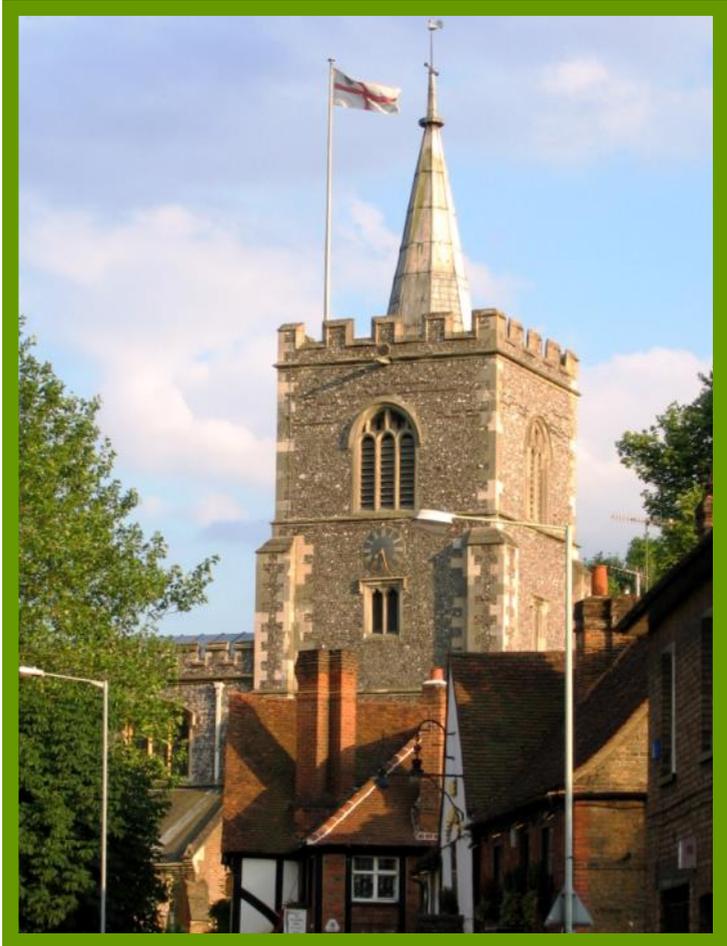


LINK

Monthly Magazine

May
2019

50p



St Mary the Virgin, Rickmansworth

The Church of England and The Methodist Church in Partnership

Serving the whole community



LINK

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Minister's Letter

Dear Friends in Christ,



A friend of a friend recently came to stay at The Vicarage for a few nights. On the second morning they were here they asked if I had noticed the goldcrest that was 'in residence' in the yew tree outside their window. 'Err, what does a goldcrest look like?' I asked. I love birds, but am hopeless at knowing the name (or, for that matter, song) of a good many of them. The houseguest proceeded to

show me the (blurry) photograph on their phone... It turns out the goldcrest is a speedy little critter who doesn't stay still for very long!

After the houseguest had departed, I set myself up in their room to look out for the wee bird and was soon overcome with excitement as it sprung into view. I carefully opened the window to hear it singing and, as my friend has suggested, it did indeed appear to be trying to out-sing and out-puff in all its feathery grandeur the other bird who seemed to be muscling in on its territory. You've guessed it probably by now - that the other bird was actually its reflection in the window. I got out my camera and took a picture which you can see above. It is just so lovely!



Isn't it wonderful when we are pointed towards something unexpected which captivates our delight and imagination. I didn't know this goldcrest was there - and wouldn't have done unless it had been pointed out to me. I don't sleep in that room, and only go in to dust before guests arrive and to make the bed up for them. Sometimes, we need someone else to change our usual trajectory in order for us to be able to see something in a new way, or simply to see something new. This little feathered friend has brought much joy - and some interesting conversations too.

Who opens up new ways of seeing for you? Who could open up new ways of seeing for you? Could you do this for others?

The revelation of the Risen Christ relied on the first witnesses at the empty grave being able to see in a new way. The angels told the women, the women told the men and so the world has come to know of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In this edition of LINK you will find information relating to two important events: firstly, a Workshop Morning (18 May) for all who are interested in any way in the work and activities we offer for children and young people at St Mary's and, secondly, the *Thy Kingdom Come* initiative on Sunday 19th. I hope you will read the articles, and be open to new ways of seeing how God is at work in our world, and how you can be involved - whoever, however and wherever you are.

With my very good wishes and prayers as the joyous Season of Easter continues.



The Revd Deborah Snowball

Readings at Communion

5 May	Acts 9.1-6	Rev 5.11-end	John 21.1-19
12 May	Acts 9.36-end	Rev 7.9-end	John 10.22-30
19 May	Acts 11.1-18	Rev 21.1-6	John 13.31-35
26 May	Acts 16.9-15	Rev 21.10,22 - 22.5	John 5.1-9

Prayer Suggestions

Week beginning:

5 May	The ability to accept forgiveness
12 May	Ambulance crews and paramedics
19 May	Firefighters
26 May	People with learning or emotional problems

For Local Churches

	The Deanery	The Methodist Circuit
5 May	Christ Church, Chorleywood	Berry Lane, Mill End
12 May	Mill End, W Hyde & Herongate	Bushey and Oxhey
19 May	St Oswald's, Croxley Green	Carpenders Park & S Oxhey
26 May	Sarratt and Chipperfield	Croxley Green

People Living Locally

5 May	Thornhill Road, Bedford Road, Russell Road
12 May	The Drive, Nightingale Court
19 May	Penn Place
26 May	Swan Fields, George Fields

A Prayer for the Month

Living Lord Jesus, as our hearts rejoice at the returning life that surrounds us in all its beauty in Springtime, may we give thanks for your life on earth, for your example and teaching, and above all for the great sacrifice you made for our sakes. May we rejoice at your living presence with us always, learn from your final actions and words as you prepared to vanish from human sight, remember you in the breaking of bread and be ready to recognise the presence of your Holy Spirit. Amen

Report from the United Church Council's January Meeting

Buzz Coster (UCC Secretary)

At its meeting in January, the United Church Council discussed a range of issues which included:

- Safeguarding vulnerable people is the responsibility of the UCC and one which it takes very seriously. We are very fortunate to have an excellent Safeguarding Officer in Helen Swain and she guided the Council through the approval of a large number of policies which had been prepared by the Diocese.
- *Thy Kingdom Come* is a prayer initiative that runs from Ascension Day to Pentecost each year. A number of activities are being planned both within St Mary's and also in the community of Rickmansworth.
- The Weekend of Invitation is 21-23 June this year. It is proposed to hold a community event on the Sunday and offers of help with organising this are warmly welcomed.

Meetings of the United Church Council take place on the second Monday of alternate months. For details, please see the calendar on the church website or in LINK.

From Cradle to... Confirmation? College? Curacy?!

We are very fortunate at St Mary's to have many children associated with our church community. We have a flourishing Toddler Group at Cloisters Hall, are linked with St Mary's School for Collective Worship, J Club and through the Governing Board. We have the Rainbow, Brownie and Guide Units, have Children's Church, X Team, families bringing children for Baptism, as well as children who undergo preparation to receive Holy Communion before Confirmation. We have young people who are amongst our servers and bellringers, and others who go on to be confirmed. Across any one week, as a church we probably have contact with almost 300 children and young people. This is a staggering number, and we do well to think about how we might support them and their families as they grow in faith. As one of our Mission Action Plan strands, as a church we have identified the need to look more closely and intentionally at the work we do with children and young people both who attend our church, and with whom we have contact.

The Diocesan Children's Adviser will be joining us on Saturday 18 May, from 10.00am to 12.30pm, to work with us to look at what we do in this area of church life, help us consider what we would like to do in it and assist us in planning how we might make some of these things happen - whilst also supporting what is going on already.

This event is open to anyone and everyone. If you are interested in seeing the children and young people of our community grow and develop in faith, then please do come along. If you are a parent of any of our children, come along. If you are a leader of one of our activities, come along. If you've seen things that work well elsewhere and can see how they might work well at St Mary's, come along. Whether or not you have any experience working with children and young people, come along. This event is not for just the current leaders of any of the activities mentioned above, it is for all of our church community - and I really hope that you will come and be part of the conversation.

Thy Kingdom Come

Ascension Day – Pentecost

Running from Ascension Day (30 May) until the Day of Pentecost (9 June), this initiative is now ecumenical and international and we shall be participating once again! There is much with which we can each be involved - whoever we are, and whatever our personal circumstances.

Nine days of Prayer (Novena): In mid-May, a specially produced booklet from the Thy Kingdom Come Team will be available from Church. For each of the nine days there is a Bible passage, reflection and prompts for prayer. Everyone is encouraged to take a booklet and join in each day - in your own time, wherever you are.

Five @ 5: One of the motivations underpinning this whole event is to pray that the Holy Spirit will inspire people to come to faith. This initiative was really popular at St Mary's in 2017. Through a #Pledge2Pray, we are all encouraged to pray each day at 5pm for five people we know who we would like to come to know Jesus Christ in their lives - whether as a new relationship, or one that is being re-kindled. If you want to pray for five people that would be great, if you only know one or two, then that is fine too! In the weeks before Ascension Day, we'll be making a wall of fire (mini-flames) with the names of everyone who is being prayed for and asking God to send the Holy Spirit into their lives. It's worth beginning to pray now for God to guide you as to whom to be praying for.

Icthus Trail: An opportunity to get out and about to look for the 20 fish that will be put out on 'fishing lines' around the Town. On each 'fish' will be the name of a particular group of people within our community who we would like to bring before God in prayer. If you'd like to be involved in creating the fish - come and join our workshop on Sunday 19 May at 3.30pm. Once they are up (and we shall need help for this task too), get your walking shoes and binoculars out to see what you can find!

Prayer Stations in Church: Linked to the Lord's Prayer, there will be activities in church to encourage people to explore different ways of praying. Anyone is welcome to come in, so do share the information with friends and family - and come along yourself.

Pentecost Picnic. On the Feast of Pentecost itself, we shall have a Pentecost Picnic Lunch to celebrate the great day. If you fancy wearing something red, feel free! In the evening there will be a minibus to take people to the Beacon Celebration Service at St Albans. If you'd like a seat, look out for the sign-up sheet in Church.

Please be praying *now* for the all the events and for everyone who will be involved - in planning, in executing, in preparing, in praying, in being prayed for... in Rickmansworth and across the world! We're praying for the Holy Spirit to come. Amen!

Inclusive Church

We pass on news of Inclusive Church (IC), to which St Mary's has signed up as a member, to show our commitment both to the Organisation and its aims... as well as ours.

So what is Inclusive Church?

It is an educational charity that was founded in 2003 as a result of indignation within the Church of England that the Revd Dr Jeffrey John was forced to resign following public outrage at his appointment as Bishop of Reading because he was in a long-term homosexual relationship. Since then membership of IC has spread not only through the Church of England, but through other denominations too. It invites both churches and individuals to become members and works through mission partners and regional ambassadors. It now seeks to include everyone in the Church who might feel excluded, whether because of disability, mental health, sexuality, ethnicity or gender.

What Does Inclusive Church Do?

It produces a monthly newsletter that alerts its members to conferences, lectures, services and other matters relevant to its aims, whether organised by itself or by other bodies with similar aims. It also uses blogs.

For instance the recent March newsletter sent out an invitation to One Body, One Faith's AGM at Toynbee Hall, 28 Commercial Street London E16LS at 11.30am on 11 May, followed by lunch, and to their annual Service afterwards at St Botolph's Aldgate at 2.00pm. Also in London, they advertised the service to celebrate 25 years of women's ordination at St Paul's on 4 June at 7.00pm - all are welcome. Reports

from different parts of the country included news of their local events.

IC is also starting a campaign to get 'Inclusive' representatives to stand for Deanery and General Synods for 2020. It asks members for donations or to organise fundraising campaigns to further its work, and for prayers and sharing of ideas and information. Newsletters include a link for making donations.

You can find more about IC and read its recent newsletters on the Inclusive Church website <http://www.inclusive-church.org.uk> (or just by 'Googling' Inclusive Church) or contact the National Co-ordinator, Ruth Wilde by phone or email (07935 374877; office@inclusive-church.org).

Ricky Week

Cancellation of the Bury Fête/May Fair

The Batchworth Sea Scouts circulated the following statement early in April:

Following consultation with the Local Authority, we were advised that the current building construction on the old WRVS site at The Bury has meant that the grounds would not be suitable for the event and the number of visitor numbers that it generates. This is because when the new development is completed in early May, the access that we use would have recently been landscaped and restored by the contractor and not in a condition to be walked upon or driven over by the funfair vehicles.

They did try to find an alternative site, without success, and therefore sadly have decided to cancel the Fête for this year.

If you have not already heard,

No 'Jolly Jam Jars' or empty ones either, this year, thank you.

St Mary's Tower Tours

St Mary's tower will be open to visitors between 2.00pm and 4.00pm on the first Saturday of Ricky Week, 11 May, and our bellringers will welcome visitors to their ringing practice on Wednesday 15 May from 7.30pm.

QUIZ NIGHT

St Mary's Church Centre

Saturday 11 May

7.30pm

Cash bar

Tables of Eight

*Tickets £10 (including Supper)
available from the Church Office*

St Mary's Interior Prior to 1896



This is an old photo that Graham Martin has in his collection, showing an earlier view of our church interior. We know it must have been taken before 1896, as that was when our current stained glass window was installed. It shows the East window with plain glass in a diamond pattern, not the window that has now been restored and installed at the eastern end of York Minster. The old heating grill can be seen down the nave aisle. You may notice some other differences too.



Meet for Tea

Helen Swain

We are a group (of more mature years) that meet for afternoon tea once a month on the first Thursday of the month. It is a very informal afternoon starting with a short talk about absolutely anything. After the talk afternoon tea is then served, which consists of a selection of sandwiches, scones and cakes, all freshly baked; and as much tea to drink as people wish (coffee can be served if preferred). All our Meet for Tea members are picked up from their homes and returned. We travel to a different location each month. If you would like to join us or know someone who may be interested please send an email to the Church Office churchoffice@stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk or phone 01923 772627 giving your details and these will be passed to Joan Martin who runs the club.

NB Meet for Tea is not to be confused with The Teapot Club which meets in Church from 2.30pm to 3.30pm on the third Wednesday of each month. You can drop in there without prior arrangement. Everyone is welcome.

From the Registers

May God bless the life together of

6 April

ROCHELLE ALIBEY and LEE ROWLEY

St Mary's in the Past

The Church Plate

When looking at past parish magazines for this series in 2016 we chanced in the September 1906 one upon an inventory of our church's plate in 1552 that we thought might be of interest and published it in September. We asked Graham Martin whether it contained the items sold in the 1960s and he replied that he needed to look into that.

Graham has since spent nearly two years doing detailed research on the church plate used at St Mary's over the centuries and produced an interesting and scholarly booklet that has been approved by the UCC. It consists of eleven A4 pages of relatively small print, with illustrations, 33 references and three appendices. What makes it particularly interesting is that the booklet is not confined to the plate, but sets it against the church history and ecclesiastical practices of its day. The book also includes information on vicars of the time and items that are also found in inventories, such as bells and vestments; and a useful glossary of terms relating to the items.

We had not appreciated that 1552 was the date of the fire that destroyed the church of the time and that could have irreparably damaged any silverware the church then owned.

A copy of the booklet has been placed in Herts Archives and Local Studies. A version has been placed in the Church Library, one in Three Rivers Museum and one has been given to Rickmansworth Historical Society. Further bound copies could be made available to people willing to cover the cost.

1913

The May 1913 magazine was dominated by the sudden death of Mr Henry Pratt, "one of our best known and well-respected parishioners". A subsidiary item is the appeal for the Renovation of the Church Bells. The Revd Parkinson said that it was being very generously responded to, but by a limited number of people and he sought to widen the response:

I feel sure every churchman and churchwoman in the Parish will wish to feel that they have given something however little for an object that appeals to all. The Church Bells must seem to us all like personal friends, calling us continually to Prayer, to Sacrament and Praise, entering into our joys and sorrows, Marriages and Deaths, so

that I earnestly hope that not only those who can give cheques or gold, but lesser sums down to the shilling and the sixpence, will make such offering to the Fund...

He added that should sufficient be collected they might - like Chelmsford - enjoy a peal of Ten Bells; a privilege enjoyed by but few parishes. [*There was some recasting of the bells and a new steel frame put in. It was 1935 before two bells were added to give our present ring of ten. Ed*]

1915

We promised at the start of the year to give you local news relating to WW1.

Lists in the May *Parish Magazine* show that:

- 67 Rickmansworth men were fighting at the front
- 157 were in the Home Defence or elsewhere
- 1 was missing
- 4 had been wounded
- 8 had been killed
- 2 were prisoners in Germany

Repeated surnames on the lists suggests that often there were two or even three people from the same family.

At home there were Intercessions in Church for these men daily at 12 noon, on Wednesday evenings at 8.15pm and at Evensong on Sunday evenings.

1994

The Revd Derek House, then Methodist Minister at St Mary's wrote about worship. He was thrilled about recent experiments in Sunday Evening worship but thought that the Sunday 10.45am Methodist Service needed new thought. [There were still separate Church of England and Methodist services at that time.] He invited people to pass on ideas to staff, churchwardens or stewards verbally or in writing.

It is vitally important that everybody participates in worship... Ask anyone who leads worship how the atmosphere which the congregation brings to worship affects what they can offer in worship.

When we worship, we need to be able to identify with and enter into what is done. We also need to be able to follow what is said. True, but worship is more than the mechanics of communication and group self-expression.

It is our response to God. We come to meet God in all his awesome wonder, to meet the risen Jesus, who promised us that where two or three are gathered together in His name, He would be present with them...

Worship is opening ourselves to God... Such worship gives us vision and grace for living, enabling us to offer ourselves to Him as a living sacrifice day by day.

Colin Bayley, Dennis Collins and Hugh Thomas were elected Churchwardens at the Annual Meeting of Parishioners. At the APCM Sheila Nunn reported that there were 268 members on the Anglican Electoral Roll. It was reported that The Revd Bruce Driver, as Rural Dean, would have two more parishes, Kings Langley and Bovington as a result of the division of the large Berkhamstead Deanery. The next stage of the Renewal Project would be repair of the clerestory windows and stonework of the tower, painting of the tower [inside!] and purchasing new curtains for behind the altar.

Joanna Swan, writing about developments and proposed ones in Rickmansworth mentioned a plan to build on part of the Vicarage Garden [25 years ago!].

The Renewal Section of the magazine continued to advertise enticing events and report on the success of those that had taken place, that have been mentioned in earlier current LINKs.

Paul Harding had completed the London Marathon, despite developing severe cramp at 19 miles; he was disappointed that it slowed him down. He would raise well over £300. The Rickmansworth Masonic School (as it was then) had organised a sponsored walk along the Ridgeway to take place in June. Half the proceeds would be donated to the Renewal Appeal and members of St Mary's were invited to join in.

Splat the Rat was to be back at the Bury Fête by popular demand.

CALENDAR

May 2019

- 1 Wed PHILIP AND JAMES, APOSTLES**
- 2 Thu** 9.30am *Little Angels* Toddlers Group, Cloisters Hall
2.15pm *Meet for Tea* (see p 12)
- 5 SUN THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER *BCP Easter 2***
8.00am Said Holy Communion
10.00am All-age Sung Holy Communion
6.00pm Said Evening Prayer
- 6 Mon** May Day Bank Holiday
- 7 Tue** 10.00am Said Holy Communion
- 8 Wed Julian of Norwich, Spiritual Writer, c1417**
9.00am St Mary's School Start of Summer Term Service
7.45pm Housegroup (for contact, see cover)
- 9 Thu** 9.30am *Little Angels* Toddlers Group, Cloisters Hall
Copy deadline for June LINK
- 11 Sat** Ricky Week begins
2.00pm Bell Tower open to the Public (see p 10)
7.30pm Ricky Week Quiz, Church Centre (see p 11)
- 12 SUN THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER *BCP Easter 3***
8.00am Said Holy Communion
10.00am Sung Holy Communion
12.15pm Said Holy Communion
1.00pm Lunch Club
6.00pm Said Evening Prayer
7.00pm *X Team* meets
- 13 Mon** 2.00pm *Threads for Change*
2.15pm LINK Editors' meeting
3.15pm *J Club* at St Mary's School
7.45pm Meeting of the United Council, Cloisters Hall
- 14 Tue MATTHIAS, APOSTLE**
10.00am Said Holy Communion
- 15 Wed** 11.30am Collective Worship at St Mary's School
2.30pm *Teapot Club*
7.30pm Ringing chamber open (see p 10)
- 16 Thu** 9.30am *Little Angels* Toddlers Group, Cloisters Hall
- 18 Sat** 10.00am Workshop: *From Cradle to...* (see p 7)

19 SUN THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER BCP Easter 4

8.00am Said Holy Communion
10.00am Sung Holy Communion
3.30pm *Icthus Trail* Workshop (see p 8)
6.00pm Said Evening Prayer

20 Mon 2.00pm *Threads for Change*

3.15pm *J Club* at St Mary's School

21 Tue 10.00am Said Holy Communion

12.30pm Home Communion through afternoon

22 Wed 9.30am Visit to Hughenden Manor

11.30am Collective Worship at St Mary's School

23 Thu 9.30am *Little Angels* Toddlers Group, Cloisters Hall

24 Fri **John & Charles Wesley, Evangelists, Hymn Writers, 1791 & 1788**

25 Sat 7.00pm Visiting Bellringers

26 SUN THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER BCP Easter 5

8.00am Said Holy Communion
10.00am Sung Holy Communion
6.00pm Said Evening Prayer
June LINK is published

27 Mon Spring Bank Holiday

28 Tue 10.00am Said Holy Communion

12 noon 10-bell Ringing Practice (All Ringers welcome)

30 Thu ASCENSION DAY

Thy Kingdom Come begins (see p 8)

9.30am *Little Angels* Toddlers Group, Cloisters Hall

8.00pm Deanery Service, St Peter's Mill End

June

1 Sat THE VISIT OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY TO ELIZABETH

**2 SUN THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
BCP The Sunday after Ascension Day**

8.00am Said Holy Communion
10.00am All-age Sung Holy Communion
6.00pm Said Evening Prayer

Choir and Bellringers Regular Weekly Practices

Wed	7.30pm	Bellringing
Thu	7.45pm	Choir

New members welcome at both practices - just come along

What's On in Rickmansworth

Watersmeet

Film: <i>If Beale Street Could Talk</i>	Wed 1	2pm, 5pm, 8pm
Film: <i>Everybody Knows (Todos Lo Soban)</i>	Tue 7	11am, 2pm
Film: <i>On the Basis of Sex</i>	Thur 9	2pm, 5pm, 8pm
<i>Giselle</i> Vienna Festival Ballet	Fri 10	7.30pm
<i>The Ultimate Commitments and Blues Brothers Experience</i>	Sat 11	7.30pm
Legend Fight Series 3	Sun 12	12 noon-3 pm, 3.30-7.30pm
<i>All My Sons</i> NT Live	Tue 14	7pm
Film: <i>The Wife</i>	Thur 16	2pm, 7.45pm
<i>High School Musical</i> RARE Productions	Thur 23-Fri 24	7.30pm
<i>Pop Divas Live!</i> NTC Promotions	Fri 28	6pm
<i>The Jungle Book</i> Wicked and Jordan Productions	Wed 29	1.30pm, 5.30pm
<i>Sing-a-Long-a Greatest Showman</i>	Thur 30	2pm & 7pm
Film: <i>Dumbo</i>	Fri 31	11am, 2pm, 5pm, 8pm

The Arts Society, Rickmansworth

Sarratt Village Hall

Tuesday 14 May

Great lengths - on the art and architecture
of historic swimming pools and lidos

Simon Inglis

11.00am; tea and coffee from 10.30am

For further information contact Gill Gowing (777715)

Rickmansworth Evening Townswomen's Guild

St Mary's Church Centre

Thursday 16 May

7.30 for 7.45pm

The Vanishing Maidservant

Ian Keeble

Contact Suzanne Hill (772809) for further information

New members always welcome

Rickmansworth Garden

Arts and Homecrafts Society

Open Evening

Wednesday 15 May

Baking Botanically

Paul Barker

8.00pm

Mill End Baptist Church Hall, Field Way Rickmansworth WD3 7EL

Not a Lot of People Know That

The Final Straw

Bill Sylvester

The Final Straw is a small insignificant event producing a situation that is intolerable overall. It has a biblical origin and an old proverb states, 'It is the last straw that breaks the laden camel's back', which means that one small thing may bring about a catastrophe in the greater scheme of events. In the 17th and 18th centuries the expression in England used to be 'the last feather that breaks the horse's back'

but Charles Dickens rescued the old proverb in his novel *Dombey and Son* in 1848. It caught on so successfully that it is ‘last straws’ and not ‘last feathers’ we talk about today.

Information from the book *Red Herrings and White Elephants* by Albert Jack.

The Alban, Britain's First Saint Project

David Gilbert

The Alban, Britain's First Saint Project is a transformational project, designed to bring recognition to the heritage of St Albans Cathedral, which sits at the heart of a thriving local community and hosts one of the largest Cathedral congregations in the country.

Our wonderful new facilities will include:

- A **welcome centre**
- An **educational centre** for school children
- An **exhibition area**
- An **adult study centre and library**
- Additional **parish and visitor activities**
- A compelling new presentation of the **story of Alban**
- New opportunities for **volunteers**
- A **wealth of interpretive materials in the Cathedral and its grounds to support guided tours**

This project is being launched in June. It brings the story of Alban and his role in the nation's history to life, as well as highlighting the many treasures the Cathedral has to offer such as the Shrine of St Alban and the magnificent medieval wall paintings in the Nave.

In the lead up to St Alban's Day, **Saturday 22 June**, there will be a very special walking pilgrimage launched. On St Alban's Day itself, the Alban Pilgrimage puppets will take to the city's streets to tell the dramatic story of St Alban. This will be followed by a city-wide **Roman Festival** including activities and events for the whole family. Taking place in the Abbey Orchard from 12 noon-6.00pm on Saturday 22 June, the Festival will have something for everyone: Military battles and live displays by Ermine Street Guard, Medieval pilgrimage badge demonstrations by Lionheart replicas, and sculpting the

Cathedral out of clay are only a few of the exciting entertainments we have in store, alongside crafts, games, food and music!

By the Way:

Looking back at April 2019

John Shaw

Spring is here; official. And not just because Tomasz Schafernaker says so; but because the glorious cherry and other blossom (better than ever this year), not to mention tulips bursting through as the daffodils fade, prove it to be so. All this is to an accompaniment of birdsong from the tree tops each morning and evening. It's just sad that such joy should be overshadowed by the thunder clouds of Brexit and by the whirlpool of emotions which it generates (anxiety, confusion, exasperation, tedium, anger, hope - sometimes all at the same time). At the time of writing, Theresa May and Jeremy Corbyn are discussing a possible way out of the current impasse, but progress on that front seems somewhat unlikely, as neither has a reputation for creativity and flexibility. Nevertheless, I remain optimistic that sooner or later (probably later) a way will be found out of the present morass.

And in any case, all is not doom and gloom. The UK's employment rate is the highest since 1971; average earnings increased by 3.4% in the year to January; deaths from heart failure due to smoking reduced by 60% between 1989 and 2015; and, according to a UN survey, residents of the UK ended last year significantly happier than they began it and happier than the residents of Ireland, Germany, and the US.

April Fools' Day has come and gone. This year's offerings in the press included drones that are capable of taking a dog for a walk and cleaning up after it; a zip wire to be fixed to the Severn Bridge to allow travellers a 100 mph crossing between England and Wales; and Lundy Island off the North coast of Devon has declared independence. Not up to the standard of the porridge mine and spaghetti trees of yesteryear. Must try harder!

News items you may have missed this month included: Bryony Frost (aged 24) was the first woman to land a Grade One victory over jumps at the recent Cheltenham Festival; it is untrue that Ernest Hemingway won a bet about writing the most concise short story ever with , 'For sale: baby shoes, never worn'; entries for the four saddest words in the English language included 'Trump plans second term' and

'National Treasure Piers Morgan'; Kathy Clugston, BBC continuity announcer, is to succeed Eric Robson as the Chair of Gardeners' Question Time; Bob Weighon, England's oldest man at 111, has asked the Queen to drop sending him cards because of the cost involved; Kylie Minogue is to play the Legend slot at this summer's Glastonbury; and Tottenham have just opened their new White Hart Lane stadium (it has a capacity of 62,000 and cost nearly a billion pounds) by beating Crystal Palace 2-0.

Deaths in recent weeks included that of Baroness Warnock (aged 94), nick-named 'philosophical plumber to the establishment' as she headed up various Government inquiries, particularly on bioethical issues such as embryology. Her husband was Principal of Hertford College Oxford, so, when she became the Mistress of Girton College, Cambridge, it was the first time that a husband and wife were heads of an Oxford and Cambridge College at the same time. Victor Hochhauser (aged 95), the impresario famous for bringing some of Russia's greatest musical names (David Oistrakh, Rostropovich, Shostakovich) to perform in this country in the 1960s and 70s. Scott Walker (aged 76), lead singer of the Walker Brothers (*Make It Easy On Yourself* and *The Sun Ain't Gonna Shine Any More*) and subsequently a 'brooding enigma'. Peter Hurford (aged 88), who was master of music at St Albans Abbey from 1958-1978 and founder of the St Albans International Organ Festival. He once famously said, "I am a musician who plays the organ. I don't just play for organ buffs. The organ is capable of as much finesse as the violin".

A South Atlantic Adventure

Jane Pummell

Visiting the family took on a new meaning for Jim and me last August when our son was posted from Windsor to the Falkland Islands. The archipelago of about 750 islands is 8000 miles from the UK, 280 miles from the South American coast and as far from the South Pole as London is from the North.

We applied to travel as 'Indulgence Passengers' on the South Atlantic Airbridge, the twice-weekly flight that carries military personnel, civil servants and contractors as well as supplies of food, other goods and all the mail for the Islands. (Vehicles and containers of house contents for military families go by ship on a much less frequent basis.)

One day in February we took off at 1am from RAF Brize Norton in an Airbus A330 with civilian pilots and cabin crew, so we didn't sit along the sides of a troop carrier as friends had imagined! After a refuelling stop at Cape Verde off the west coast of Africa we arrived at Mount Pleasant Airport at 5pm (8pm GMT) and descended the aircraft steps to be nearly blown off our feet by the Falklands wind, a year-round weather feature. Next day our daughter-in-law showed us more of British Forces South Atlantic Islands Mount Pleasant Complex (MPC) when we went to collect our granddaughter from nursery and two grandsons from primary school which has 35-40 pupils; children come and go throughout the year as parents have new postings.

We were keen to see local flora and fauna. There are no native trees and the few distorted, introduced conifers bear witness to the power of the wind. Tussac grass found on the coast grows in clumps which can reach 3.5 metres in height and be very long lived. There are also whitegrass and low growing plants such as diddle-dee with tiny red berries; teaberries; scurvy grass; and balsam bog which looks like a soft, mossy cushion but is rock hard. They are grazed by the 500,000 or so sheep which are so important that "wind chill factor for newly-shorn sheep" is included in all radio weather forecasts.

Surprisingly our first bird sighting was a flock of house sparrows whose ancestors must have arrived on a whaling ship. The penguin is the iconic bird of the Falklands and we saw two of the five breeding species. From a cliff path high above Gypsy Cove near Port Stanley we could see magellanic penguins (near-threatened conservation status) on the beach below and we spotted their empty burrows beside the path. To reach Stanley we had a one-hour drive across bleak, rocky terrain on a potholed road with many cattle grids. The surface alternated between stretches of rough, loose gravel and harder but uneven tarmac. A 4x4 vehicle is essential and on any such trip one has to take sleeping bags and supplies in case of breakdown or bad weather.

A new experience for us was a helicopter flight to a small island nature reserve where we got close to striated caracara (a bird of prey endemic to the Falklands with near threatened conservation status), southern elephant seals and gentoo penguins.

We made several visits to a beach a few miles from MPC with a vast expanse of white sand backed by dunes covered in tussac grass. There were gentoo penguins, commerson's dolphins and a sea lion pup which came right up to us - he didn't know about the rule of keeping your

distance from wildlife! Giant kelp thrown onshore by storms provides food and shelter for small birds. We saw southern species of oystercatcher, plover, skua, gull, shag, heron and also white-rumped sandpiper that migrate from the Arctic. Of great interest were birds endemic to the Falklands or South Atlantic: the Falkland flightless steamer duck, upland goose, kelp goose and tussacbird. Inland were black-necked swan and the endemic long-tailed meadowlark with its brilliant red breast. Turkey vultures circling over MPC were a common sight and one day three perched on the roof of a neighbouring house.

Of course the ongoing development of MPC is a direct result of the 1982 Falklands War in which 255 British servicemen were killed. Our son took us to visit the big memorial in Stanley, those at Fitzroy, Goose Green and San Carlos and also the Argentinian cemetery, all of which involved travel on rough roads or tracks.

All too soon we were given notification of our return flight, but then the incoming plane had to be diverted to Montevideo because of the rotor phenomenon whereby wind rolls down from the mountains behind the airport causing problems for landing aircraft. It eventually arrived at MPC and we were able to return to Brize Norton, landing at 5am three weeks after we had left, having had the experience of a lifetime.

Some of the wildlife



Elephant seals



Gentoo Penguin



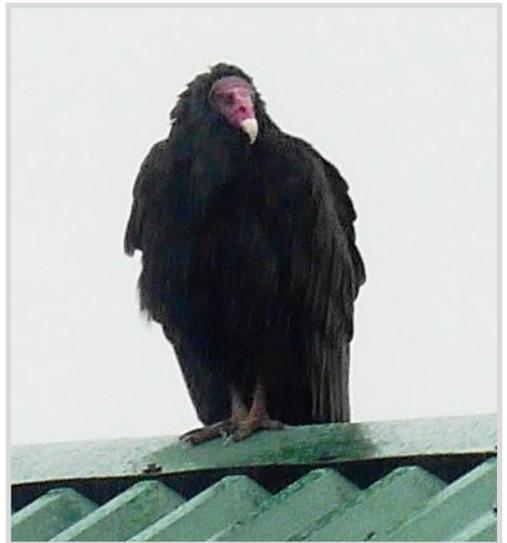
Kelp Goose



Sealion pup



Striated Caracara



Turkey Vulture

Smile

Ecumenical Outreach?

Michael Baker

A woman and her young daughter were travelling on a bus. Halfway through the journey, two nuns, formally habited in black and white, got on and sat nearby. The mother was surprised to see her little girl move nearer to the sisters and begin talking excitedly to them.

When they all alighted at the terminus the woman remarked to the nuns that she had never known her daughter to take to anyone so quickly before, and she hoped the little girl hadn't been a nuisance. The older sister put her finger to her lips with a conspiratorial smile. "She was no trouble at all," she said, "but don't say anything about it. You see, she thinks we're penguins".

Two True Newspaper Reports

From Barbara Owen's Collection

Mrs Irene Graham of Thorpe Avenue, Boscombe delighted the audience with her reminiscence of the German prisoner of war who was sent each week to do her garden. He was repatriated at the end of 1945.

She recalled: "He'd always seemed a nice friendly chap, but when the crocuses came up in the middle of our lawn in February 1946, they spelt out, 'Heil Hitler'".

Bournemouth Evening Echo

At the height of the gale, the harbourmaster radioed a coastguard and asked him to estimate the wind speed. He replied he was sorry, but he didn't have a gauge. However, if it was any help the wind had just blown his landrover off the cliff.

I Had to Smile

Geoff Hall

I had a new experience this year while delivering Church Newsletters. Michael wrote some time ago about the hazards of various types of letter-boxes but I could not get as far as the letter-boxes. Several of the flats have tradesman buttons to allow access and I used one to deliver to the flats next to St Mary's Court. However, when I reached St Mary's Court I was unable to contact the person I usually do to let

me in as she was in hospital. I contacted the warden using the entry phone and explained that I would like to deliver Church Newsletters and please could I be allowed in. His reply was, “You haven’t given me the password”. I did wonder about saying “Open Sesame” but decided I had to go on my way without delivering the newsletters.

The Lent Lunch



Our customary Lent Lunch in aid of WaterAid took place on 7 April, Passion Sunday. Tables were speedily laid after the 10am service and soup heated (a choice of warming butternut squash and thyme and/or broccoli and stilton). This and the rest of the meal were all colourful and delicious. As soon as these photos were taken, a good crowd of people sat down and enjoyed demolishing what was on offer in a convivial atmosphere. Local tradition is for a simple, but satisfying meal that perhaps will promote generosity. Grateful thanks are due to all who provided the meal; we especially enjoyed Frédéric’s French cheeses. We do not yet know by how much WaterAid will benefit; we will let you know next month.

Heaven’s Grocery Store

From Minehead Matters with thanks to Joan Martin’s sister Janet

Two members of the Minehead congregation were on a cruise of the Norwegian Fjords and during the Sunday morning Service the Captain read this poem:

I was walking down life’s highway a long time ago.
One day I saw a sign that read ‘Heaven’s Grocery Store’.
As I got a little closer, the door came open wide,
And when I came to myself, I was standing inside.

I saw a host of ANGELS. They were standing everywhere.
One handed me a basket and said, "My child, shop with care".
Everything a Christian needed was in the Grocery Store,
And all you couldn't carry, you could come back next day for more.
First I got some PATIENCE, LOVE was in the same row.
Further down was UNDERSTANDING, you need that everywhere you go.
I got a box or two of WISDOM, a bag or two of FAITH;
I couldn't miss the HOLY GHOST, for it was all over the place.
I stopped to get some STRENGTH and COURAGE to help me run the race.
By then my basket was getting full, but I remembered some GRACE.
I didn't forget SALVATION for SALVATION is free,
So I tried to get enough of that to save both you and me.
Then I started up to the counter to pay my grocery bill,
For I thought I had everything to do my MASTER'S will.
As I went up the aisle I saw PRAYER and I just had to put that in.
For I knew that when I stepped outside, I would run right into sin.
PEACE and JOY were plentiful, they were on the last shelf.
Then I said to the Angel, "Now, How much do I owe?"
He just smiled and said, "Just take them everywhere you go".
Again I said, "How much do I really owe?"
He smiled again and said
"MY CHILD, JESUS PAID YOUR BILL A LONG, LONG TIME AGO!"

Why our Church is Safe from Vandals

*Another letter from Bishop Eustace to his nephew
from Minehead Matters*

The Rectory
St James the Least

My Dear Nephew Darren,

I was sorry to hear that your church was broken into last week. Since your sound system rivals that of any concert hall and your projection equipment would put most cinemas to shame, it is not surprising that is what they had their sights on. Your bemusement that they never touched your library of recordings is less understandable. I would have thought that few thieves would have been much interested in thirteen alternative renditions of *Shine Jesus Shine* and other artistic gems.

It may have been an act of Christian Charity to put a sign outside saying “ Thieves will be forgiven”, although since they took this as an invitation to burgle your house the following evening, I hope your forgiveness still operates. You must have been greatly relieved to find that your numbers from your train spotting were untouched. They must have been so overjoyed to discover your tins of night-time cocoa that they overlooked them in their excitement.

Last year we also had unwelcome visitors. The thieves must have spent several hours breaking down the 400 year-old oak door to get in. Had they bothered to try the handle they would have discovered that we never lock the church anyway.

Since we have yet to leap forward into the nineteenth century, there was little to attract them. Had they removed the marble sarcophagi of the Earls of Lincombe, the money they may have made wouldn't even have paid for the subsequent hernia operations. Inevitably there was general outrage that the poor box had been broken into, although as far as I can remember, for many years it had contained nothing more than an old three-penny piece and a button.

For many of our congregation, this represented the End of Civilisation as we Know It. Calls were made to have a permanent armed guard on the premises and a few even speculated about the possibility of having tactical nuclear weapons and strategically placed landmines about the place. Colonel Beauchamp generously offered us his collection of man traps.

Perhaps our thieves may be forgiven for their crime, but until that three-penny piece and button are returned, it will not be forgotten.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

Croxley Great Barn

The medieval monastic barn was originally owned by the Abbey of St Albans. It is open to the public from 11am on Saturday 25 May and on the last Saturday of the month until October. Parking is available at St Joan of Arc School car park. Meet there by 10.45am for the 10-15 minute walk to the Barn.

Dave Walker Cartoon



This cartoon first appeared in *Church Times* and is reproduced with permission.

LINK

This month's cover photograph is by David Hibbert .

June dates to note

Copy deadline: Thursday 9 May

Publication date: Sunday 26 May

We are very pleased to receive contributions of interest to members of the Church and the local community. Your name should be included (we will respect requests not to publish it) and items should not be subject to copyright. Please let a member of the LINK Committee* have them by the above copy date, preferably by email at link@stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk; we can accept handwritten copy. We may have to edit for space or other reasons and tight deadlines do not always allow for discussion of changes with authors. We like good quality photographs.

Please note that opinions expressed in LINK are not necessarily those of the Editors of *LINK* or St Mary's Church.

*Please see back cover for phone numbers.

Contacts (continued)

The code for all phone numbers, unless otherwise stated, is 01923

Officers (continued)

Church Council Secretary	Buzz Coster	via Church Office
CofE Electoral Roll and Methodist Members Roll	John Glidden	223613
Methodist Council Secretary	Petra Hedges	222715
Church Giving Advisor (A)	David Gilbert	via Church Office
Treasurer	Adam Shiels	07950 262798

Worship

Altar Servers	Chris & Sue Hillier	779580
Bellringers	David Hibbert (Captain)	773735
Intercessors	The Revd Deborah Snowball	772627
Lesson Readers	June Poppleton	773388
Organist and Choirmaster	Andrew Sykes	07943 601717 07519 318049 organistsmr@gmail.com
Sacristan	David Gilbert and team	via Church Office
Sidespeople	David Hibbert	773735
Welcomers	David Carruthers	07831 387541

Christian Teaching and Prayer

Bible Reading Fellowship	Sue Hillier	779580
Exploring Prayer Group	The Revd Deborah Snowball	772627
House Groups Tues am:	Gillian Baker, Brenda Bell	775890 772482
Wed pm:	Jane Pummell	774343

Pastoral

Baptism (Christening)		via Church Office
Confirmation	The Revd Deborah Snowball	772627
Children's Communion	The Revd Deborah Snowball	772627
Home Communion		via Church Office
Home/Hospital Visiting	The Revd Deborah Snowball	772627
Wedding Bookings		via Church Office
Coffee after Church	Anne Kay	773470
Handbell Ringers	Suzanne Warren	01442 385922
Meet for Tea	Joan Martin	775433
Motley Crew (Drama Group)	Chris and Sue Hillier	779580
Sunday Lunch Club	Gill Gowing	777715 gmgowling@btopenworld.com
	Maxine Platzman	896622

Children and Young People

Children's Church Leader	Rachel Turvey	via Church Office
Sunbeams (3-5s)	Rachel Turvey	via Church Office
Shooting stars (6-11)	Christine Martin Ayling	via Church Office

The code for all phone numbers, unless otherwise stated, is 01923

Contacts (continued)

Children and Young People (continued)

X Team (Youth Group, year 7+)	David Carruthers	07831 387541
<i>Little Angels</i> : babies & toddlers, Thurs am, Cloisters Hall	Gillian Thomas	07957 749636
Girlguiding UK		
Rainbows:	Yvonne Wells	via Church Office
Brownies:	Ali Hampton	via Church Office
Guides:	Tracy Jenkins	via Church Office
Church School	St Mary's CofE Primary	776529
Headteacher:	Mrs Emma Edwards	
School website:	www.stmarys698.herts.sch.uk	

Administration

Charitable Giving Committee	Jane Earl (Chair)	711695
Community and Outreach	David Carruthers (Chair)	07831 87541
Harvest Giving	Jennett Day	237248
Safeguarding officers:	Mary Weatherilt	07593 532567
	Helen Swain	07593 532567
email:	safeguarding@stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk	
Stewardship and Finance	John Rhodes	via Church Office

Buildings and Support

Church Centre Booking	Church Office	721002
Church Centre Committee	Martyn Gowing (Chair)	777715
Church Bookings	via Church Office	
Church Cleaning	June Poppleton	773388
Cloisters Hall Bookings	Janet Carruthers	07799 050532
Cloisters Hall Committee	The Revd Deborah Snowball (Chair)	772627
Fabric & Churchyard	David Hibbert (Chair)	773735
Flowers	Hilary Pearce	896025
Library	Michael Baker	776109
Steeple Keeping	David Hibbert	773735
Threads for Change	Beryl Baker	776109

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Newsletter	c/o Communication Committee	
Website	Buzz Coster	775908

Representatives for Organisations Beyond St Mary's

Action for Children	Christine Butler	778001
CARE (07935 269144)	Jenny Woods (St Mary's Rep)	447417
The Children's Society	Suzanne Powell	via Church Office
Christian Aid	Gill & Martyn Gowing	777715
