing and manoeuvring of ships in Plymouth harbour – a job she did for two years.

De-mobbed in 1946, Marian took a secretarial refresher course before joining British Petroleum (then the Anglo-Iranian Oil Co) as a secretary in the engineering department, based in BP House in Finsbury Square. There she met her future husband, Len, a civil engineer, who had spent most of the war as an RAF officer in India. They married in 1950 and were fortunate to be able to buy a house not far from Marian's parents in New Eltham. Following the custom of the time, Marian stopped work on marriage and, before long, the family had expanded to include their son, Nigel, and their first red setter. Marian went on to have two more children, Alison and David... and eight more setters!

When Marian was pregnant with Alison, Len was sent by BP to Papua, New Guinea for six months. On top of that her mother had just survived a coronary and needed support. Fortunately Len arrived home shortly before the



Len and Marian at their Ruby Wedding, 1990

birth of his daughter and the family then moved to a village near Rochester so that Len could work on the design of a new refinery on the Isle of Grain. Their third child,

David was born at this time. Six months later Len's work took the family firstly to Abadan, an oil town in Southern Iran (temperature 50 °C), and then to Tehran where they lived in a house in the hills not far from the Shah's palace. Marian enjoyed the expatriate life with all the dinner parties and poolside social events; she said it was 'a wonderful time'.

After two years the family returned to England and lived in Sevenoaks for seven years before buying a house with a granny-annexe in Otford so that Marian's mother could come to live close by. Seventeen years later, once her mother had died and the children had left home, Marian told Len that she would like an oast house for her birthday! Her wish was granted when they moved to Twitton where

Marian lived for 27 years. During that time Len retired giving them the opportunity to travel widely. Sadly, after almost 50 years of marriage, Len died in 1999. Reluctantly Marian moved to her current home in the heart of Otford seven years ago when she could no longer drive.

Over the years, Marian has dedicated much time to voluntary work including being on the Sevenoaks League of Friends Hospital Committee, the Sevenoaks NSPCC Committee (20 years), and the Sevenoaks Cancer Research Committee (20 years, including four as chairman). She is a former president and longstanding member of Otford Evening WI and is still Chairman of Otford Players. She belongs to Sevenoaks Poetry Society and used to be involved with 'The Outreach Theatre' (an offshoot of the Oast Theatre in Hildenborough) which went into care homes acting out plays based on wartime reminiscences.

On the night that Marian's husband died, Pat Hopkins came round to see her and 'took her under her wing'. This action led to Marian finding new purpose through a Christian faith rediscovered. She told me she would now be lost without her faith – it is a great support to her.

Christeen Malan



Family Wedding in 1994

ANCIENT WISDOM - MODERN LIVES

The Resilience of Jesus



God was delighted with his world, but not the behaviour of his children. They were doing the one thing he'd asked them *not* to - deciding for themselves what was right and wrong. Soon his 'clever' children had stopped listening to their heavenly father. Instead they kidded themselves that it was fine to steal, to make war, to ignore the hungry, to pollute the rivers . . . Like straying sheep, they went their own way!

But God still loved his children. So much so, that he planned to send his own son Jesus into the world, a kindly shepherd who would gather his flock into the fold. Jesus would even pay the price for people's mistakes by dying on a cross. But that would not be the end . . .

From the word go, it was not an easy life for Jesus. God gave him loving parents. But they were far from home when Mary gave birth and Jesus was born in a poor stable. Then they had to flee from cruel Herod. Refugees! But his childhood in Nazareth was peaceful, learning useful building skills from Joseph.

God provided Jesus with an older cousin John who prepared everyone to listen to his message about living God's way – the way of kindness. But no sooner had he been baptised, than he was tempted by the Devil. Tempted to use his God-given talents for his own power and pleasure. His utter determination to do God's will enabled him to resist and he voiced this in words of Scripture that he knew by heart.

At least the Devil recognized Jesus as the Son of God! Many people did not – especially those in his

own town of Nazareth, where he was rejected. He was often criticized and questioned in a hostile manner but he parried with a question of his own to make others think. His close friends were a support and he taught them to love their enemies and to do good to those who hated them.

Even his best friends did not understand his real mission – especially when he revealed that he would suffer and be killed. But he resolutely set out for Jerusalem, saying, "I must keep going today and tomorrow and the next day . . ."

What a welcome there was for Jesus in Jerusalem on Palm Sunday! But within a week, the same crowd was demanding his death. He was betrayed by Judas, arrested, mocked, insulted, spat upon, flogged, disowned by Peter and nailed to a cross on Good Friday. He died.



But he was victorious over death and on Easter Day he rose again. He had fulfilled his purpose to heal man's broken relationship with God.

Vicki Howie



MISSION MATTERS

Development Through Education

St Bartholomew's is a long-term partner of Worldwide Silver Lining. WWSL supports two projects, a charity school in Kenya and a Christian Maasai project in Tanzania.

Bishop Jeremiah Kibobi operates Magnet High School, a charity school in Rongata Ongai near Nairobi. A total of 250 students are fully supported financially by Magnet with over 350 students attending Magnet in total. A proportion of these pay some or a full fee for their studies. Jeremiah recently sent this update:

"We are always very grateful for the support we receive continuously from WWSL. We have accepted further orphans aged between 6 and 13 into the junior school. There are now 114 children we are fully supporting in the Junior School and 136 in the High School free of charge. These children would not attend school if it was not for Magnet and would be at risk on slum areas.

With some extra donations recently we have been able to build more teachers accommodation rooms, and provide uniforms for the students, more beds and bedding and more classroom desks. Our great challenge now is to construct a staff room for both schools and also improve the sanitation for the orphans.

Proverbs 19:17. When you help the poor, you are lending to the Lord and he will pay wonderful interest on your loan.

May He bless you and keep you healthy "

Jeremiah

Worldwide Silver Lining and three churches in the U.S.A. assist with monthly grants.

However, the teachers are low paid compared to those in the state schools and the school has difficulty dealing with contingencies such as paying for medical treatment for students.

If you are interested in supporting the children of Magnet School please follow the links below. Please pray for the staff and students at Magnet School.

MAPED news: We are currently paying the student fees of Peter (Maasai tribesman) to have pastoral training including teacher training. The Maasai school has now been registered with the local authority which may open doors for more funding. They are expecting a road to be constructed nearby which may bring the possibility of electricity supply to the community.

For photos of the projects please see the website and any donations are very much appreciated.

<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/charities/worldwidesilverlining>

www.worldwidesilverlining.co.uk

Andrew Hill



THE RISE & FALL OF LULLINGSTONE VILLA (PART ONE)

Most of us have visited the remains of the Roman villa at Lullingstone and stared down at the illuminated foundations and the exposed tesserae of its famous mosaic. We may even have bought an expensive guide to better understand what we were looking at. But those bits of foundations can never tell us the full story of this amazing home and how the politics of Rome, half a world away, so influenced its fate. That is what this story is about.

It is generally thought that the first thatched farmhouse was built in about 100AD. The Romans had occupied Kent for almost 60 years at this point and the governor of Britannia, Quintus Urbicus, had been pursuing an active policy of 'Romanisation' of the local population. This included instruction on the Roman system of farming.

So the new house was planned in the familiar Romano-Gallic 'winged corridor' design; two wings on either side, linked by a big central room and a front veranda. As was common then, it included an extensive cellar which could provide dry storage for their grain.

Our new farmer was encouraged to grow Emmer wheat, the key ingredient of Roman bread, staple diet of the occupying army. And, as we know, wheat grows well in our valley and it wasn't long before the farm was prospering. Sixty years pass and probably it was the son of the original owner who now built a small circular Roman temple half-way up the escarpment behind the house. It was an indication of his new found status and a statement of his respect for Rome.

It was at about this time that someone quite different took on ownership of the little villa. As we discover, he appears to have probably been a senior military man who had spent considerable time in the Middle East. Maybe he was the general who had previously served with our governor in Syria and had been recently brought over here to quell an uprising of the Picts. The little farmhouse is transformed into a full Roman villa. He builds an extensive heated bath complex at the southern end, while beneath the northern wing, he converts that grain cellar into a fully fledged nymphaeum with a 'sacred well' at its centre. Its walls are now carefully painted in



The early farmhouse C. 130AD

geometric patterns and hanging palm trees decorate every corner. Beside it he constructs a thatched temple, similarly decorated, linked by a corridor to the nyphaeum. This was a religion of the water spirits only found in the Eastern Mediterranean, particularly in Syria. Yet a military man, no matter how powerful, must go where his orders take him and it would seem that the state now took over the villa as a country residence for the governor. Why do we suppose this?

The enormous variety of tableware, discovered by the archaeologists, would seem unlikely to be the property of a single owner, but more likely of a series of owners. It would indicate men of wealth, drawn from different parts of the Empire, with varied tastes and likes. And then there is the mystery of the stolen ring. Found hidden with some gold coins near a rear outside door, it was conspicuous in its statement of wealth and rank. A ring like this was only worn only by an eques or a governor.

At this time, many of the Darent valley villas were occupied by government or military men. In 192, the governor of Britannia, Albinus, made his failed challenge for the imperial crown in Rome. When he lost his bid at a great battle outside Lyons, no quarter was given. Unsurprisingly, back in Britannia, many of the

villas along the Darent were now suddenly left empty, their owners either slain or fled. It was to be 80 long years before anyone again took ownership of Lullingstone and the villa remained deserted and forgotten.

This was a chaotic time in Rome as one emperor after another was assassinated or deposed. The chaos stretched across Europe and the warring Franks decimated the whole wheat-growing area of north Germany. Wheat was now desperately needed to feed the army. Only the arrival of emperor Constantine brought back stability to the Empire. It was in about 285AD, that a new owner buys our much-dilapidated villa. He is probably a successful Romano-British business man who recognises an opportunity.

Spending generously, he restores the villa and its baths to a fine state. He demolishes the old temple buildings and, having cleaned out the 'deep room', he blocks its entrance from outside, using it now just for occasional storage. Above it, he rebuilds the wing of the villa with heated rooms. Finally, he turns his energies toward purchasing land from the nearby farmers. It is the beginning of an energetic new era for Lullingstone Villa.

Rod Shelton



The Battle of Lugdunam, Feb. 170AD

OUT AND ABOUT...



OTFORD GIRLGUIDING The 2017 Sainsbury's Active Kids Scheme has been running since

the end of January and Girlguiding Otford are saving the vouchers again this year to benefit the village's Rainbow, Brownie, Guide and Senior Section units. Vouchers are available until 2nd May and we would like to ask for your help again in saving the vouchers for us. There is no limit to how many we can collect, so please spread the word to everyone. Vouchers can be dropped into our collecting box, located in the Parish Office, during normal opening hours. Thank you.

Our village Rainbow, Brownie and Guide units are currently full with long waiting lists. The demand for places at all Rainbow and Brownie units in the Sevenoaks area far exceeds places available and we would love to open new units to provide fun and adventurous opportunities for more girls. We can only do this if we have new adult leaders. If you are female, aged 18 or over and interested in finding out more about volunteering with us and training to become a Leader we would love to hear from you. Please register your interest at www.girlguiding.org.uk/get_involved/volunteer.aspx and one of the local leaders will be in touch with you.

Volunteering as a leader is hugely rewarding but most of all great fun!

OTFORD HERITAGE CENTRE We are very fortunate, as a parish, to have a fascinating and significant heritage and to have a heritage centre with relevant artefacts displayed and stored and information held and shared. The centre is run entirely by volunteers and we are most grateful to all who have helped and help today,

Inevitably, further volunteers are required from time to time and this is such a moment. The range of tasks is considerable, including helping

to gather information and prepare displays, receiving and caring for artefacts and serving as stewards. More particularly, we need people to run the centre's shop, help arrange the stewarding rota, serve as press officer or meetings secretary and help with running Coffee and Cake mornings.

If you feel tempted to offer to help, please ring me (01959 522325) or send me an email (douglascracknell@aol.com) and we'll be delighted to explore with you the possibilities.

Doug Cracknell,

Chair, Otford Heritage Centre Management Committee

OTFORD GARDENERS' SOCIETY



Tuesday 4th April, Michael Abel, horticulturalist and lecturer, will talk on 'Biological And Non Chemical Control Of Pests'. **Tuesday 2nd May**,

Russell Bowes, Garden Historian, will give a talk about the 'Dig for Victory' campaign.

These meetings will take place at 8pm in Otford Village Hall, and admission for each, which includes refreshments, is £1 for visitors.

KEMSING SINGERS: Saturday 20th May:



Kemsing Singers in the St Edith Hall, Kemsing, TN156NA at 7.30pm- "Songs of Sea and River"

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OTFORD EVENING WI In April we will celebrate our birthday with a meal and a talk by Martyn Harrison about 100 Years of Musical

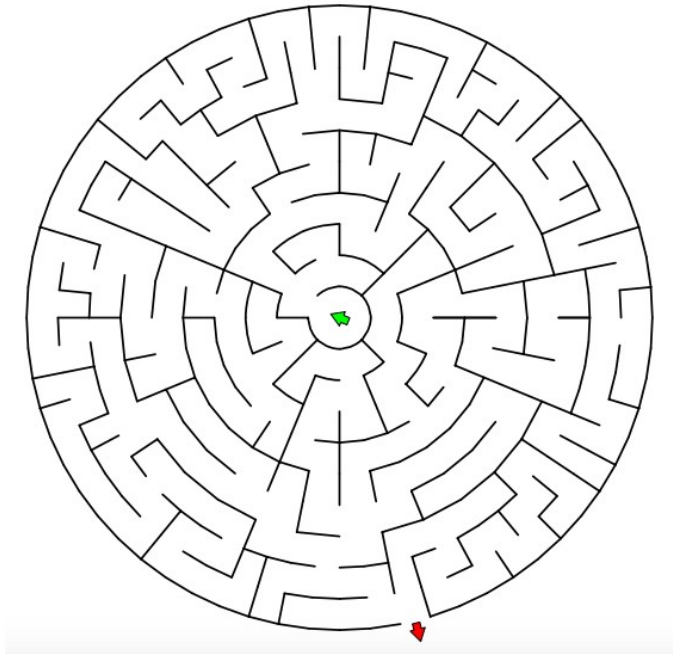
Theatre. The date is Thursday, April the 13th, 7.30pm in the Main Hall of the Otford Memorial Hall. This is a Members Only meeting.



OTFORD-NEUFCHATEL-HARDELOT TWINNING

Our Hardelet Twins are visiting Eltham Palace by coach on Wednesday 19 April and are coming to Otford for tea and cake at about 4pm in the Church Centre. It would be appreciated if you could bring a cake, but you will be most welcome whether you bring one or not. *Jane Lawrey*

APRIL PUZZLE



EASTER SALMON ROAST

This recipe is delicious, healthy and light. Serve with some interesting warmed rustic bread and salad or with asparagus and carrot batons. It works well at Easter, but also on Christmas Eve! Thank you to Beatrice Hampton for sharing this recipe with me!

Serves 4

Prep: 15 mins Total time: approx one hour

Ingredients

- 500g salad potatoes, thinly sliced
- 1 red onion, cut into wedges
- 100g radishes, quartered
- 2tbsp olive oil
- 250g cooked beetroot wedges
- 4 skinless salmon fillets sprinkled with lemon juice
- a handful of pea shoots (or rocket)
- 2 tbsp chopped dill
- 1 tbsp capers

Method

Preheat the oven to 200 C, fan 180 C, gas 6. Tip the potatoes into a large, shallow roasting tin and add the red onion and radishes. Drizzle with the oil and add some seasoning. Toss everything together and spread out in the tin. Scatter with the beetroot wedges. Roast for 30 minutes.

Remove the tin from the oven and give everything a stir. Put the salmon on top of the vegetables, season and roast for 10-12 minutes until the salmon is just cooked and the vegetables are tender. Put the salmon on a plate. Stir the pea shoots or rocket into the vegetables, then return the salmon to the tin and scatter over the dill and capers to serve.

Serve with crème fraiche or natural yoghurt mixed with a little horseradish sauce.

Vicki Howie



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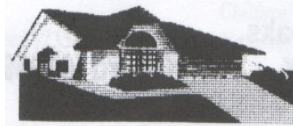
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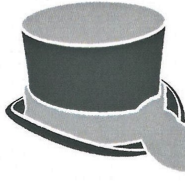
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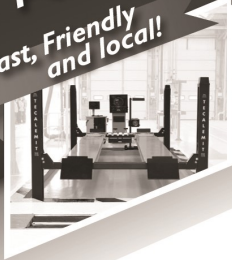


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Clive Southgate

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CHURCH HALL

Manager and Booking Sec: Robert Hunt 01959 523820

MAGAZINE

Editorial team: 01959 523185 Vicki Howie,

Christeen Malan, Clive Southgate, Richard Worssam

Advertisements: Deborah Vigis 01959 523331
st.bartholomews@otford.net

YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S WORK

'First Steps' (for parents and pre-schoolchildren)

Contact: Najen Harris 01959 522813

SUNDAY CLUB (Sundays at 10.00am)

Infants (3-7s)

Juniors (8-11s)

Seniors (12-14)

For all groups contact Donna Worssam 01959 523185

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FELLOWSHIP

Contact: Dawn Hallam 01959 526865

OUTREACH

Chairman of Mission Links:

Andrew Hill 01732 469538

BELLRINGERS

The Tower Captain: Bobbie Fairclough 01959 522696

Secretary: Janet Whitehead 01959 524088 Practice night: Thursday 7.45-9.15pm

CHOIR

Choirmaster: Kevin Grafton 01732 452117 Practice night: Friday 8.00-9.30pm New members always welcome

CHURCH COUNCIL The Vicar and the Churchwardens Margaret Lidbetter* and Russell Edwards, Samantha Barnett, Joan Beacom, Cindy Davies, Dawn Hallam*, Andrew Hill, Mark Holmes, Vicki Howie, Janet Hunt*, Mike Jones, Bill Lattimer, Nick Page, Derek Shilling#, Mags Southgate, Anne Stevens, Mark Tierney

Ex-Officio (Diocesan Synod) * Ex-Officio (Deanery Synod)