

The Rector would appreciate it if anyone knowing of illness or any other trouble in the Parish would notify him as soon as possible so that he or a member of the Church can call without delay.

Rector's Surgery: If you have an enquiry about baptism, marriage or another service, or if there is something else you would like to discuss with Napo John, please make an appointment, through the Church Office (8462 1373), to come and see him during Surgery hours - Monday mornings (except Bank Holidays) 10.30 am – 12 noon and Tuesday evenings, 7 – 9 pm.

MAKING PROVISION

We have reached harvest and, as with so many events this year, we cannot celebrate it in the usual way. In years past, there would be a service involving local youth organisations and, let's not forget, a harvest social of one description or another in the Old Church Schools. In fact, it seems as though the team at St Mary's is constantly making provision to adhere to the latest guidelines. Many things have been and are being taken into account to ensure that we can remain open in a way that is safe for everyone who enters the church building. Up to this point we have overcome the hurdles set out ahead of us and have been able to offer worship within the regular pattern for Sunday morning services.

Harvest, however, marks the start of a particularly busy season, as the weeks glide seamlessly to remembrance, through Advent and into Christmas. Each year we welcome huge numbers of people into our church to share in these remarkable occasions. This year, we must of course make provision due to the extenuating and uncertain circumstances. After much thought and discussion, it was decided at September's PCC meeting, that some events could not take place safely and others could go ahead but in a limited capacity. It was agreed that the Charity Christmas Fair cannot go ahead this year, as it would bring a large number of people together. It was suggested that it could happen as a market in the Rectory garden, but the inevitable large volumes of cash being handled from person to person, would make it a hotbed for cross-infection. Detailed information regarding the Remembrance and Christmas services will be circulated in due course. Please be assured however, that aside from the Crib Service, significant services will be held, with additional measures and restrictions in place, where necessary.

It could be easy to get downcast and think, that's yet more things that will be denied to us because of Covid. Harvest, however, is traditionally a time when we give thanks for God's abundant provision from the land and sea. Perhaps in the current climate, we could try to look for other ways in which God has provided, rather than focus on what has been, or will be taken away. I hope you can take time to reflect and think of some reasons to give thanks to God. Maybe the kindness of neighbours and friends gives cause for appreciation. Perhaps you feel a renewed gratitude for the simpler things in life and are determined to tread more slowly going forward, resisting the temptation to add to an already packed schedule. For me, it is the way in which the whole Church has been able to reach out further than before. You will most probably know that here at St Mary's, we have made great strides from a technological perspective. Things which had not before been considered an option, have been put in place years ahead of time. For example: using Zoom for prayers, Bible studies and meetings, putting messages on Facebook, the e-community put together by Brenda so everyone can receive email updates, our YouTube channel with the ability to 'Live Stream' our 10.30 Sunday morning service – this is thanks to young William's expertise and our newly trained team of 'Live Streamers'. If you have read recent *Herald* articles regarding the 'Hayes Community Foodbank', you will have yet another example of God's provision and the way in which a much-needed resource was enabled at a rate of knots! Praise God that we can reach so many people with His message of love through services and also practically.

I will leave you to ponder the astounding words below from Romans 8:32. They were written by St Paul to give comfort and assurance of God's ultimate provision for us - His love and abounding grace.

'He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all - how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?'

Becky



Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families



What strange times we are living in. This time last year we had had our enrolment service when we welcomed Jo Watkins to Mothers' Union followed by our AGM. I am trying to keep in contact with all members by phone and am so pleased to hear that you too are talking to each other by phone, visiting and even meeting in hospital waiting rooms! Sheila Hunt, who has just had a successful cataract operation, happened to meet Jean Thody at the eye clinic at the PRU. We are also pleased to hear that Pam Cahill is recovering after her fall and subsequent operation. We welcome back to Hayes Hilary Abrahams who had been staying with her son during lockdown. She has promised to write about her 'Adventure' for next month's magazine.

We have all been through a lot this year. We have endured much but we have prevailed. As the seasons turn, we will rebuild: *'For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'* 2 Corinthians 5:1.

As in Biblical times people put their faith in God when they needed more than their earthly dwellings, so too we must trust in Him when our livelihoods are threatened. Such challenges as the pandemic and the economic fallout are surely destructive forces but we have access to a *'house not made with hands'* which will shelter us while we rebuild our hope and confidence.

My sister Jill and husband John have been staying with me. She reminded me of this story in Luke 17:16 (NIV) *'And he threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked Him'*.

Jesus was walking along the border between Galilee and Samaria when He came to the village. There He encountered ten men, all with leprosy. They remained socially distanced but called out loudly *'Jesus, Master, have pity on us.'* When Jesus saw them, He said to them

“Go and show yourselves to the priests”. And as they went, they were miraculously healed and made clean. One of them, a Samaritan, when he saw that he was healed, turned back. Glorifying and praising God, he lay, face down at the feet of Jesus.... thanking Him over and over again. Jesus asked, *“Were not ten of you healed? Where are the other nine?”* He asked *“Was it only this foreigner who returned to give thanks and praise to God?”* Then He said to the man at His feet, *“Get up and go on your way. Your personal trust in me and your confidence in God’s power has restored you to health.”*

I love this story because the message is so uncomplicated and speaks of a real situation. In New Testament times, lepers were outcasts and their condition incurable. For them social distancing was a way of life and no one would risk contracting their disease by touching them. These men had obviously heard of the miracles that Jesus had performed and recognised the power of God working through Him. So, they dared to hope! They called out in a loud voice, pleading for mercy and healing. Jesus heard them and took pity on them. He told them to present themselves to the priests, who, by Old Testament law, were the only ones qualified to confirm a healing and return to wholeness.

We have no idea of the actual time scale but we are told that the lepers were healed and that just one turned back to thank Jesus and praise God for his return to health. Jesus asked about the other nine. It is achingly obvious that the other nine were so excited about their return to wholeness and health that they didn’t even think to say “thank you”. We don’t know what happened to them but we do know that Jesus reiterated to the man who had bothered to say “thank you” that his trust and confidence in God’s power had fully restored him.

So, what is the lesson or encouragement for us today in our world where social distancing and ‘keeping apart’ has become our new norm? Well, maybe it is simply to pray this prayer?

‘Lord, have mercy on us. We trust in You to heal and cleanse us from the many imperfections and blemishes that disfigure our lives. We repent of our wrong doings and accept your forgiveness. Lord, we ask you to remind us to say ‘THANK YOU’, to You, every day, for all your mercies. Amen.

We’re very aware of the many children and young people across the globe who have had their education disrupted as a result of the pandemic. We pray for all in authority who are making decisions on their behalf. We pray for schools who have worked hard to put measures in

place to provide learning for students in a safe environment. Where students have been out of school for months, now they've returned they feel confident. May they and their teachers adapt easily to these new ways of schooling.

Mothers' Union announces theme for 2021



We recognise that the effects of the global pandemic will continue to be felt across the world throughout 2021 and so it seems appropriate to develop our 2020 theme to encompass Rebuilding hope and confidence. As people seek to come to terms with loss of all kinds, from bereavement to

loss of livelihood, relationships, wellbeing and other challenges, our work of rebuilding hope and confidence will be vital.

Staying connected through midday prayers

Our UK members who don't have access to the internet at home will still be able to hear our midday prayers thanks to the Church of England's Daily Hope line. Just call **0800 804 8044** from a UK landline and press **option 4**, then **option 8**.



A free phone line of hymns, reflections and prayers

I have a few copies of the Mothers' Union mail order catalogue. If you would like one please contact me on 0208 468 7785.

Until we can be back together, I leave you the first verse of my favourite hymn:

*'O Jesus, I have promised to serve Thee to the end;
Be Thou forever near me, my Master and my Friend;
I shall not fear the battle if Thou art by my side,
Nor wander from the pathway if Thou wilt be my Guide.'*

Avril Ashford

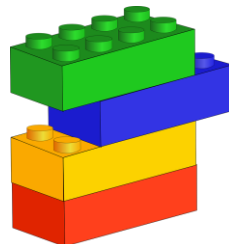
OUTDOOR FAMILY WORSHIP

After many months of not being able to deliver any face to face sessions with our children and young people, we were finally able to do so on Saturday, 12th September. The families who usually attend Fresh Start, Sunbeams, Blaze and Illuminate were invited to join Napo, Becky, Hilary and myself in the Rectory garden for a special service Family Worship session aimed at our children and young people. Children from under two years right up to age 11 came along with their parents for this outdoor service. We were thrilled to see quite a few families that we have not seen for so long.

The weather was kind to us and we had enough space in the Rectory garden to create a square for each family that was two meters apart, in an oval shape so that we could all see and hear each other.

This event included games, a story, prayers, worship songs, making lego/ duplo constructions, making masks and doing age-specific Bible-based activities whilst remaining in their own little square on the grass.

Each family had a box in their square named after a character in the bible like “Daniel”, “Timothy” etc. The box included everything they needed for the session including hand sanitizer, craft material and a little treat for their efforts! It also included lego/ duplo and a “challenge” to create a specific thing with it, such as a lion’s den, Noah’s Ark, the room in which the disciples met, the tree from the Garden of Eden and the palace where Esther lived. All the creations were amazing especially the “Big Fish” and the T-Rex (though not specifically mentioned in the Bible, it does roar like a lion - which is!).



It was so lovely to see everyone joining in and being able to worship together. The parents were great and not only got involved but also managed to keep their little ones in their squares! The feedback we have had from the people who participated in the event was so positive that we will certainly aim to do it again some time soon.

If you are the parent or guardian of a child or children under 14, and would like to receive information about this and other events that we plan, please do email me at info@stmaryshayeskent.co.uk

Brenda

BISHOP COMMEMORATES 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

Bishop Simon Burton Jones has attended a service to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Britain, which is officially marked on Tuesday 15 September.

Speaking at the event which took place at Biggin Hill RAF Chapel on Sunday, Bishop Simon said that our knowledge that the Allies ultimately won the war, influences our perception of what was experienced at the time:

"Those who did not consciously live through those nightmarish days, which is most of the population today, can find it hard to grasp the fear people would have felt. The first thing we learn about World War Two is that the Allies won it. He continued: "No, there was nothing inevitable about victory at that point. Which makes the Battle of Britain, won decisively by the RAF, one of the key turning points of the war, and perhaps the first one."

Bishop Simon went on to commend not only the courage of the RAF pilots, as well as pilots from other nationalities, but also to remember the contribution made by the many people on the ground - men and women - without whom the pilots would not have been able to fly:

"These and many more ensured the war effort succeeded at a pivotal moment. That's what a society looks like when it pulls in the same direction. Yes, there were gifted, brave individuals in the sky, but the unseen work of the teams around them should not go unremembered."

In closing, he spoke of the debt we owe to all those who took part in this pivotal battle: "Sometimes the future hangs by a thread and comes down to the courage of a handful. But always there is a God in heaven whose character is justice and mercy, and whose purpose it is to bring us to our true destiny in Christ."



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**ST. MARY'S CHURCH DIARY
OCTOBER 2020**

Morning Prayers take place daily at 9.10am Monday to Thursday throughout the year (except Bank Holidays).

TRINITY 17

Harvest

Sunday 4th	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Morning Praise
Wednesday 7th	2.45pm	Hayes Men's Fellowship Annual Service

TRINITY 18

Sunday 11th	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	9.15am	Fresh Start
	10.30am	Parish Communion CW
Wednesday 14th	7.30pm	Annual Parochial Church Meeting

TRINITY 19

Luke the Evangelist

Sunday 18th	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Morning Praise

LAST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Sunday 25th	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Parish Communion CW

A RECENT FUNERAL IN THE PARISH

Pam Ridout

HAYES MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

On then into October with just a glimmer of hope for “normality” with the resumption of printed copies of *Hayes Herald*. The downside is that the almost-immediate deadlines hitherto for on-line publication now become less elastic to allow for the printers to complete their tasks.

So I am writing these words in the middle of September just after the “rule of six” has come into effect in England (and in confusing differing versions in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales).

Nevertheless, Napo then confidently assured us that our Annual HMF Service will go ahead on 7th October governed by the same Covid-19 precautions as for other services in the church. This will be an important occasion for our members, who not have been able to meet and greet as a group face-to-face for many months. Unfortunately, the original idea to use a marquee in the Rectory garden for refreshments and much-needed fellowship is not allowed.

Fortunately, our next planned event is also secured on current guidelines. Our Annual Lunch in January can again be held in Regan's, the banqueting suite upstairs above the New Inn in Station Approach, Hayes, which usually can hold up to 200 seated diners. The lunch will be staged in strict Covid-19 conditions, thus for example tables of six rather than eight and further apart.

Looking to the present, we have just issued another of our Extra Newsletters. These were intended to keep in touch with members and give them a chance to read about the topics we should have covered in talks or outings. As our new programme will not begin until next year, this latest Extra took the opportunity to look back at lockdown in three different ways. This included personal recollections from committee members in particular of lockdown – the good things (like the support given by neighbours), the bad things (like the lack of social activities) and the things we still miss (like being able to watch live football at Selhurst Park??!!). We also had a series of photos of popular central London locations during the height of lockdown. It was shocking to see such a vibrant city so deserted. To complete the look back we had a light hearted article about the new language that developed during lockdown (lockdown lingo?), such as being on a bit of a coronacoaster or being a complete covidiot! This was all topped off with the usual variety of quizzes.

We also like to use photos to remind our members of how things used to be but, more particularly, how we hope they will be again in the

not too distant future – though that hope has taken a bit of a dent with the new “rule of six”.



Outing July 2019 Polesden Lacey



Outing June 2019 Tilbury Fort

We are keen to get back to whatever the new normal will prove to be, always concerned with the safety and health of all our members. Some may need some encouragement to emerge from their HMF hibernation or isolation. Others will be only too eager to cast off face coverings and jettison sanitiser and mix and mingle freely again, no doubt with handshakes and hugs (remember them?).

The good news for all is that for this coming year the annual subscription is reduced exceptionally from £15 to £10. The further encouragement is that we intend to offer as full a programme in 2021 of our usual Outings, Talks and Walks as any continuing restrictions will then allow.

Watch this space...

Allan Evison, Hon HMF Secretary
020 8402 7416
secretary@hayesmensfellowship.org

A MOMENT IN EYAM

Little has changed on this Derbyshire hillside near Eyam since August 10th, 1666 when the village was devastated by bubonic plague. Whether it was raining or fine was probably irrelevant to Mrs. Hancock as she placed the last shovelful of earth on her last family member; seven graves for six children and her husband in eight days and all so quietly done. Weather and a little settlement have tilted the gravestones which are otherwise unremarkable. Only the rust of lichen on the stones and an historic monument sign betray their age. One can almost hear the sound of digging and see the lonely figure of a woman with the vicar and a few friends descending to Eyam along the same path by which visitors now pass with their camcorders.

Leaving the seven to their ancient hillside and returning to the church in Eyam one enters a sacred place. It is not true that buildings are fashioned merely of stone and brick. They are also shaped by people and events. Such is the case in Eyam. The church is testimony to the devastation that struck at the heart of the village and it requires little imagination to recreate the tragedies of that summer.

I sat in the church reflecting on the prolific evidence around me of the struggles and fortitude of human beings. The ghosts of years gone by surrounded me and I could see the faces of diverse village folk in the

dimly lit church. They had their petty disagreements , their gossip and their passion. They had celebrated at every opportunity until that year. The vicar was a good man who offered himself to the people and lost his wife to the plague in the process. He had persuaded the village to cut itself off to prevent the spread of disease to other villages and towns. The villagers had reluctantly but bravely agreed, knowing that they would probably perish.



Sacred places such as this induce catharsis and reflection on one's destiny and direction. I was praying to the God who also lived through these tragic events, and countless before and since, when the church door opened. Silent reflection was shattered by the excited chatter of sixty schoolchildren who had come to study the plague. I felt initially upset by this intrusion on my thoughts but then I remembered the hillside and those graves where Mrs. Hancock had laid her six children. No doubt they were just like these, full of chatter and excitement, until one by one they were struck down within eight days.

I looked at their mischievous faces and realised that this was a good place for them to be. They were the reminder of youth and eternal hope, of life rushing to fill the void created by death, the consolation of shattered lives, God's signpost for our future set against the cruelty of

our past. As I stepped out into the sunshine the many complexities of my own life realigned and focused on the present where chatter and excitement truly exist. This was probably true for Mrs. Hancock who subsequently moved away and remarried, surviving to a good age. I feel sure that she always welcomed little children although such details are rarely recorded as important by those who document the weighty events of life.

David Langford 1980

From Rochester Diocese Newsletter

A Prayer for Families as Loved Ones Begin College or University

Dear Lord,
thank you for the blessing of our child,
who has now grown into a young adult.
Thank you for the gifts that you have given over the years, and the
opportunities still to come
as this new chapter begins.
We entrust our child to your loving arms
and ask that you would keep them safe.
May they grow in the knowledge and love of Jesus,
in whose name we pray.
Amen

A Prayer for Students Going to College or University

Lord, be with the Freshers of 2020.
Guide them, fill them with hope and compassion
and give them a thirst for learning.
Though things might be different than planned,
let each of them grow in faith,
experience your call in their lives,
and know that even in the uncertainty,
you are with them.
In Jesus' name,
Amen

FOUR AND A HALF MINUTES OF FAME

I promise I'll stop going on about my book soon but there is space to be filled in this month's magazine and not much else has happened to me during lockdown.

Back in August I heard the news that my novel *Small Pleasures* had been chosen to feature on a new BBC2 book programme called *Between the Covers*, to be broadcast this autumn. (November 6th if all goes to plan.) It is a discussion programme in which a panel of 'celebrities' discuss their favourite books, then a recently published book by one of the panel, and then a book by someone who is not a celebrity – in this case, me!

Given how hard it is to publicise books this was a tremendous coup and I was naturally very excited. I was slightly less excited when I was told that a film crew wanted to come and film me talking about the book as part of the programme. One suggestion was that they would film me at work in my 'writing room' – perhaps imagining an elegantly furnished study, with a leather topped desk, blotter, inkwell, view of hills, etc. Looking around the tiny room where I work I note that it contains, as well as a desk, computer, filing cabinets and bookshelves, various non-literary items, including several musical instruments, fishing rods, camping chairs, a cool-box, an ironing board, a half completed Airfix kit (a Boeing Fortress Mk111 since you ask), and a bag of quick-drying cement.

Fortunately, social distancing restrictions meant that indoor filming was scotched and we had to stay outside. The back garden, at least, looked slightly more respectable. Unfortunately, it was one of the hottest days of the year, well over 30 degrees, and it wasn't long before we were all wilting in the heat. The back gardens of Hayes on a sunny day are also not quite as silent as a recording studio, and we had to do multiple takes as my brief piece to camera (brow furrowed with concentration as I tried to remember what I was talking about) was repeatedly interrupted by the distant roar of power drills, chainsaws, lawnmowers and the creaking of garden trampolines.

As the book is set in and around 1950s Hayes, they also took some lingering shots of pebbledash, and the view from the Ridgeway towards the station. It took from 9.30am until 3pm to film enough material for four and a half minutes of screen time!

Clare Wickert (Chambers)

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE QUAKERS

The Quakers - the Religious Society of Friends - was founded in the 1650s by George Fox, who aimed to take believers back to the original and pure form of Christianity. By the time of his death in 1691, his movement had 50,000 followers.

Fox got into political trouble by preaching that there was something "of God in every person". - a revolutionary attack on all discrimination by social class, wealth, race and gender and it had worrying implications for the social structure of his time.

Quakers' refusal to take oaths or to take off their hats before a magistrate, and their holding of banned religious meetings in public, led to 6,000 Quakers being imprisoned between 1662 and 1670.

Fox believed that everyone should try to encounter God directly and to experience the Kingdom of Heaven as a present, living reality. He objected to the rituals of the churches, and rejected the idea that the Bible was always right.

He argued that God himself does not want churches, which, with priests and rituals are an unnecessary obstruction between the believer and God. These views infuriated the mainstream churches, and Quakers were persecuted in Britain on a large scale until 1689.

Quakers today work actively to make this a better world. They are particularly concerned with human rights, based on their belief in equality of all human beings; social justice; peace and freedom of conscience. They seek to live simply so as to reduce the burden on the environment.

Quakers do not celebrate Christian festivals such as Easter and Christmas, they feel the incarnation and resurrection should be remembered on a daily basis. Communal worship consists of silent waiting, with participants contributing as the spirit moves them. There is no creed since this is seen as taking on belief at second hand - they think that faith should be more personal than that and based on a person's inner conviction, and that faith is something that is always developing and not something frozen at a particular moment in history that can be captured in a fixed code of belief.

Quakers have no collective view on what happens after death. They tend to concentrate on making this world better rather than pondering what happens after leaving it. They are actively involved in social and political issues and believe in pacifism and non-violence.

Brian Hatton

IN THE CHURCH AND VIA ZOOM! Annual Parochial Church Meeting – Annual Meeting of Parishioners

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on **Wednesday 14th October at 7.30pm** in the Church **and via Zoom**. If you intend joining the meeting via Zoom please let me know and I will send you the code the day before the meeting.

We will be electing three members to the Deanery Synod and three PCC members: Lucy Carroll, Cathy Price and Eileen Cohen - have all resigned during the year for personal circumstances – we are grateful to them for their valuable input. Sarah Willis will not be continuing as churchwarden and again the PCC and all St Mary's are thankful to her for the tremendous amount of time and energy Sarah has given.

If you would like to stand for election please sign your name on the list in the church porch or let Napo or myself know. Proposers and Seconders are needed. Please consider standing for PCC or becoming one of St Mary's representatives on our Deanery Synod.

In these unusual times it is important that you make every effort to attend the APCM one way or another, listen to what has been done by many on your behalf. This is your chance to show your support and there will be an opportunity to voice your opinion.

Mary Whytock
Secretary to the Parochial Church Council

Photograph of Eyam parish church on p.12 by Alan Fleming

Items for the November magazine by 16th October please. Copy to the Editor – see below.

November magazines will be ready for distribution on 31st October.

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