

THE

CRAYFISHER

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The magazine for the Parish of Cray Valley

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Front Cover Picture: Lent Lilies by Jackie Cook

PARISH LETTER



At Christmas we bid each other ‘Happy Christmas’. At Easter we bid each other ‘Happy Easter’. For some reason however nobody ever greets another with the words ‘Happy Lent.’

Lent is a preparatory season where we get ready for the great Christian feast of Easter. Our getting ready is a building of our spiritual preparedness. Why do we do this? We do this because with Christ’s Easter resurrection new life will burst from the tomb and into the world. New life will change things, will change us, if we want to be changed.

Unimaginable new life is offered to us through Christ’s resurrection, but we must be willing to accept it. And often the prospect of being changed through Christ is deeply scary.

‘All this talk about new life, I’m perfectly happy with my old life thank you very much.’ If all Christianity offered was a bit of a spiritual buff up where we remained broadly the same but just a bit shinier round the edges it would be superficially more attractive. It would however be virtually pointless. Church would be a waste of your time. Far better to stay home and have a lazy morning in front of Match of the Day.

But through Christ’s resurrection scary, wonderful, transformational, exhilarating new life is offered. This offer is not just of a ‘thanks very much and forget about it’ nature. It is the offer of a lifetime. It is the offer of new life. And such an offer should not be taken lightly.

So, in Lent Christians prepare through prayer, self-reflection and self-denial. This isn’t meant to be a season of misery. Through such preparations we hope to be able to grasp and accept ever more deeply the new wonderful joyful life offered in Christ.

Happy Lent.

Jessie

READINGS FOR SUNDAYS IN MARCH

- Sun 7th **THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT**
Exodus 20. 1-17
1 Corinthians 1. 18-25
GOSPEL John 2. 13-22
- Sun 14th **MOTHERING SUNDAY**
Samuel 1. 20-end
2 Corinthians 1. 3-7
GOSPEL Luke 2. 33-35
- Sun 21st **FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT (Passiontide begins)**
Jeremiah 31. 31-34
Hebrews 5. 5-10
GOSPEL John 12. 20-33
- Sun 28th **PALM SUNDAY**
Zechariah 9. 9-16
GOSPEL Mark 11. 1-11

COLLECTS FOR MARCH

- Sun 7th Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain and entered not into glory before he was crucified: mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may it find none other than the way of life and peace; 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 14th God of compassion, whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary, shared the life of a home in Nazareth, and on the

cross drew the whole human family to himself: strengthen us in our daily living that in joy and in sorrow we may know the power of your presence to bind together and to heal; 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 21st Most merciful God, who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ delivered and saved the world: grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross we may triumph in the power of his victory; 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**

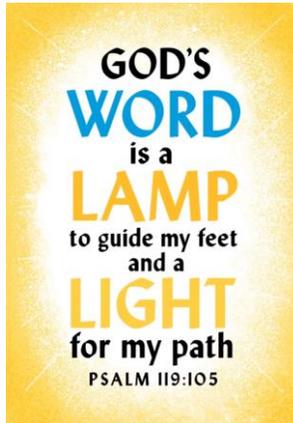
Sun 28th Almighty and everlasting God, who in your tender love towards the human race sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ to take upon him our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross: grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility, and also be made partakers of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen**

SERVICES DURING MARCH

For the time being Sunday services will remain on zoom only at 10 a.m. Please be aware that the situation is under constant review. We will let everyone know when we are able to be back in our church buildings.

ALL SERVICES WILL BEGIN AT 10.00

THE DEADLINE FOR THE **APRIL ISSUE OF
THE CRAYFISHER IS **FRIDAY 12 MARCH**. PLEASE HAVE
YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS IN BY THIS DATE – ANYTHING
RECEIVED AFTER THIS DATE WILL BE HELD OVER UNTIL
THE NEXT ISSUE**



Courtesy of Parish Pump.co.uk

PARISH PRAYER GROUP

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

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S

For further details contact Tony Lathey 01689 872742

SOCIAL EVENTS

AT ST ANDREW'S AND ST MARY'S

Regretfully, our planned events for 2020 had to be postponed. We are, however, hopeful that we can have some social events in 2021. WATCH THIS SPACE!

GOING PLACES!

Sadly we had to cancel all social events and Going Places days out last year owing to the coronavirus situation. As soon as things get back to a proper footing and the restrictions are lifted, we will be organising schedules for this year and will notify you further when restrictions allow.

Trevor Taylor

DADS

For my birthday in May 1946, my Dad made me a green wooden cart. This is what I have learnt about its origin.

Dad managed to obtain from wood somewhere. He made the frame and handle, cut small pieces of wood which he and my Mum sanded and painted to make little bricks. Dad then had the problem of where to buy or obtain round wood for the wheels.

Being ever inventive when it was fairly dark and no one else was around he lowered the village flagpole and sawed off four pieces, these made the wheels for my cart. (I often wondered if anyone had ever noticed that the village flagpole had shrunk).

I would toddle off to the nearby farm shop with my cart, money, note and coupons watched by Mum from our gate. Mrs. Bradshaw, who ran the shop, later became my infant schoolteacher.

I loved that little green cart and would push the cat, dog, my baby sister, or dolly around in it. One day, I looked for my cart on the veranda where it was kept but it wasn't there, the previous day we had a man in to do some drainage work – Coincidence??

I never saw my little green cart again; I was so upset.

Rosemary Lathey

REMINISCENCES OF MY DAD

Jacky Cook's item in last month's Crayfisher prompted some special memories of my Dad.

My Dad was special in so many ways. In some ways he was just an ordinary man but now I realise just how special he was. In particular he was very quiet, modest, unassuming and everyone who met him recognised him as a true gentleman. It was only in his later years that I came to appreciate how that marked him out as someone who commanded respect from every quarter. Mind you, he was no softie! When he told me off, he spoke quietly and with a look that made me know the only way was to behave.

We lived in a tiny flat in the Elephant and Castle until I was 10. And it was there that my best memories were born. Like sitting on the back of his armchair combing his hair. I can still feel the Brylcreem now. Dad was brought up in the Salvation Army but during the war he swapped his cornet for a trumpet and after the war, he joined a dance band. When he was going out on a banding night, I would watch him giving his trumpet a "drink", pouring water down the bell into the kitchen sink. Then donning his dress suit off he'd go. I've got some great photos of Dad at that time.

On another occasion, he took me to the pictures to see Norman Wisdom in "Trouble in Store". I still sing "Don't Laugh at Me Cos I'm a Fool" and remember most of the words! I not sure if Fra is appreciative of my rendition. On another occasion he and Mum took me to see "The Glenn Miller Story" and I have been hooked on dance music ever since. Thank you, Dad, for giving me my appreciation of music.

I am glad I was prompted to look back like this. It's funny how we realise retrospectively just how great Dads can be. He was a great role model, but I think I will never be able to match him. My hero.

Peter Moyle

MILLENNIUM DOME EXPERIENCE

I read with nostalgia and interest, the article by Mr Jerry Dowlen about the Millennium Dome Experience in 2000 at North Woolwich, in the September issue of the 'Crayfisher 2020'.

The first time we went, we took our grand-daughters, Nicole and Spice then aged 10 and 8 and another little girl from church. Tony and I agreed it would be worth the effort of getting up extra early and catching buses and queuing up to get in. (We unexpectedly met some friends who were also queuing up.)

As often is the case in our country, it runs its own efforts down (an example is the 2012 Olympics) we which we were lucky enough to attend the opening ceremony – but that's another story.

The Millennium Experience was fantastic, all the exhibits were of a very high quality and most interesting, just about anything you could possibly think of was there, including a realistic beach where the girls enjoyed

making sandcastles whilst we relaxed on deckchairs to laying down in the quiet zone watching the clouds drift by projected onto the ceiling.

The different trades and industries were also represented. We could see what a £1,000,000.00 in notes looked like in a glass case and walk through a human body, with the voice of Tommy Cooper in the background (Just like that). The twice daily shows were spectacular, were better than some of the West-End Shows or circuses we have seen, we saw both performances. Then we all went home tired, still on a high after a wonderful experience, worth every penny.

The second time we visited we took my mother, who was then the same age as I am now, once again we were enthralled by it.

Anybody who didn't or couldn't go, missed out BIG time!!

Rosemary Lathey. (with Tony's help)



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

Coronavirus near Easter: still a good time to pause, pray and remember.

When the UK death toll for coronavirus recently reached 100,000, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York issued a call to the nation. They asked everyone to pause and remember the victims of Covid-19. The victims and their families were ‘known to God and cherished by God’.

Perhaps, as we approach Easter, we should consider stopping again and remembering again the terrible cost of the pandemic.

In their open letter, Archbishops Justin Welby and Stephen Cottrell had insisted that death does not have “the last word”, and the Christian faith promises that one day “every tear will be wiped away”.

God, they wrote, knows grief and suffering and “shares in the weight of our sadness”.

Turning to the wider impact of the pandemic, the loneliness, anxiety and economic hardship, they then invited people to “cast their fears on God”.

The archbishops said: “We write to you in consolation, but also in encouragement, and ultimately in the hope of Jesus Christ. The God who comes to us in Jesus knew grief and suffering Himself. On the cross, Jesus shares the weight of our sadness.”

“Most of all, we have hope because God raised Jesus from the dead. This is the Christian hope that we will be celebrating at Easter. We live in the hope that we will share in His resurrection. Death doesn’t have the last word. In God’s kingdom, every tear will be wiped away.

“Please be assured of our prayers. Please join us.”

It is expected that the Church of England will hold services of remembrance for those who have died and thanksgiving for all those who have cared for them when it is possible to do so.

Life is full of ups and downs: after blessings, hard times often follow. They are not meant to destroy us but to help us grow spiritually by deepening our faith and dependence on God. The Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil – to give Him the opportunity to stand fast against the enemy. The devil’s temptations were based on half-truths, which Jesus rejected by standing firm on the whole truth of Scripture. The truth sets us free!

Why not have a go at this month's wordsearch

S	T	E	J	Y	Y	B	D	T	A	O	M	J
T	E	H	O	L	Y	E	E	B	R	E	A	D
R	M	E	R	R	T	L	D	A	L	O	N	E
I	P	C	D	S	C	L	L	A	R	M	S	T
K	T	K	A	A	R	I	S	Y	O	E	P	S
E	A	F	N	O	V	U	T	D	T	I	I	Y
G	T	N	W	E	R	I	G	D	H	B	R	R
W	I	L	D	E	R	N	E	S	S	G	I	T
P	O	F	J	O	I	T	R	D	N	L	T	E
T	N	E	H	K	P	O	S	U	O	O	V	S
L	E	T	E	M	W	O	H	W	O	R	V	T
I	U	T	E	M	P	L	E	F	E	Y	E	T
A	L	T	A	N	G	E	L	S	T	O	N	E

Holy
Spirit
Jordan
Wilderness
Tempted
Worship
Me
Serve
Jerusalem
Pinnacle

Devil
Fasted
Hungry
If
Bread
Temple
Stone
Foot
Angels
Bear

Alone
Kingdom
World
Authority
Glory
Strike
Test
temptation

The Revd Canon Paul Hardingham looks back on the year that changed the world.

'One Year On'

It was just over a year ago that the WHO discussed the coronavirus that was starting to spread around the world. None of us could have foreseen the devastating effect on our world, with over 80 million people infected and nearly two million deaths. How has the pandemic challenged our faith, as we look back over the last year?

Firstly, it has forced us to face up to the *reality of our situation*. We cannot underestimate the health, social and economic effects of the virus on our lives, churches and communities. We have learned how to do church online, but the future shape of church life is uncertain!

As the apostle Paul writes: *'We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus'* (2 Cor 4:8-10).

The pandemic has challenged so much of what we take for granted, but also demonstrated that God is alongside to help us in these circumstances.

Secondly, alongside the fear and uncertainty of this year, we have also learned to find *new faith and hope in Jesus*. The experience of Jesus' death and His resurrection provides a pattern for us in facing the future: *'so that His life may also be revealed in our mortal body. So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.'* (2 Cor 4:10-12).

During the season of Lent, as we anticipate the events at Easter, it's good to focus on the promise of sharing in the death and resurrection of Jesus. As we consider our present struggles, are we ready to surrender them to Jesus? May the hope of Easter Day take us forward into the coming year.

The Revd Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters from 'Uncle Eustace'... this letter was written before the pandemic.

On how to deflect those staff appraisals

The Rectory
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren

So, your vicar has introduced staff appraisal for all the officers who work for your church, including yourself. It seems a very dangerous innovation; as far as I am concerned, ministry is only successful when parishioners have no idea what the clergy get up to.

I imagine that he will look at the number of services you take in a year. Funerals can only be increased if you resort to murder, which is likely to be frowned on – although I have been sorely tempted during endless church council meetings. Perhaps if you take a flask of water wherever you go and if you find a baby unattended, you could resort to a spontaneous baptism. That would get your numbers up, even if returning mothers may marvel at the highly localised and brief shower that seemed to have taken place over the pram.

Visiting targets are easily increased. Compile a list of when parishioners will be out and call on those days; a card through their letterbox will prove to your vicar that you were there. Should they happen to be in, mention that you are collecting for the organ fund and they will immediately excuse themselves for an important appointment. You are then free to move on to clock another visit.

Your vicar is also bound to want to see the congregation increasing. This is not sustainable, and you should put a stop to such



ambitions at once. It is easily done. All you have to do is to approach your friends at the local football club and bribe them with your homemade beer to come along to church several Sunday mornings in a row. If you give them enough beer BEFORE the service, they will be likely to make just enough muted disruption as to leave your vicar a bit rattled, and thinking that perhaps after all, 'less' is 'more' when it comes to the congregation.

But whatever you do, make sure that you never preach a better sermon than he does. You don't want anyone thanking you at the door for your 'so interesting sermon' in front of him, when they have been sleeping through his sermons for years. If you offend the vicar this way, he will take swift revenge, and ask you to organise the parish summer fete.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

All in the month of MARCH

It was:

1700 years ago, on 7th March 321, that the Roman Emperor Constantine 1 (Constantine the Great) decreed that Sunday should be a day of rest throughout the Empire.

1600 years ago, on 25th March 421, that the city of Venice was officially founded when its first church was dedicated at noon.

300 years ago, on 24th March 1721, that Johann Sebastian Bach dedicated six of his concertos to Christian Ludwig Margrave of Brandenburg-Schwedt. They are now commonly known as the Brandenburg Concertos.

Also 150 years ago, on 29th March 1871, that the Royal Albert Hall in London was officially opened by Queen Victoria.

15 years ago, on 1st March 2006, that the Senedd, the National Assembly for Wales's debating chamber, was officially opened by Queen Elizabeth II in Cardiff.

10 years ago, on 11th March 2011, that the great Tohoku earthquake and tsunami of Japan took place. It shifted Japan's main island, Honshu, 2.4 metres to the east. 15,897 people were killed, 2,533 went missing, and nearly a quarter of a million were made homeless.

Three reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant went into meltdown, leading to the second-largest nuclear accident in history.

Also 10 years ago, on 15th March 2011, the Syrian Civil War began. It still continues today.

For the Young and Young at Heart is courtesy of www.parishpump.co.uk

FROM THE EDITOR

Way back at the very start of the lockdown in March last year, some of us found ourselves doing things that maybe we didn't usually do. Photos were sent into the magazine and we had a good display of what you had been up to. How about this time, sending in a short paragraph of about 50 or so words, letting everyone know what exciting things you have been up to?

Brenda Smith



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SIR JOHN BETJEMAN AND THE VICTORIAN SOCIETY

Sir John Betjeman had a passionate and lifelong interest in architecture. The Victorian Society was founded in 1958, with the declared aim of ‘protecting the best of the past from the encroaching tide of development’. Sir John took the role of secretary. He and the Society launched a number of campaigns to stop the demolition or despoliation of what he considered to be London’s most precious old buildings and landmarks.

Sir John nevertheless told an interviewer: ‘I don’t think that *everything* old must necessarily be preserved; nor do I think that *everything* Victorian is beautiful.’ Indeed there were times when he chided the Victorians for bad architecture. He was especially peeved by the Victorian zeal to ‘beautify’ or ‘restore’ churches that they considered to be too simple and austere. Betjeman disliked the resultant clutter of different styles. One of his poems satirised an architect who in 1883 ‘took down the pew-ends ... pulled down the dull old aisle ...’ Worse still – which horrified Betjeman – the Victorians sometimes destroyed original features and fittings of brass, wood and other materials – or they sold them to furniture-makers for a fraction of what Betjeman held was their true value.

Betjeman fought a long but unsuccessful campaign to keep the giant Doric arch at the entrance to Euston railway station. Did you know that some of it now resides here in Bromley? The contractor employed to pull down the arch in 1962 used some of the granite to build his garden at Paradise Villa in Sundridge Avenue. By a strange coincidence some more of the stone ended up in another Bromley: this was Bromley by Bow in Stratford where it was used to infill a section of the River Lea.

Jerry Dowlen

A JAR OF JaM

Charlotte and Olivia listened to Jesus's first miracle of turning water into wine. Then Olivia and Charlotte and her mum, Louise, played the memory game of adding another item to the wedding gifts.

Here's Charlotte and Olivia's list: I'm going to a wedding and I'm going to take: A wedding present, a banana, a wedding cake, a bridesmaid dress, a marble run, a disco ball, a bouquet of flowers, a wild Jacob, (Olivia's brother) some guests and a Vicar.

"Jacob was playing with the marble run! And not sure about the banana", wrote Louise.

GARDENING TIPS

Here are some top tips to get you through March.

1. Protect new shoots from slugs!
2. Plant shallots and onion sets and early potatoes.
3. Plant summer flowering bulbs
4. Clear away any remaining detritus from your garden to make it beautiful for when we get the lovely spring sunshine.

Brenda Smith

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POETRY CORNER

Two poems from the children of JaM

NATURE

- N: Never forget the wonderful world God has given us.
A: All the species of animals and plants which are taken
for granted.
T: The birds, the trees, everything, made by God.
U: Underwater species of fish, mammals and plants of
beautiful colours.
R: Rain, sun, snow so important for our planet. All the
seasons of winter, spring and summer and autumn.
E: Every living thing God has made for us.

Sofii

POPULATE

- P: Public and private help for endangered animals.
O: Ostrich, otter, owl, octopus and orang-utan.
P: Prepare then your important help for these.
U: Unlucky species in our universe and
L: Learn how important and vital it is for them to survive.
A: Attacking these animals (poachers?) God has wanted
them here
T: Thank you for your plastic patience or
E: ELSE the end of our Sea World!

Cormeagar

JOYS OF WINTER

This sprung from watching the garden while eating breakfast this morning.

The cloud curtains have parted
The sky is blue
Joy of joys
The sun shines through.

Snow glistens and twinkles
In sudden sunlight
Uplifting our spirits
Making smiles bright.

Birds flock to the feeder
A-twitter in flight
Fox looks forlornly
For a tasty bite.

Black cat wanders along
A now drying path
Whilst tulips and daffs
Push through frozen earth.

The flurries of winter
Will soon be past
The gentle warmth of spring
Will be with us at last.

Joyce Ozsvald

IMPERMANENCE

Irretrievable past thoughts,
they melt away
like ice cubes in lukewarm drinks,
tomorrows become our yesterdays,
the present is all there is.

Geraldine Ann Ford. (May 2000)



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time

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