

St Bartholomew's Church, Oxford Parish News



September 2017

www.stbartholomews.co.uk

SERVICES AT ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

September	8.00am	10.00am	3.00pm	6.30pm
3 September	Holy Communion	All Together Worship	-	Evensong
10 September	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	-	-
17 September Stewardship Sunday	Holy Communion	Morning Worship	-	Evensong
24 September	Holy Communion (BCP)	Holy Communion	Messy Church	-

SUNDAY CLUB (FOR AGES 0-14)

INFANT: 3-7

JUNIOR: 8-11

SENIOR: 12-14

These groups meet in the Church Centre during the 10.00 am service, except on the first Sunday when they meet in Church for All Together Worship.

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

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

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

Vicar's off duty day: Monday

Cover photo: Kench Hill Youth Weekend Away
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VICAR'S VIEWPOINT

This month, as the new term gets underway after the summer holidays, I want to highlight two new courses that St. Bart's will be running over the Autumn. The first is entitled "Parent Talk" and will be run by Vicki Howie on Monday evenings in September and October. The second is called, "Keeping Company with God" which I will be running once a month on a Wednesday evening, initially for three sessions.



It is evident from the Gospels that Jesus had a heart for young families and children. There is a famous occasion when Jesus was teaching his disciples and he was interrupted by some young families. His disciples wanted to send the children and parents away, but Jesus did quite the opposite. He took the children in his arms and blessed them. (Mark 10:13-16)

In our Mission Action Plan we have stated that we place a high priority on our work with children and young people, and this new course is one aspect of that. As Vicki says, "Children don't arrive with an instruction manual" and so it is helpful to share our own experiences and to learn from and support one another. Further details are on p.6, so do get in contact with Vicki if you are interested.

Our Mission Action Plan also highlights the importance of growing in prayer and our relationship with God. One particular approach, which has been found helpful by Christians down the centuries, is contemplative prayer. Rowan Williams, the former

Archbishop of Canterbury, has written, "Somebody once said that the deepest problem in prayer is often not the absence of God, but the absence of me. I'm not actually there. My mind is everywhere". I wonder if this chimes with your own experience? A trend in Western society has been called "the great acceleration". The rate of change continues to get faster and faster, and this has consequences both for us and for our world. In our contemporary situation it is all the more helpful to be able to draw on the wisdom of the contemplative tradition in seeking ways of slowing down and cultivating stillness.

Stanko Abadzic has observed that "the faster we live, the less emotion is left in the world. The slower we live, the deeper we feel the world around us". Entering into stillness helps us to grow in our awareness of the presence of God and our own reactions to people and events. If you want to find out more, do come along - details are on p.6.

Your friend and Vicar,
Richard

DIARY FOR SEPTEMBER 2017

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

- 2 9.00 am Churchyard Working Party
2.00 pm Wedding of Andrew Frame and Emma Cunningham
4.30 pm Interment of the ashes of Madeleine Crowhurst
6.30 pm Brazilian Pop-Up Restaurant (Church Centre)

3 The Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

- 8.00 am Holy Communion**
10.00 am All Together Worship
12 noon Baptism of Molly Drake
6.30 pm Evensong
- 4 7.45 pm Cameo (17 Leonard Avenue)
5 8.00 pm Fabric Committee (Church Centre)
6 9.30 am 'First Steps' (Otford Methodist Church Hall)
10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
8.00 pm Readers and Revs group (17 Leonard Avenue)
- 8 2.15 pm Magazine Editorial Team (The Vicarage)
- 9 10-6.00 pm Friends of Kent Churches Ride and Stride
6.00 pm EPIC (Church Centre)

10 The Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

- 8.00 am Holy Communion**
10.00 am Holy Communion
- Magazine material for the October edition by today, please, to the Church Office, st.bartholomews@otford.net**
- 11 12-2.00 pm Soup Lunch (Church Centre) : Speaker Bill Lattimer
7.45 pm Cameo Party (17 Leonard Avenue)
8.00 pm Parent Talk - Session 1 (Church Centre)
- 13 10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
8.00 pm Introduction to Contemplative Prayer (The Vicarage)

17 The Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity: Stewardship Sunday

- 8.00 am Holy Communion**
10.00 am Morning Worship
6.30 pm Evensong
- 18 7.45 pm Homegroup (17 Leonard Avenue)
8.00 pm Parent Talk - Session 2 (Church Centre)

- 20 9.30 am 'First Steps' (Otford Methodist Church Hal)
10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) coffee afterwards
7.45 pm PCC meeting (Church Centre)

24 The Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity

8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)

10.00 am Holy Communion

3.00 pm Messy Church (Church Centre)

25 7.45 pm Cameo (17 Leonard Avenue)

8.00 pm Parent Talk - Session 3 (Church Centre)

27 10.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)

30 7.00 pm Barn Dance (Village Hall)

Also...

Our special harvest services are on Sunday 1st October

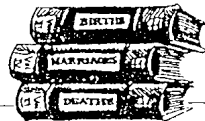
8.00 am Holy Communion

10.00 am Harvest Festival

6.30 pm Festal Evensong for Harvest



Registers



BAPTISM

27th August Jaxon Munday **Pullen**

WEDDING

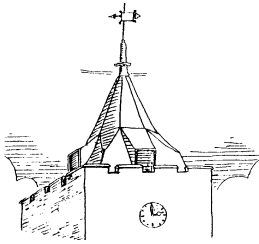
25th August Paul Martyn **Appleton** and Lydia Lesley **Kettle**

FUNERALS

7th July Frederick Samuel **Maunder** (aged 90)

21st July Michael Allan **Crook** (aged 89)

FROM ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH



CHURCHYARD WORKING PARTY

Saturday 2nd September

Anyone able to support the regular team will be most welcome from 9.00 am together with any useful tools - and even skills!

PARENTALK – THE PRIMARY YEARS

For parents of primary school children

Monday evenings, 8-9.30 pm in the Church Centre: Sept 11, 18, 25 and Oct 2, 9, 16

Parenting can be challenging – children don't arrive with an instruction manual (!) – but also rewarding! Starting in September, we'll be running *Care for the Family's* six *Parentalk* sessions. Do come along to meet other parents. After a welcoming drink and sandwich, we'll watch some short DVD clips on a particular theme about parenting and family life, including a light-hearted drama and input from an expert guest. They'll be time for swapping ideas over tea/coffee.

This informal course is suitable for all Mums and Dads, whether parenting together or alone. Each session is 'stand alone' so there is no problem if you cannot make them all. *Parentalk* looks at valuable principles that can be applied on a day-to-day basis with children. The content is well researched and based on what is

known to be effective in building strong relationships within families.

For more information/to book, please ring Vicki Howie (01959) 522413, or the church office (01959) 523185. We look forward to hearing from you!

'FIRST STEPS'

This lively group for babies, toddlers and their carers is always pleased to welcome new members. It is run by the Methodists and our own Church and includes the opportunity for a chat, refreshments and also a short Bible story with singing and activities for the children, including games and crafts. It meets fortnightly at Otford Methodist Church Hall on Wednesdays from 9.30-11.30am.

THE FRIENDS OF KENT CHURCHES BIKE & HIKE

Saturday, 9th September

This will be held between 10.00 am and 6.00 pm. Potential sponsors will be most welcome. We are looking for a rota of people to welcome visiting cyclists and walkers to sign them in. If you can spare an hour or two, please contact the Church Office on 01959 523185. The money we raise is divided between Friends of Kent Churches and our parish.

SEPTEMBER SOUP LUNCH

Monday 11th September in the Church Centre, 12-2pm, cost £5 to the mission of St Bart's. Do come along and enjoy homemade soup and bread, plus a light dessert. Our coffee-time guest will be Bill Lattimer, who will chat with Nick Page on the subject "New Term at Trinity - can a state school really be Christian?"

MESSY CHURCH, Sunday, 24th September, 3.00 pm

The next Messy Church event will take place on Sunday, 24th September at 3.00 pm in the Church Centre. This is suitable for families with children up to the age of 11. Do come along for some messy fun!

HARVEST SERVICES These will be held on Sunday, 1st October. This year we are again supporting the Diocese of Rochester's Poverty and Hope Appeal with financial gifts. Leaflets and gift aid envelopes are available at the back of church. We will also be supporting the Sevenoaks Food Bank (Loaves and Fishes) with gifts of food.

This year Rochester are continuing to support projects that are responding to the root causes of poverty in some of the poorest areas of the world, as well as helping less advantaged young people in Kent explore how to live and work sustainably and to learn new skills that will serve them for the rest of their lives.

HARVEST BARN DANCE

Please come and join us for our Harvest barn dance on 30th September, 7.00pm in Otford Village Hall. Tickets are £10 for adults, £5 for children or £30 for a family ticket. The ticket includes a hot meal with dessert.

Please bring own drinks and glasses.

(All proceeds to Church funds)

Tickets from Joan Beacom 524304

KEEPING COMPANY WITH GOD

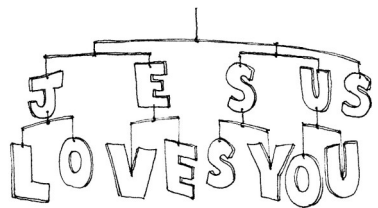
An Introduction to Contemplative Prayer

Starting this month, the Vicar will run a three-session autumn series on contemplative prayer, exploring the background to this way of prayer and sharing tips on how to enter into

and enjoy the use of silence. The sessions will be held at the Vicarage from 8 - 9.15 pm on the following dates: Wednesday 13th September, Wednesday 11th October, and Wednesday 15th November.

STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY

On Sunday 17th September we will be holding our annual Stewardship Sunday. There will be a presentation at all three services. This will give an update following on from the presentations in March, and also an indication of the church's finances looking ahead to 2018. In addition, we'll also highlight various areas where help in different aspects of the ministry of the church will be much appreciated. We are very grateful for the generous giving of time, talents and financial resources by church members contributing to the life of St. Barts.



Wendy checked the message on her mobile

ST BART'S YOUTH WEEKEND KENCH HILL 2017

Just south of Tenterden, on the Appledore Road, is Kench Hill - a lovely Georgian house set in peaceful gardens and surrounded by farmland. Then we all arrive, full of energy and expectation about the weekend ahead!



This was our second year at Kench Hill and we were all looking forward to returning as it is such a lovely site and, for the cooks especially, the facilities are great for our needs.

We travel by minibus (with thanks to Bessell's Green Baptist Church for the use of their minibus without charge) and cars (thank you to those parents who volunteered to drive).

With us were 28 children in all, between the ages of 8 and 14, and 11 adults over the 2 days. This year's theme was **Friends of Jesus: people Jesus met and who became his followers**. We looked at the stories of Zacchaeus, Mary and Martha, the woman by the well, Nicodemus and Peter, learning about how Jesus changed their lives and how we can meet with Jesus and become his friend too. During the weekend some of the adults also explained what it meant to them to be friends with Jesus and how this friendship has made a difference in their lives. In each session the children are encouraged to ask

questions and to apply the message of the stories to their own lives, through a variety of activities.

Zacchaeus: a tax collector for the Romans, so hated by his fellow Jews, climbed a tree when Jesus was coming by to hear what he had to say. Jesus invited himself to tea and through this encounter Zacchaeus realised his sin and offered to pay back 4 times what he had defrauded. Jesus had an amazing affect on all sections of society; who do we think might be beyond God's forgiveness?

Mary and Martha: Mary was the listener, drinking in what Jesus had to say. Martha was the doer, rushing around getting things done. Jesus made it clear that both are needed and whichever we think we are most like we need to remember that there are times to listen and times to do and we all need to do and stop in equal measure.

The woman by the well: an outcast in so many ways and yet Jesus went out of his way to be where he knew she would be and make her feel loved and special. She is also the only person, as





We might do the same at times, not speak up when we know we should or do or say the wrong thing. But this does not mean Jesus will abandon us!

Throughout the weekend we also designed some amazing coats of arms for some of the people who became Jesus' friends, had a massive water fight (just for the fun of it), roasted marshmallows on the barbeque, played sardines and stuck-in-the-mud, made friendship bracelets, watched a film and had popcorn, and so many other great things.

On Saturday evening we were surprised by the arrival of Ben, Becca, Richard and Matt who had just flown in from Portugal but wanted to come down for some of the weekend.

We were so encouraged by the return of so many regulars as well as those who came for the first time each year. God blesses our time away too and we do thank all those who support the children and young people in so many different ways even if they are not able to actually come with us.

recorded in the Gospels, to whom Jesus told he was the Messiah. No-one is beyond God's love.

Nicodemus: the man who wasn't sure about Jesus and worried about what others would think, so went to encounter Jesus at night so he wouldn't be seen. As with other encounters, Jesus had such a profound affect on him that he accepted who Jesus was and became a follower. Sometimes we are not sure, and even if questions remain for years, through a relationship with Jesus we can be sure about who he is.

Peter: the one who became Jesus' right-hand man and yet so often put his foot in it. Yet Jesus called him his rock. Even when Peter had denied knowing Jesus not just the once but three times, Jesus still forgave him.

Mags Southgate



FAITH IN THE FAMILY...

September: Friends for life!

Pause for thought: They say that you can never have enough friends. The supposed diary extract on p.14 tells the story of the strong relationship between David and Jonathan – an unbroken friendship.



As parents, we want our children to find good friends and also to be a good friend to others. How can we help them to do so? Take time to think back to your own school days. How did great friendships come about and how have you managed to keep them going? Be prepared to pass on these stories.

It's also great to model being a good friend by communicating our thinking. For example, "I'm meeting Sue for a coffee today – she's been feeling a bit down recently. Maybe I can cheer her up." "Ben's got a job interview tomorrow, so I'm sending him a text to say I'm thinking of him." We can also model speaking well of our friends, rather than running them down.

It's interesting that David and Jonathan make a serious promise of friendship before God. It's a decision they make and stick to, not something that comes and goes according to how they feel - or abandon when the going gets tough.

If children understand the true meaning of friendship, they can better understand the friendship that God offers to us.

David and Jonathan: Read the diary extract on p 14 about the friendship between these two

young men. Wonder about it as follows:

I wonder why the King wanted to kill David

I wonder who was a good friend in this story

I wonder what you think makes someone a good friend

Pizza Party: Invite new school friends round to make pizzas together! You could buy some ready-made bases (or make your own dough) and prepare some tomato sauce in advance by heating tinned tomatoes with a dessertspoon of tomato puree and a pinch of oregano or mixed herbs.



Provide a variety of toppings for your friends to choose from, for example:

Tuna pizza: black olives, capers, tinned tuna fish, sliced onion

Spicy sausage pizza: chopped ham, sliced spicy sausage, sliced pepperoni, grated Mozzarella cheese

Courgette pizza: sliced courgette, sliced mushroom, sliced onion, grated cheese

Lay circles of dough (about 13cm/5 in diameter) on a greased baking tray. Spread the sauce over the bases, leaving a small margin. Add the toppings and bake until bases are golden brown (approx 15-20 mins at 220 C/425 F/ Gas mark 7).

Friendship bracelets: *You will need rectangles of white paper, about A5 size; pencils; crayons or felt-tipped pens; sticky tape; scissors*

(Each piece of paper makes three bracelets)

Fold the rectangle of paper in half, short edges together, and then in half again (in the same direction). With the short end of the folded paper towards you, draw a circle (for a face or head shape) near the top of the paper. Connect this circle to the long edges of the paper with two lines (rather like a narrow watch strap). Repeat in the middle and bottom.

Cut out each bracelet, taking care not to cut along the folds of the 'straps'. Open them out and decorate them with your friends. You could draw your own face and those of three friends. Or you could decorate them with pictures of David and Jonathan and some items from the story!

Help each other to fasten them around your wrists with tape. You could even make a long chain of everyone in your class or Sunday Club and hang it up on the wall!

A good friend . . .

Write this heading on a big piece of paper and leave it pinned or taped where family members can write their ideas. For example:

Always wants the best for you

Tries to understand you . . .

Never . . .



'Friends' scrapbook:

Why not keep a diary, scrapbook or photo album of all the things you do with your friends this year. Write some notes to remind yourself in the future of all the things you

are doing together now. Send paper birthday cards and tell your friends how much you appreciate them - or thank them for their support in the past. If you take a good photo of a group of friends, perhaps you could buy a

'friends' frame for it and give as a birthday present.

Bedtime meditation: Remind children that when God made the world, he wanted to be good friends with us. Chat quietly about all the things he did for us (giving us plenty of food, a beautiful world, trusting us to look after his world, etc). Ask children to close their eyes and use their imaginations as they listen, answering the questions in silence . . .

(Speak slowly and quietly) Imagine you're standing in a beautiful garden with God. He smiles at you and asks you to walk with him through his garden. As you walk, he seems to match his steps with yours, so that he is always by your side. The sun's just setting. What colour are the clouds? He points out some trees with fruit on them. What kind of fruit hangs on the branches? Now you come down to some water. Is it a lake, or a river? Is the water flowing fast or still? What reflections can you see in the water? A bird flies down to the water's edge. What's it like? Now God beckons and a horse comes trotting up to make friends with you.

You walk on together and God asks you about your day. What do you tell him? You chat together happily – what are you chatting about?

Now you are both quiet, but it doesn't matter at all because you feel quite at ease – with a good friend you can be happy whether you are talking or just being quiet together.

Prayer time: Thank God for particular friends or ask him to help us find friends. Ask how we can give them support. Thank God for sending Jesus to be our friend for ever.

Vicki Howie

IN CONVERSATION WITH PAT MILLS

Active member of St Bart's Church!

In the thirty years since Pat Mills, and her husband Tony, moved to Otford, Pat has made an ongoing and valuable contribution to the life of our church. The many areas in which she has been involved include the Venturers, YPF, crèche, PCC, Deanery Synod and Diocesan Synod. Pat currently assists with serving the bread and wine at communion services, acts as a welcomer and helps with the popular Wednesday morning post-service coffee sessions. Reflecting on all these roles, she told me that she had found Diocesan Synod particularly interesting and that she and Tony will never forget the YPF breakfasts which they cooked and served at their house... and where everything that they put on the table would disappear instantly!



Pat, on left with her mother and siblings

Pat grew up in the London Borough of Enfield as one of four children in a busy, happy household. Her parents were members of the Plymouth Brethren and Pat was taken to church from the earliest age. She remembers services as being lively, with all denominations welcome to attend, and she said she loved going on Sunday school outings – often there were so many children involved that ten coaches were needed to transport them all! However as she grew up she found the Brethren's strait-laced approach

to matters, such as women having to wear hats in services, less appealing and she joined the Baptist Church. After her marriage to Tony, she began to attend Church of England services.



Tony and Pat on their wedding day, 1965

One of Pat's most treasured childhood memories is of going to the Queen's Coronation in 1953. She said that, having failed to win tickets in a school ballot, her father stepped in and agreed to take Pat and her sisters to central London. They rose extremely early, found a place on the pavement by the Ritz on Piccadilly and stood for nine hours to see the procession. When the service in Westminster Abbey began they could hear it relayed over the Tannoy system then, afterwards, as the two mile procession drew near, the crowd parted to allow small children to go the front for a better view. Pat saw the Queen pass by in her coach, holding the orb and sceptre and 'looking so small'. Not surprisingly she described it as 'an amazing experience'.

The story of how Pat first met Tony is interesting. Aged five, they were classmates at primary school in Enfield – though paid little attention to each other at that time. At eight Tony moved away to Tottenham whilst Pat carried on her studies in Enfield, passing the eleven plus and attending Enfield County School

(a girls' grammar). Pat says she had lots of friends and enjoyed maths and sport but was keen to leave at sixteen. Different jobs ensued including working at a convalescent home in the country for city children who had been in hospital, shop work at Dickins and Jones and a spell in market research for Unilever. It was while Pat was employed in London that, through a mutual friend, she re-met Tony – without either of them realising until much later that they had begun school together. They married in 1965 and celebrated their Golden Wedding two years ago.



Golden Wedding celebration, 2015

Tony was a pilot with the RAF so, with his various postings, married life led to them living in fifteen different homes in twenty years. As well as moving around the UK, they went to Bahrain and Germany (where their daughter Kate was born in 1973).



Tony, Pat and Katie, 1981

Pat told me it was an enjoyable time with an excellent social life. Eventually Tony left the RAF and joined Monarch, initially flying from Luton then from Gatwick, at which point the family moved to Otford allowing Kate to settle for her secondary education at Walthamstow Hall. Pat now found employment at Dorton House School where she joined the Home Economics department and taught daily living skills, including cookery, to blind and partially sighted children. She spoke of the pupils as having been 'truly amazing', saying that it was 'a joy and a privilege to be there – the children were so lovely'. She explained that, whereas sighted children absorb so many skills just by watching their parents, for example how to make a cup of tea, blind children need you to talk all the time to describe exactly what you are doing. She added that the job suited her well because 'I like talking'!

Pat and Tony have always loved travel and are often off to exotic destinations! The Gambia is a particular favourite, and they have fond memories of many other places such as Mombasa, Costa Rica, Egypt, Barbados and Venezuela (where Tony and Pat swam in the Orinoco alongside a snake!). In between times Pat is an enthusiastic volunteer at Otford Primary School where she has enjoyed helping out for 19 years with maths, literacy and sewing – in fact 'anything, whatever is required'. Pat and Tony also have a beautiful garden which is clearly the result of much hard work. That and a weekly dance exercise class keep Pat admirably fit.

Pat feels they are fortunate to have come to Otford and she is very happy being part of the church. Her Christian faith is 'immensely important' to her – it has been at the core of her life since she was a child.

Christeen Malan

ANCIENT WISDOM - MODERN LIVES

Diary of Jonathan, Son of King Saul

PRIVATE!

NOT TO BE READ BY ANY PERSON

Father in bad mood again today. "Tormented by evil spirit!" Keep out of his way . . .



Still bad. Servants fetch lad from Bethlehem. Brown face. David. Plays the harp to Father. Great! The King feels better! We keep David on! . .

I get chatting to David. He's about my age. Not shy! Looks after his father's sheep. Asks me about my success in battle . . .

I talk to David again. Says he's a warrior, too - he's killed lions and bears with his hands. Really? But I like him - and so does Father! . .

Crisis! The Philistines threaten our army. Their champion Goliath looking for fight. Nine feet tall . . . INCREDIBLE! DAVID KILLED GOLIATH WITH SLING AND STONE! THE LORD IS WITH OUR YOUNG SHEPHERD!

David is here to stay! I love this guy! We make solemn pact - friends for life. Give him my sword, etc, as sign . . .



Yes! Father gives David high rank in army. Deserves it. Popular with the men - and the ladies!! BUT Father uneasy again. Feels God not with him as before. Horrible bursts of anger . . .

Father truly disturbed today. Wants me to *kill* David! Why? I warn David to keep away. I speak up for him. Remind Father of all D has done for us. Why kill innocent man, etc? Dad promises D is safe. Feel reassured . . .

David leads our army to victory again! Am I jealous? NO - because I know God is with him ...

Strange - David says King trying to kill him. "What is his crime?" he asks. Know this cannot be true. Father would have told me. David says he's keeping me in dark because of our friendship. We make a plan. David to hide in archery field while I confront King. If he means D no harm, I'll go out later and shoot three arrows at target. Then shout to my boy, "Go fetch my arrows. They are on *this* side of you. Bring them here." But if father *does* mean him harm, I'll shout, "Look, the arrows are *beyond* you." That's D's sign to flee . . .

I'm trembling. Angry. Spoke to King who flew into rage. Accused me of siding with David, giving him my future throne. "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?" I asked. The King hurled his spear at me.

I saw his eyes, full of hate. Now I see, he means to kill David. It's shameful. Call for my bow . . .

* * *

Feel numb. David is gone. We wept. Thank God he went in peace. We once swore friendship to each other and to each other's families and we won't forget that - whatever happens.



DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS

Telephone: 01732 227000 www.sevenoaks.gov.uk

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



The most exciting news at SDC at the moment is that you have a chance to have your say on our new Local Plan which will help guide what can be built and what should be protected in the District

up until 2035 – in the new Issues and Options consultation.

We are running the consultation from 3rd August until 5th October and you can share your thoughts by visiting the Council's website and filling out a survey. The survey will also be sent to every house in the District and will be publicised in a special edition of *In Shape* in August, which you should have received by now.

The new Local Plan has to square the circle of continuing to protect our 93% green belt while also providing much needed housing and employment sites as well as new medical, community, retail and leisure facilities. The plan needs to consider transport and infrastructure as well as all types of new housing.

We are committed to protecting the green belt by increasing density in existing built up areas and by being more innovative with air space development (flats above supermarkets and car parks). We will only consider building on green belt land where the land is already built on (brownfield site within the green belt) or in exceptional circumstances.

We want our new plan to focus on the needs of our local communities and reflect the issues

that are important to you – and the only way that will happen is if lots of people complete the survey and involve themselves in the consultation.

The Housing Strategy was approved by Sevenoaks District Council in July and will be officially launched in November. The strategy was based on a housing survey that was sent to every home in the District. Nearly one in five households completed that survey so we have a really good idea of the housing needs of people across the District, but most importantly down to ward (village) level.

The Housing Strategy aims to tackle the housing crisis in Sevenoaks: lack of affordable homes for first time buyers and young families, overcrowding, debt and reliance on foodbanks as a result of the high cost of housing, older people under-occupying large, cold homes full of potential hazards and often growing lonely. The strategy also tackles rapid discharge of people from hospital by preparing their home for them while they are in hospital so they can be discharged earlier.

The new Local Plan, which will hopefully be approved by the Planning Inspector in 2019, will draw on the new housing strategy and the two will be strongly linked together.

I wish everyone going back to school a successful school year and especially think of those starting secondary school this month and those sitting their Kent Test.

With best wishes,

Michelle Lowe

A WALK THROUGH OTFORD (PART THREE)

The Bull (originally called *Morys House*)



With its exterior much changed by the Victorians, the original timber building was constructed in 1480-1510. During construction work on the Palace in 1514, it became home to the master mason, a highly prestigious position.

It still has two notable fireplaces. These were remarkable as we believe they were the first wall-fireplaces in Otford (unlike a hall house which only had a central fireplace).

The carved roundels sited above the fire places have been dated c.1535-40. They are likely the panels of a Tudor carved chest (probably from the Palace).

There is a Tudor door, carved with linen-fold panelling, on display in the Heritage Centre. It came from one of the bedrooms of The Bull.

Notice the attractive (listed) barn outside to the rear of its car park.



The School



The village school was built in 1872 by Sir Thomas Graham Jackson (a Sevenoaks architect).

Before it was built, a simple, wooden classroom sat directly in front of the church, on the village green.

Classes would stop for family hop-picking throughout September right up until the late 1940s.

At the time, many hop fields surrounded the village, the Recreation Ground being one.

The headmaster's house, with its own well, is now used as the Parish Council office and Heritage Centre.

The Old Parsonage



This lovely home was adapted from an earlier, probably 14th century, hall house.

Beneath its tile-clad exterior stands a timber-framed Jacobean home of the early 1600's.

In the 17th century, fireplaces, chimneys and glass were added.

In about 1770, the traditional jettied (overhanging) front, was straightened. Bricks and hanging tiles were added. It was probably then that both its wings were truncated.

In 1922, the garden was re-designed by Gertrude Jekyll, a close friend of Edward Lutyens who was building the church hall, opposite.

Mill Bridge (over the Mill's Leat Stream)



The mill leat stream was dug to feed the old timber-built 3-storey Otford mill (at the end) which had two water-wheels, each 14ft in diameter.



A mill was recorded here in the Domesday Book. It was used for corn grinding up to 1880. Then it

was converted to driving saws and being a timber-mill. It burnt down in 1924. The present house was built in 1960.

Bridge Cottage (beside the bridge)

This is a fine yeoman's house. It dates from the 16th–17th century.

Note its handsome Tudor-style chimney (unfortunately re-built).



Pickmoss

This originated as a 14th-15th century hall house, the smoke from its central fire drifting up through the tiles. It was later divided into four cottages.

The right-hand side comprises the close-studded original Tudor building. This was extended in 1951 to re-create a left-hand side to produce a more attractive frontage, bringing the house back to its original dimensions.

Rod Shelton

These are just brief notes in preparation for Rod's new book "Otford, Heritage Village", which will be published next year. Copyright Stanhope Publishing 2017.



IN MEMORIAM



Michael Crook, 1928 - 2017

Born in 1928 Michael's paediatricians announced that he was a sickly child and would be lucky to reach the age of 21. He clearly confounded the medical professionals. Michael attended Cranbrook College in Ilford as a schoolboy. He remained in London throughout the war.

Michael went on to study Chemistry at Queen Mary College, London, and then he specialised in Radio Chemistry. He continued his studies at Balliol College, Oxford, finally gaining his PhD at the age of 27.

Michael met his wife, Mavis, at a very early age – her grandparents lived just down the road. Their first date was to a school play. Being at the same school meant they had ample opportunity to talk and for their relationship to develop.

The Second World War saw regular bombing raids over London and latterly the constant threat of the V1 bombs followed by the V2 rockets. One day, completely against the wishes of both of their parents, Michael and Mavis walked home from school rather than catching the bus as they were instructed to. On this occasion, the bus was seriously damaged by a German bomb. They still had to explain why they had walked together unchaperoned.

Michael and Mavis got married in December 1951 and then 10 months later they had their only daughter Diana followed by Nigel 2 years later, and then the twins Trevor and Kevin.

Upon finishing his studies, Michael began working in the commercial sector for BICC. The family moved to Otford with Michael commuting to London. However, as a friend commented, Michael preferred to "make men, not money," and after a few years he rejoined

the academic world and specialised in rubber technology and subsequently plastics technology.

On retirement in 1989 Michael's knowledge of the latest techniques in plastics manufacture was known worldwide and he was invited to lecture in establishments all over the world. Mavis accompanied him on some of these travels. In addition, Michael was employed as a consultant to some plastic manufacturing companies.

Michael played an active part in village life. Soon after moving to Otford he joined St Bartholomew's Church choir. He also set up a madrigals group that met at his home once a month after Church on Sunday.

Michael was an active member of the Otford Historical Society. He also joined the Photographic Society, the Gardening Club and the local art group as he dabbled in oil painting and later moved to water colours.

Michael volunteered into the Civil Defence Corps as a scientific advisor - taking up just a bit more of his weekend. He was an avid reader of the newspaper and had a very good general knowledge. In the late 1950's Michael took up sailing and this played a big part in his life. The family also had a number of dogs over the years which Michael enjoyed taking out for walks.

We are grateful for his contribution to the life of both our church and the village over the years and his memory will be cherished by all who knew him.



OUT AND ABOUT



OTFORD EVENING W.I. meet on Thursday 14th September at 7.30pm in the Club Room of the Memorial Hall and our speaker this month is Jo

Livingstone who will tell us about Odd Corners of London.....places in London we have never noticed. If you would like to come along or want more information, please contact 01959 524831.

Our **Table Top Sale** will be held on Saturday 14th October in the Memorial Halls from 9am to 12noon. If you want to book a table please contact 01959 522485 - the cost is £10.

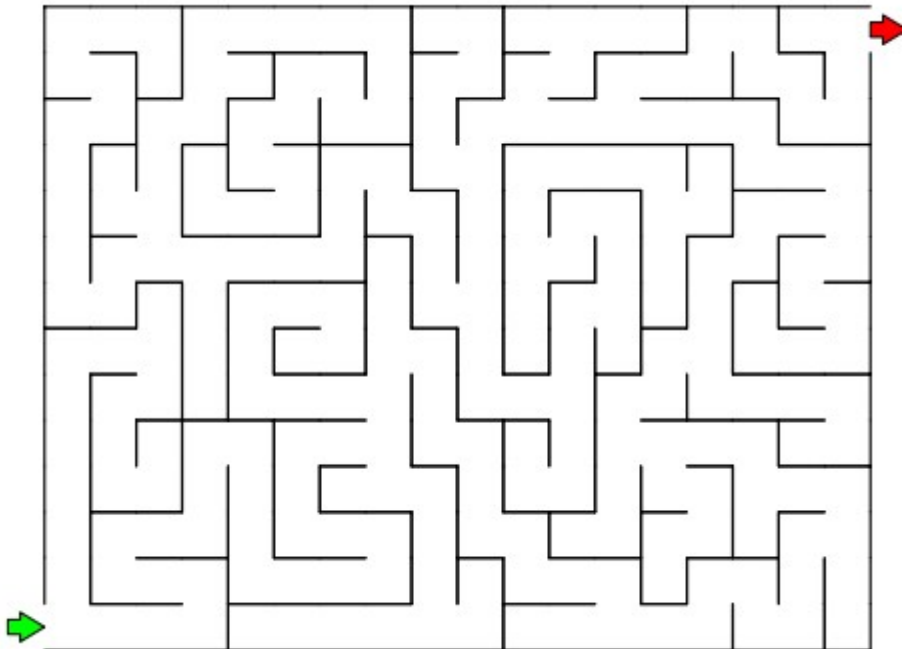


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Our next Social Gathering will be on Monday 16 October 2017 from 7.30pm at the Woodman Pub. We look forward to your joining us. Keep the date free.

Jane Lawrey

SEPTEMBER PUZZLE



MISSION LINKS - POVERTY AND HOPE APPEAL 2017

When launching the Poverty and Hope Appeal for this year, the Bishop of Rochester wrote: "The Bible challenges us to think beyond our own needs and to look to the needs of others. The Poverty and Hope Appeal is one way we are responding as a Diocese."

This year we are concentrating on supporting, in prayer and financially, projects in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burkino Faso, Northern Argentina, Delhi and, as always, Commonwork Trust here in the Diocese. This last offers justice and global citizen education to school children and also helps vulnerable young people fulfil their potential. If you are involved with a school do get in touch with Commonwork and see all that they can offer.

Over 95% of the money we raise goes to the projects, and of that about 80% of the money raised goes overseas. The projects are generally overseen by one of our partner organisations – Christian Aid, USPG and CMS. They ensure the money is well spent, and report to the Poverty and Hope Committee, led by Bishop James, regularly. The feedback is often very encouraging. For example, a project we supported over the last two years in Burkino Faso, helping villagers to feed themselves, has had such an impact that the local authority has offered to take on responsibility for it, allowing us to move on to support a similar project in a new area.

It is not only lack of food that causes poverty. Often a lack of rights (due to gender, colour, caste or lack of education) plays a role. We support the Delhi Brotherhood Society women's helpline which responds to distress calls. The helpline seeks to stop violence against women by offering an anonymous listening service and then follows up calls with support activities, including community councils, rights education,

livelihood support and legal and financial assistance. In the DRC our project teaches people how to engage with local authorities so that their rights are recognised and met. Perhaps surprisingly, many local politicians have responded positively to this.

The project in Argentina is, arguably, the most ambitious but also the toughest. The work in a remote forest region seeks to gain recognition of indigenous groups' land ownership entitlement and associated with that to prevent deforestation on a massive scale by international logging companies. Feelings often run high and offering Christian leadership and mediation is not easy.

More information about all the projects, together with material for a Sunday school session, is available on the website (<http://rochester.anglican.org/diocese/poverty-and-hope/>)

Debbie Cooper
Poverty and Hope Appeal coordinator



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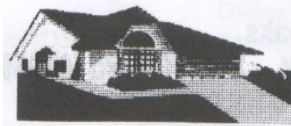
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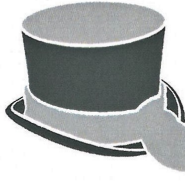
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Ex-Officio (Diocesan Synod) * Ex-Officio (Deanery Synod)