

THE

# CRAYFISHER

September 2020

£1:00



The magazine for the Parish of Cray Valley

No.64

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**Front Cover Picture: Flowers at Carlton Parade by Dominica Winter**

## PARISH LETTER

That ‘Back to...’ time of year

September is traditionally the ‘back to’ month primarily I guess because it marks the start of the academic year and students go back to school, colleges and universities. A huge number of our population are involved in this return – students, teachers, support staff, parents and carers all have a direct involvement. The rest of us recognise something has changed because there is more traffic on the roads in the morning and fewer people in the parks.

There is even a ‘Back to Church’ movement. One Sunday in September is designated when we can invite people who used to come to church to come back. This year it is September 20<sup>th</sup>.

‘Back to’ has a poignancy about it this year because we have been away from our churches since the middle of March unable to worship in our much loved buildings.

September isn’t just about ‘back to...’ Yes, people return to schooling but always to something new – new teacher, new timetable, even a new building for some. It isn’t about going back to what was before. We cannot do that. September marks a return to something new. Does that sound a bit odd, returning to something that is new, how can we do that?

Returning to something new is what we do all the time as Christians. We return in our confession to the new life Christ offers us through forgiveness. We return to the new experience of worship – different every week because of our readings, hymns and the people we worship with. Yes, it is the same, but always new.

Returning to something new will be our real experience this September whether we are able to physically get to church or not. Our ‘new’ will be new patterns of worship alternating weekly between our two churches. Our ‘new’ will include continuing to use zoom while also in church. Our ‘new’ will include the things we cannot include in worship – singing and sharing wine (at least for a while). We will be back, yes but returning to something new.

All this is challenging. We can either long to go back to how we were, and I guess all of us would like that, but it is not going to happen, that desire will leave us disappointed and regretful of what is lost. We can return to the 'new' which is more hopeful, yes like children on their first day back we will be unsure of what we are to find but we will very soon settle into new rhythms of worship that honour our God and satisfy our spiritual hunger. More than that when we return to the 'new' God will meet us on the way and transform our return to his missional purpose. The bible is full of such stories, like Moses returning to Egypt, Jonah returning to Nineveh, Jesus returning to Jerusalem, the story of the prodigal son, Paul returning to the churches in Turkey and Greece, John seeing the great vision of return in Revelation.

September is our 're-turning time' we look forward to greeting one another in church, to re-'newing' our fellowship. We have something fresh and new to offer our communities. Every Sunday is a renew Sunday because it is a celebration of the resurrection, the most forward looking 'new' that ever happened, and that is worth celebrating.

Be blessed in the month of re'newing'

*Rev Jane.*

### **READINGS FOR SUNDAYS IN SEPTEMBER**

Sun 6<sup>th</sup> Exodus 12.1-14  
Romans 13.8-end  
GOSPEL: Matthew 18.15-20

Sun 13<sup>th</sup> Exodus 14.19-end  
Romans 14.1-12  
GOSPEL: Matthew 18.21-35

Sun 20<sup>th</sup> Exodus 16.2-15  
Philippians 1.21-end  
GOSPEL: Matthew 20.1-16

Sun 27<sup>th</sup> Exodus 17.1-7  
Philippians 2.1-13  
GOSPEL: Matthew 21.23-32

## COLLECTS FOR SUNDAYS IN SEPTEMBER 2020

- Sun 6<sup>th</sup> Almighty God, who called your Church to bear witness that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself: help us to proclaim the good news of your love, that all who hear it may be drawn to you; through him who was lifted up on the cross, and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever: **Amen**
- Sun 13<sup>th</sup> Almighty God, whose only Son has opened for us a new and living way into your presence: give us pure hearts and steadfast wills to worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever: **Amen**
- Sun 20<sup>th</sup> God, who in generous mercy sent the Holy Spirit upon your Church in the burning fire of your love: grant that your people may be fervent in the fellowship of the gospel that, always abiding in you, they may be found steadfast in faith and active in service; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever: **Amen**
- Sun 27<sup>th</sup> O Lord, we beseech you mercifully to hear the prayers of your people who call upon you; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil them; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever: **Amen**

## **SERVICES THROUGHOUT SEPTEMBER**

Sun 6 <sup>th</sup>	10 a.m. at St Mary's (Patronal Festival)
Tue 8 <sup>th</sup>	10 a.m. Morning Communion at St Andrew's
Sun 13 <sup>th</sup>	10 a.m. at St Andrew's
Tue 15 <sup>th</sup>	10 a.m. Morning Communion at St Mary's
Sun 20 <sup>th</sup>	10 a.m. at St Mary's
Tue 22 <sup>nd</sup>	10 a.m. Morning Communion at St Andrew's
Sun 27 <sup>th</sup>	10 a.m. at St Andrew's
Tue 29 <sup>th</sup>	10 a.m. Morning Communion at St Mary's

**Details of how we will carry out our APCM will be made available shortly.**

**THE DEADLINE FOR THE OCTOBER ISSUE OF  
THE CRAYFISHER IS MONDAY 14 SEPTEMBER. PLEASE  
HAVE YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS IN BY THIS DATE –  
ANYTHING RECEIVED AFTER THIS DATE WILL BE HELD  
OVER UNTIL THE NEXT ISSUE**



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## **PARISH PRAYER GROUP**

We cannot meet at Muriel's home, but we are still praying for all in need especially at this time.

## **ST. MARY'S CHURCH OPEN HOUSE**

St Mary's Church will be opening its doors again this year, details from Peter or Terry.

## **FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S**

For further details contact Tony Lathey 01689 872742

## **SOCIAL EVENTS**

**AT ST ANDREW'S AND ST MARY'S IN 2020**

**Regretfully, our planned Salvation Army Concert, Dinner and Dance and Christmas Fair will be postponed until further notice.**



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## **HOLY DAY**

### **1<sup>ST</sup> SEPT DRITHELM - VISION OF THE AFTER-LIFE**

**D**rithelm is the saint for you if you have ever wondered what lies beyond death, or have had a near-death experience. He was married and living in Cunningham (now Ayrshire, then Northumbria) in the 7<sup>th</sup> century when he fell ill and apparently died. When he revived a few hours later he caused panic among the mourners, and was himself deeply shaken by the whole experience.

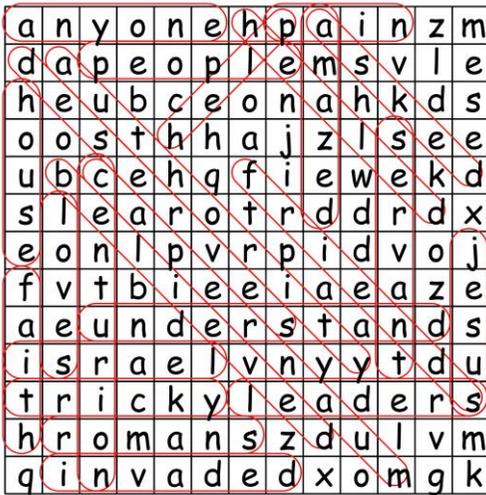
Drithelm went to pray in the village church until daylight, and during those long hours reviewed the priorities of his life in the light of what he had seen while 'dead'. A celestial guide had shown him souls in hell, in purgatory, in paradise and heaven... suddenly the reality of God and of coming judgement and of what Christ had done in redeeming mankind became real to him, and his life on earth could never be the same again.

Next day he divided his wealth into three: giving one third to his wife, one third to his sons, and the remainder to the poor. He became a monk and went to live at Melrose, where he spent his time in prayer and contemplation of Jesus.

Drithelm's Vision of the after-life is remarkable in that it was the first example of this kind of literature from England. It was SO early: seventh century Anglo-Saxon England! Drithelm has even been seen as a remote precursor of Dante.

On a lighter note, Drithelm can also be a saint for you if you didn't get abroad this summer, but ventured to swim instead off one of our beaches: he used to stand in the cold waters of the Tweed for hours, reciting Psalms.

*Courtesy of Parish Pump.co.uk*



**FOR THE YOUNG AND YOUNG AT HEART**

Here is the solution to last month's wordsearch puzzle. How did you get on?

**LOUIS PASTEUR – ‘FATHER’ OF MICROBIOLOGY**

**A** tiny invisible thing that brings disease and death .... where have we heard that before?! But Louis Pasteur, who died 125 years ago this month, on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1895, was not interested in a virus, but in tiny living organisms that brought disease and death in other ways.

Pasteur made some outstanding breakthroughs. He discovered the principles of vaccination, and then created the first vaccines for anthrax and rabies. His medical discoveries provided support for the germ theory of disease and nullified the theory of spontaneous generation.

But Louis Pasteur is best known for his invention of the technique of treating milk and wine to stop bacterial contamination, a process that was named after him: pasteurisation. In doing so, he saved the French beer, wine and silk industries.

All in all, this gifted French biologist, microbiologist, and chemist well deserves his title as the ‘father of microbiology,’ and to be seen as one of the three main founders of bacteriology.

## **ST JAMES THE LEAST OF ALL**

### **On how to survive a weekend away with the young people**

The Rectory  
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren

I think your idea for both our Confirmation groups getting together for a weekend away – socially distanced, of course - was excellent and our meeting last week drew most of the plans together. We didn’t take any minutes, so let me record the decisions I believe we made.

Since all of us have to sleep far apart at the centre, I am prepared to spend the nights at a local hotel. By chance, I have found that there is a four star one only a few miles away, so I have booked myself in.

As the dining area in the youth centre may be cramped, I am also willing to have dinner each evening at the hotel, thereby creating more space for the rest of you. An additional sadness is that, since breakfast at the hotel is not served until 8am, I will not be able to join you either for your pre-breakfast dip in the nearby stream. It would be grossly unfair to expect you to pack lunch for me, so I will arrange for the hotel to provide me with a picnic hamper for one which I can have while you all enjoy your cheese and pickle sandwiches.

I think it will be an excellent learning experience if you prepare all the teaching sessions yourself, but be assured that I will always be on hand to give the advice of experience. That large armchair near the fire in the common room seems to be the best place for me to sit, so I can keep an

eye on proceedings, while I take on the responsibilities for stoking the fire. This reminds me; do make sure that the young people are encouraged to saw enough logs each morning for me to fulfil my obligations.

Naturally, my arthritis will prevent me being able to accompany you on your afternoon hikes, but I will cheerfully park my car wherever you leave the minibus, to provide a second vehicle in case of emergencies. I do not mind in the least waiting all those long hours until you get back; I have already found an attractive tea shop in the village.

I am fully aware that not sleeping or dining at the centre, not being responsible for preparing the teaching, nor being involved on the walks will mean that my contributions will be ever so slightly limited, but these are sacrifices I gladly make in order to give you further experience in your ministerial career.

Your loving uncle, Eustace



*The bishops had formed a  
'support bubble' all on their own.*

*Courtesy of Parish Pump.co.uk*

## FUNSHINE AND MESSY CHURCH PICNIC

**O**n Wednesday 12 August, quite a number of mums turned up at the Priory Gardens with their children for our picnic which was blessed with fine weather. We settled ourselves under a big oak tree – lovely! Or so we thought! Whilst



we were all sitting, talking and enjoying our picnic lunch, a squirrel took umbrage I think. He was up in the tree pelting us (or that's how it seemed) with half-eaten acorns. He was moving around the branches and kept dropping acorns. He was quite fair though as we all experienced a hit on the head or some other part of our bodies. We were determined that he wasn't going to get the better of us though. **Brenda**

We enjoyed playing around the garden and eating our picnic with our friends. **Dylan**

**Katie** says 'it was one of the best days of my holiday thank you to all who helped make this possible and thank you for helping us see our friends again! Xx'

We played a game where we had to hide or chase people and get them back to where we wanted them to go. We didn't have a time limit so we could've been playing for a very long time. It took a very long time to get the people that were hiding. They were really good but we found them and everyone that were catching were so hot 🔥 😓 we were about to



melt like an ice 🍦🍧 melting  
in the sun. From **Charlie**  
love 💕💕💕 all of you. Bye.

We went to Priory Gardens and  
we went into the old priory with  
our Friends and played it with  
them

When we finished the game we  
found/made a few secret

hideouts and took a few pictures.

After that we just chatted in the priory and played some more.

*Finley*



I liked the picnic and I played with the ball with Nieve.

*Lucy*

A huge thank you to everyone who joined us for our first Toddler/Messy  
Church/Nativity picnic. What a lovely morning catching up with  
everyone and all the children had such fun playing together. Looking  
forward to planning another before the end of the summer holidays.

*Sarah xx*

## HANDWRITING STYLES

**Michael James Gould, born 1948, a former resident of Petts Wood, recalls how he was taught handwriting at school.**

**A**t infants school we were taught to write a simplified version of the typefaces/fonts normally seen in books. It was referred to as printing, and we used pencils, which relied on pressure to achieve the strokes.

Arriving in junior school we were then taught to join our writing in the style of adults and to use a fountain pen. The pen did not require pressure the same way as a pencil, but the nibs had a mind of their own and needed controlling. Biro's, dependent on pressure, were forbidden – and were comparatively expensive, too.

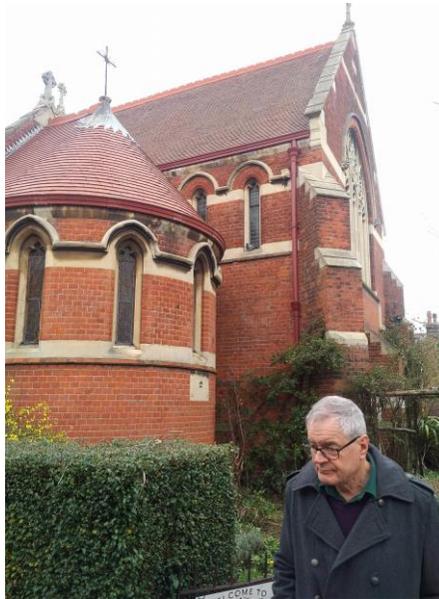
Joined-up writing was urged on us because it was thought to be quicker to do so; and even if, let's face it, it could never be as legible, it was thought to be more elegant and sophisticated. The style taught was looped cursive, said to have been invented in 1868 by Vere Foster, as being easier than the style known as copperplate, then in general use. Looped cursive is/was based on the principle that your pen or pencil should stay on the page for the duration of the word, and always start in the middle of the line. You weren't to start a letter at the top. It was up to the right before down to the left. The letter f was the most difficult, which involved a loop above the line and a loop below the line, and woe betide you if your lower loop wasn't to the right of the down stroke. The capital letters taught were bizarre, resembling the Old English font still used on the Daily Telegraph and Daily Mail, and didn't join anyway.

At junior school you were never expected to write so fast you couldn't be neat, completing all the prescribed strokes, but all that went out of the window at grammar school when writing, particularly in exams, was always performed under stress. Two of our teachers advocated an Italic style which required special nibs to achieve thin up and thick down strokes. Letters were only to be joined where natural to do so. The elimination of joining strokes would speed the writing. My mother lent me her Parker 51 for my GCEs, which did not have an Italic nib, a good compromise.

An alternative style of round hand had been recommended by teaching inspector Marian Richardson in 1936, half-way between looped cursive and occasionally joined print. Had I been taught it, I don't think my handwriting would have been such a calligraphic disaster. All those unnecessary strokes in looped cursive seemed to discipline the shape of the letters, and there is always an argument for sticking to what you're taught. My father actually wrote what resembled copperplate. But seeing that everybody's handwriting is different, it's astonishing that most of my post-war generation would have been taught round hand or looped cursive and only an expert could tell which.

*Michael James Gould*

*Photo: Michael in January 2020 outside his local St Peter's Church in Whitstable – built circa 1900*



## NEWS ABOUT ST MARY'S

**H**ow blessed we are to have such kind and caring members of our community surrounding us.

Our grateful thanks to Ryan Speller, who after visiting the memorial garden at St Marys Church to remember his mother, then proceeded to spend many hours weeding and pruning the grounds that we have been unable to tend to for many months.



Please see some photos of the transformation - and for those of you who had visited, it is a grand transformation!

Thank you, Ryan, we hope we will soon meet you in person to extend our gratitude.

*Mother Jessie*



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## TWENTY YEARS AGO: THE MILLENNIUM EXPERIENCE AT NORTH GREENWICH

**D**id you visit the Millennium Dome in 2000? It opened its doors on the 1<sup>st</sup> January that year and closed exactly twelve months later. I am so glad that I went to see it – taking my ten year old daughter with intention that when she was older she would look back on it as a landmark memory of a landmark date in the calendar. Britain’s right wing press – no friend of Tony Blair and his still new administration – had fed the public a relentless diet of scorn about the Millennium Experience, condemning the attractions and exhibits as



amateurish and shoddy. They complained that the project had exceeded budget and that the visitor numbers were pitifully small. But for me, adopting the motto ‘I shall speak as I find’, it was a once in a lifetime stunning treat to go there.

That too was the general verdict of the nearly seven million visitors that made it Britain’s most popular tourist attraction of 2000, ahead of the also-new London Eye at Westminster and the third-placed Alton Towers that had been top in 1999.

Twenty years later what has survived most in my memory of the exhibits inside the Dome is the walk-through of the human body: an innovative and instructive experience; a series of eye-catching zones on the theme of Faith including the history of Christianity; and the spectacular and mind-boggling trapeze show to the accompaniment of Peter Gabriel’s mind-blowing musical soundtrack.

Arguably the most impressive feature of all was the Dome itself. It is an architectural phenomenon that has become an indelible icon of the modern-day London skyline. I have never been back inside it – never a member of the audience at the O2 Arena as it became in 2005. My photograph of it in 2017 was taken from the vantage point of the Trinity Buoy lighthouse directly opposite on the Essex side where the River Lea meets the Thames as it curves in a U-shape past the Dome. The German-style oompah band afterwards used my photo in their publicity material and I think that by anybody’s standards the Millennium Dome deservedly now ranks alongside Big Ben, St Paul’s Cathedral, Tower Bridge and other of London’s most instantly recognisable and defining photogenic locations.

*Jerry Dowlen*

## **BACK TO SCHOOL**



*Courtesy of Parish Pump.co.uk*

**Please pray for all those returning to school after lockdown and all the very young children starting school for the first time.**



## Funshine Club

### St Andrew's Toddler Group

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time

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venue, please contact the  
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Andrew's Church <<***

## NATIONAL TRUST: THE GARDENS REOPEN

After the lockdown started on 23<sup>rd</sup> March it was very striking that we had week after week of warm, sunny weather with glorious blue skies. It was soon apparent from our house windows or from permitted short walks and car journeys that flowers and shrubs everywhere were bursting into colour. The experts opined that our natural



world of animals, birds, insects, flora & fauna was

flourishing in the good weather and the unusually clean air. The lack of rain was a challenge for the gardeners but wherever you looked it seemed that a fairy with green fingers had been roaming everywhere with her magic wand to make All Things Bright and Beautiful.

It was frustrating, of course, that showpiece public parks and gardens were closed. Shortly before the shutdown Nancy and I had squeezed in

a National Trust trolley-dash in early March. A long weekend in Rye saw us visit Lamb House, Smallhythe Place and Sissinghurst (garden only) in cold weather.

Creatively for the lockdown many museums, parks and stately homes set up on-line virtual tours for customers to log in and see. All well and good but alas no substitute for the real thing. Hence the stampede to book timed entries when some of the NT gardens re-opened their gates in June. Nancy and I managed quickly to bag tickets for Emmetts Garden (Ide Hill) and Scotney Castle (Lamberhurst). But had the floral horse already bolted from the stable? Luckily, no – we were still in time to enjoy



*Continued on page 24*



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glorious azaleas, hydrangeas, rhododendrons and above all roses. (Has there ever been a year with such a rich profusion of early summer roses?). The safety measures of pre-booked staggered arrival times and one-way walking circuits were efficient and were politely observed by most NT members that we saw. One wonders indeed if these measures could become a permanent feature to advantage.

Photos (June 2020): Scotney Castle; Emmetts Garden with roses.

*Jerry Dowlen*

### **NEXT TO YOU AND LONELY**

*(Matthew 25:40)*

Cups of tea and people,  
People who do and who know.  
People with purposeful expressions,  
Their eyes searching beyond her, through her,  
The invisible one.  
She's next to you and she's lonely.

Smiles and one-way conversations,  
With thoughts and eyes elsewhere,  
Never noticing the masks of brightness  
Hiding hurting children,  
The tired ones,  
Who are next to you and lonely.

And the makers of the cups of tea,  
The knowers and the doers,  
Those who smile and seem to have so much.  
They too wear masks that hide their crying,  
The *together* ones  
Sit next to you and are lonely.

*By Daphne Kitching*  
Courtesy of Parish Pump.co.uk