

The Parish of Sutton
with Seaford



Comfort
and Joy

Parish Magazine

Parish News

Clergy Letter

Advent &
Christmas

Mission News

Prayer Diary



December 2020-January 2021

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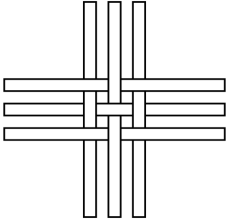
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Parish Magazine

St. Leonard's & St. Luke's Churches

December 2020-January 2021

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Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year

Christmas

Comfort
and Joy



One way or the other Christmas 2020 in our churches is going to look a little different to the pattern of services and events we have in previous years. As we prepare for publication it looks like the end of Lockdown2 will enable us to return to some congregational worship albeit with social distancing and other measures still in place. So there is hope that there can be some coming together to celebrate this Christmas season. However services and events sadly cannot take place as we have become accustomed to. There is still a degree of uncertainty but we hope that you will be able to join us either physically in church or virtually online. Details are opposite.

Unless there is a change in government rules, congregations will be unable to engage in singing during services.

Booking is Essential

eventbrite

Due to social distancing requirements at some of our busy Christmas services we are asking those that wish to attend to book seats using Eventbrite. You can do this online or via the Eventbrite app, without charge, from December 1st. Services where this is applicable are shown opposite with the symbol **e**

To access our Eventbrite page please go to www.seafordparish.org.uk and follow the link from there.



Services for Limited Numbers (subject to Government restrictions)

Amongst the many Christmas services that are planned, there are two with limited numbers. This will provide a very safe environment for those who are unable to attend services where more people may come, so there will be an upper limit of 20 to enable maximum social distancing.

Wednesday 16th December at St. Leonard's
Thursday 17th December at St. Luke's

Both services will offer communion, start at 2.30pm and will be finished by 3.30pm. If you would like to come, please contact Wendy Ogilvie (07779 248730) so that space can be reserved. Thank you to all who have been in touch already, we hope these occasions will be a blessing for many who have not yet ventured back to church because of underlying health issues.

Christmas Services

St.Luke's@7 Christmas Praise

Sunday 13th December at 7.00pm on Zoom!

Go to www.seafordparish.org.uk/online to join

Nine Lessons and Carols (shortened format)

St. Leonard's Church

Saturday 12th December at 1.00pm **e**

Sunday 20th December at 6.00pm (also live-streamed) **e**

Wednesday 23rd December at 11.00am **e**

These services will be identical, numbers are limited, reserve your seats using Eventbrite

Messy Church

Monday 21st December 10.00am to 12noon at St. Leonard's **e**

Crib Service

Tuesday 22nd December at 3.00pm online

Messy Christingle

Christmas Eve 10.00am and 3.00pm at St. Leonard's **e**

First Communion of Christmas

Christmas Eve at 11.30pm at St. Leonard's (also live-streamed) **e**

Christmas Parish Communion

Christmas Day at 10.00am at St. Leonard's (also live-streamed) **e**

Christmas Day at 10.00am at St. Luke's (booking not required)

Live-streamed and online services can be seen at www.seafordparish.org.uk

e Seats for this service can be booked free on Eventbrite










Countdown to Christmas

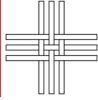
There's something very special about the Advent Sundays leading up to when Jesus was born. Join in with these activities as we prepare for and celebrate Christmas – and as we remember the Comfort and Joy that Jesus brings to us all.



Comfort and Joy

Date	What brings joy today?	Who needs comfort today?
29th Nov, the First Sunday of Advent	<p>Counting down with excitement</p> <p>Look at your Advent Calendar – just 2 days until you can open the first door! Give a jump for joy or fist bump your family at the excitement of looking forward.</p>	<p>Those who are anxious about Christmas</p> <p>Look at the floor. Some people are anxious about Christmas. Ask God to be close to them in the coming days.</p>
6th Dec, the Second Sunday of Advent	<p>Being able to give presents to others</p> <p>Christians sometimes call Jesus 'God's gift to us' – that's why we give gifts to each other at Christmas. Make a list of the people your family will give gifts to this Christmas. Thank God for each person.</p>	<p>Those worried about money</p> <p>Christmas can be expensive. Some people are worried that they do not have enough money for gifts or food. Could your family help by giving a gift to your local foodbank?</p>
13th Dec, the Third Sunday of Advent	<p>Access to water</p> <p>Count the number of taps in your home. Pour yourself a glass of water and give thanks for access to clean water for washing, cooking, drinking, and cleaning.</p>	<p>Children of the world</p> <p>Pour a glass of water. Add a teaspoon of mud to it, stir and place it in your kitchen. In some parts of the world children only have access to water like this. Each time you see your glass today, pray for agencies like Water Aid, trying to bring clean water to children across the world.</p>
20th Dec, the Fourth Sunday of Advent	<p>Health and people who care</p> <p>Draw a rainbow. Around it write the names of your local doctors, hospitals and pharmacies. Colour a heart by each one to show you are thankful for them.</p>	<p>People who are feeling sad</p> <p>Find a sticking plaster. Draw a sad face on it. Stick the plaster onto your bathroom mirror to remind you to pray for people who are sick or sad.</p>
Carol Service	<p>The gift of music</p> <p>What's your favourite Christmas Carol? Record your family singing it and send it to your wider family and friends.</p>	<p>Those who can't get to church</p> <p>Some people will be sad that they can't go to a carol service. Make a poster of your favourite carol to put in the window to cheer everyone up.</p>
Christmas Eve	<p>Everything that makes Christmas exciting</p> <p>Gather round your Christmas tree and look at the decorations. Tell each other which is your favourite and why.</p>	<p>Those who are home alone</p> <p>Do you know someone who will be home alone this Christmas? Surprise them with a phone or video call.</p>
Christmas Day	<p>The gift of God's love in Jesus</p> <p>Today we celebrate Jesus' birthday. Light a candle (safely) and sing Happy Birthday for Jesus before you open your presents. (Remember to blow the candle out!)</p>	<p>People who have no homes</p> <p>Some people don't have their own homes where they can celebrate Christmas. Pray for charities like Crisis who will provide safe space for them to eat and sleep today.</p>

Date	What brings joy today?	Who needs comfort today?
Boxing Day	<p>Those who serve us in shops, cafes, and entertainment</p> <p>Go for a walk with your family. As you pass shops and cafes, thank God for the people who serve us in them. (If there are no shops or cafes near you, think of the ones you last visited.)</p>	<p>Those who have no work to do </p> <p>Some shops and cafes have closed because of the Covid crisis. This means people no longer work there. As you pass closed shops and cafes on your walk, ask God to be close to the people who used to work in them.</p>
27th Dec, 1st Sunday of Christmas	<p>Wider family who love us, grandparents, etc </p> <p>Look at your Christmas cards. Find the ones that came from grandparents, aunts, uncles and godparents. Thank God that they love and care for you and your family.</p>	<p>Families who cannot be together</p> <p>Find a jigsaw puzzle. The pieces need to join together to complete it. Some families cannot be together this Christmas. As you put your puzzle together, ask God to be with families who have been separated during the holidays.</p>
28th Dec	<p>The children in our family </p> <p>Make a chain of paper dolls. On each doll, write the name of a family you know and all the children and adults in it. Put the dolls in a place where you can see them and thank God for the people they represent.</p>	<p>Those who are grieving for loved ones this Christmas</p> <p>Make another chain of dolls. During this year some people died, and their families are sad. As you write the names of people who have died on the dolls, talk about something you remember about each person.</p>
29th Dec	<p>Holiday time to be together</p> <p>Shout out 'Group Hug' and get everyone in your household to either have a household huddle or hug themselves tight. Thank God that you can be together at holiday time.</p>	<p>Those who are hungry </p> <p>Open your fridge or food cupboard and look at what's inside. Some people have very little food and very little money to buy more. Next time you go to the supermarket, buy some extra tins to put in their Food Bank collection.</p>
30th Dec	<p>Remembering all those journeying to find out about faith</p> <p>Some people who visited Jesus followed a star to find their way. Make or draw and decorate a large star. As you hang it on your front door or in a window pray for people who want to know more about Jesus. </p>	<p>People struggling with illness of whatever kind</p> <p>Hospitals don't close over Christmas. They carry on caring for people who are ill. Send a card to your local hospital to thank the staff who were working over the holiday.</p>
31st Dec	<p>For all the good things the past year brought to us </p> <p>Have a family huddle with your favourite hot drinks. As the drinks cool, tell each other the things you have really enjoyed in 2020.</p>	<p>Those who have found this year very difficult</p> <p>Squeezeyour hands into fists until it feels uncomfortable. 2020 was uncomfortable for some families. Slowly open your hands and ask God that 2021 would be less difficult for them.</p>
1st Jan	<p>For the good things in store this year</p> <p>Draw around your hand. Inside it write or draw the things you are looking forward to in 2021. </p>	<p>People worried about the future</p> <p>Draw around your other hand. Some people are worried about 2021. Draw hearts inside this hand and ask God to hold the people and their worries.</p>
2nd January to Epiphany	<p>That Jesus is for the whole world</p> <p>How many countries can you and your family name? Jesus came to be God's Good News for all the countries of the world. Jump for joy that Jesus is God's Good News for you too.</p>	<p>Those in the Middle East</p> <p>Jesus was born in Bethlehem and grew up in Nazareth. He came to bring peace but today there are many conflicts in that part of the world. Find the two towns on a map. Place your fingers on them and pray for the people who live there.</p>



Church Mission Society

Grace and the children have moved to Liskeard in Cornwall. The boys-William and Zephaniah-have settled into their new school. Hannah copes well with various forms of childcare throughout the week. Grace began working for St. Martin's Church in Liskeard in June.. She was working ten hours a week but since September that has increased to 30 hours a week. She loves the work. People are looking for practical support and are coming to the church to find it.

Festo has applied for a visa. Please pray that the visa is granted and that he will be able to join the family in time for Christmas.

Over recent months we have all become used to a very rapidly changing set of circumstances in all we do. Our church life has been no exception. Please do stay in touch with all the latest news.

Visit our website
www.seafordparish.org.uk

Sign up to receive the weekly news email or download one online.

Follow us on Twitter:
[@seaford_parish](https://twitter.com/seaford_parish) or
Facebook:

[@seafordparishsussex](https://www.facebook.com/seafordparishsussex)



Single Consecrated Life

My vocation to the Single Consecrated Life began over fifty years ago! I was a novice for three years living in a Convent. The nuns lived under three vows of poverty, celibacy and obedience to the Head of Community. Due to family circumstances I had to leave before taking my final vows. I sensed my vocation to respond to this call never ceased and it is only now that I am able to fulfil my vocation by taking my vow to follow a monastic way of life. For the past three years since I took my first vow my journey has been overseen by the Bishop. This lifetime vow involves a vow of celibacy, prayer through the day, living a simple uncluttered life and undertaking Pastoral Care work that I sense I am being called to. The Bishop and a Spiritual Director support individuals living this Single Consecrated life throughout their life.

If you would like to be present as I take my vow before the Bishop the service is taking place at St. Leonard's Church on February 2nd 2021 at 4pm. (restrictions permitting of course)

For more information you can visit the Single Consecrated Life website:

Singleconsecratedlife-anglican.org.uk

Every blessing, Diana Woodcock

From the Registers

Funerals: Roy Hall (91) and Gloria Powney (82).

CHRISTMAS APPEALS

Seaford Parish Women's Group

Christmas Gifts for Stopover



Festive Foodbank & Toy Appeal



Every year the Women's Group collect Christmas Gifts for Stopover, a charity set up to help young females needing a safe environment for themselves and their children. The Women's Group are already starting to collect gifts and it would be fantastic if this year more of the congregation joined us with additional items for this worthy charity. The committee are hoping to arrange a short Advent type church service in December (date to be confirmed) when they will hand over their Stopover gifts. Suggested ideas:

For the girls: Toiletries, Socks, Tights, Scarves, Hats, Jewellery, anything pretty and brand new, tins of biscuits.

For babies & children up to the age of 3 years old: clothes or toys (new)

All the donations for the girls should be Christmas wrapped; the children's gifts wrapped and labelled *child* and age. Supplies of snack bars are also welcome and should not be wrapped.

If you would like to support the annual FSW appeal any of the goods listed below can be left in St. Leonard's Church or telephone Liz Morgan-Jones (01323 890644) for collection.

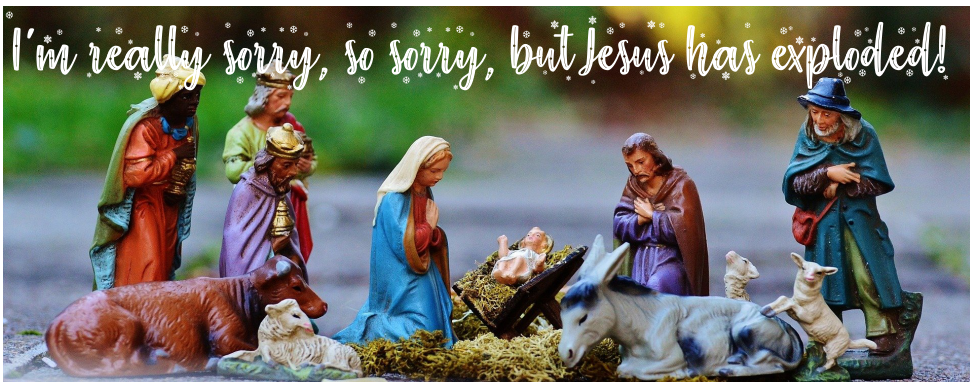
- Any toys or gift vouchers for children 10-15 years and their parents
- Festive tins of chocolates or biscuits
- Christmas puddings and mince pies
- Gravy granules, stuffing, cranberry or mint sauce
- Tinned sweetcorn, peas, carrots, fruit, custard, rice pudding, ham, corned beef
- Squash, cordial, crackers and savoury snacks
- Personal care products.

You may prefer to send a donation this year - cheques payable to 'CDAFSW' and post to, FSW, Garton House, 22 Stanford Ave, Brighton, BN1 6AA or online at www.familysupportwork.org

Comfort
and Joy



Comfort and Joy is a series of reflections from the Church of England for Advent and Christmas. For details go to www.churchofengland.org



James Hollingsworth

I have a lot of nativity sets. I bought a wooly one a few years back. Its very cuddly. I had a porcelain nativity set once that I leant to a Care Home. One morning I got this mortified apologetic phone call. The manager was beside herself. She said I'm really sorry, so sorry, but Jesus has exploded! She was in floods of tears and nervous at the vicar bellowing angrily back. I have no idea really what she expected my response to be. I roared with laughter. She said "Its not funny! Jesus is in pieces". I just kept snorting and giggling and couldn't stifle the laughter. She was getting very confused.

I managed to gather myself and say more soberly, "I think you may have just said something quite profound and prophetic". She wasn't following me at all. What had happened was my (actually really not that nice, factory produced and poorly painted) Nativity set had been put in pride of place in the hall entrance way and some curious person had wheeled their chair a bit too close and knocked the

whole table. Picture the scene in slow motion and the muffled cry of 'No!' as Jesus in his manger slowly slid off the table and onto the hard floor. Jesus literally exploded.

She was worried that I might have been precious about it. She's right though, we can get precious about things that we really shouldn't be precious about but all we actually need to do is take a deep breath, a long sigh, and a quick forgive and move on.

She was worried that I might have been offended. Doesn't she realize how important Jesus is to my faith and shouldn't she have taken proper care? I could hear the guilt welling up in her as she told me what happened. Again we can be funny and take offence where we as Christians really don't need to. Recently there was a story in the news of a man who'd climbed up on a church roof, had wrestled the crucifix down and then climbed down. The vicar chose not to interpret it as a

hate crime but as a disturbed person in need of help. Good choice.

The exploding Jesus was an accident, caused by someone wanting a closer look. It happened for all the right reasons! So I was still giggling.

But it got me thinking: Is our faith that fragile, that inflexible? When pain and sorrow and trouble comes does it cause us to cry out to God or does it shatter our faith?

And it got me thinking that actually Jesus does explode but over things that matter. I think he is angry about prejudice and exclusion, about cliques, about unforgiveness, about our attitude to global warming, to immigrants, to ... and that's why He sends us prophets.

Be an Angel.

I will be getting my Christmas tree up as early as possible and it won't go down until Lucy says for the third time, "Oh come on it really is time". I think its cheering.

Derreck and I have been looking at some books – Stephen Cottrell's Walking backwards to Christmas and Jane Williams' Art through Advent. Somewhere in this mag there should be a review of these two. You should get one and mull it over with a friend, use it as an excuse to call each other up (or, Boris willing, if we're allowed to visit each other).

The shepherds are my favourite in the nativity scene, because they are the

ones for whom the next day its back to work as normal, and nothing has changed. Jesus hasn't taught them anything amazing, they don't know the Lord's Prayer, they haven't seen Him walk on water, heal, multiply loaves and fishes. For them Boxing day, so to speak, is the same as every day. But at the same time their lives have completely changed. They have encountered God in a manger and they will never be the same again.

Last time I told you about my conversion at my confirmation. (Ideally you're supposed to be converted before your confirmation. That being said I once knew a vicar who got converted ten years after being ordained!). And while I'm on the subject of confirmation, we hope to have one on 14th February 2021 so if you'd like to know more about what that means, do get in touch with Derreck or myself.

I remember at my second prep school being annoyed by a boy who was supposed to help me find my way around the school and settle in. He was just plain mean and horrible. So I decided not to forgive him. He was too big, I couldn't fight him. It seemed to me that not forgiving him was the meanest thing I could do back to him.

On the one hand this does read as if I was an appallingly precocious teenager. Maybe. On the other hand, I have since come across so very many adults who think that this not forgiving someone is a helpful coping strategy; a way to manage the bitterness and

anger and 'Ooh wouldn't I like to get my own back on them one day, for them to feel the way I feel'. Its actually a rubbish strategy. And you know it. But still we do it, we keep this bitterness wrapped up tight as if it's a hot water bottle when its more like a clump of stinging nettles.

I couldn't forgive him. I just couldn't find the strength to do it. So I asked God to help me want to forgive the boy. And that was my first encounter with the power of God to change people, moments, situations. I prayed. I never did become friends with him, but he did cease bugging me and he was no longer a mental irritant, occupying my thoughts, I was free. It's a joy to discover that all this faith stuff, its not just true but it changes us. It was for me an epiphany.

A few years after my confirmation, I was sleeping at the boarding school I'd be sent to. I'd had a little trouble with a bully (a different one) who seemed upset that I had been promoted to some role of responsibility which he thought was his. Anyway, there I was asleep in my little room when, I kid you not, an angel woke me. Yup. An angel.

I didn't see anything, but I heard this voice saying 'Get up, sit up'. The voice just kept repeating this little mantra. Oddly I wasn't scared by this voice. Perhaps being sleepy helped. So eventually I sat up. The angel then changed his (her?) mantra to 'Sit up, stand up, sit up, stand up'. I dozily argued but eventually stood up. The

moment I stood up the door of my little room was flung open by the aforementioned bully who had nicked the fire extinguisher from the kitchen.

He was a bit surprised to see me standing there, ready and waiting to repel him. His face changed from mean to shock even horror. I have always wanted to ask him 'what did you see?'. He dropped the fire extinguisher and ran off. I put it back in the kitchen and went back to bed. It was only in the morning that I realized that I'd had an angel come and wake me up.

I'm sorry I didn't appreciate this epiphany more at the time but it had a lasting effect on me. And that bully was never a problem again. I like angels.

It might be that you've got an angel story or two to tell. Do tell. It might be that you haven't ever noticed one but I assure you that they are busy ascending and descending to heaven on their Master's business.

Next time I'll tell you something painful about my faith story. But for the next few months pray, pray to catch a glimpse of heaven at work, pray for angels to be visiting others, share your angel stories, and as far as you can try to be an angel.

With love and prayer

James



Improve your fitness at Horder Healthcare Seaford

Horder Healthcare is renowned for providing high quality musculo-skeletal healthcare services but we are also dedicated to keeping you fit and healthy to delay problems from occurring. From our clinic in Seaford we offer a range of fitness classes led by trained instructors and physiotherapists. Classes are aimed at those already suffering from muscle and joint pain in order to improve strength, balance and flexibility.

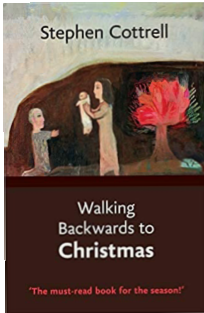
To book a class or discover the range of classes available:
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Derreck Lee-Philpot



Walking backwards to Christmas

by Stephen Cottrell (Archbishop of York)
ISBN 978-0-281-071Book47-0 (published by SPCK)

An Advent , it's all about stables, mangers, and stars isn't it, with an angel or two (or several), gifts and donkeys, shepherds and kings thrown in for good measure. Well if that's what you think of when you think of an Advent book, think again!

The premise of "Walking backward to Christmas" is to look at the Christmas story.....in reverse. Straight away you can tell this is no ordinary Advent exploration, it isn't following the well-worn path of nativity verses well-known and familiar.

This is the Advent story told through the eyes and lives of eleven witnesses, some we know and some less familiar. Each of them giving an account that is in turn incisive, uncomfortable, heart-warming, insightful, and very real. We see Anna, living with bereavement and the taunts of others exulting at seeing Jesus in the Temple, weep with Rachel in the slaughter of the innocents, live with Joseph through confusion, doubt and anger as he comes to terms with a situation he has no control over and yet grows into a deeper understanding of God. We watch with David the shepherd as he is overwhelmed by a sky exploding with praise and we join him in a sense of awe and great self-consciousness as he kneels before the announced child. We stare with Isaiah into ourselves to find hopelessness, look into the world to find darkness and despair, and then to hear a voice from heaven..... We kneel with Moses on holy ground and hear of Him who is the 'I am'. Beyond these there is the testimony of Herod, Casper, Martha, Elizabeth, and Mary.

Together these characters bring the story alive in a refreshing way, drawing us into the events through their thoughts, feelings and emotions giving us the opportunity to experience in greater depth the eternal story anew. This is no ordinary advent book, but then the story is no ordinary story.

The Art of Advent, a painting a day from Advent to Epiphany

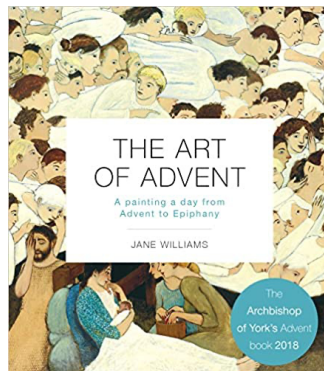
written by Jane Williams

ISBN 978-0-281-07169-2 (published by SPCK)

I was quite excited when I was handed this book a few days ago, Art! Pictures! Lovely! As I flicked through the book my anticipation rose and I couldn't wait to engage with the artwork within. Limiting myself to one painting a day as with an Advent daily reading, might be difficult!

Rightly or wrongly the words, "Preach the gospel, use words if you have to" are attributed to Francis of Assisi, I chime with the sentiment completely and it is beautifully expressed in this book.

Painting, music, all sorts of artistic endeavour can, I find, often speak volumes offering depths and heights of thought or experience which maybe words cannot always reach. By the same token, a single picture can connect with different people in different ways. Pictures depicting an artist's personal understanding of biblical themes, thoughts, meanings, and life impact have the capacity to present a 'different way of seeing', potentially helping us all to engage with God and ourselves differently.



'The Art of Advent' depicts paintings ancient and modern, different artists, different times, different places, different styles, different views. Each day there are some thoughts and an explanation about a particular painting and artist, concluding each is a reflection, a point for possible discussion and a suggested prayer.

I like this book for Advent because for me and hopefully for others it has the potential to present a different way of seeing the Advent story.

Now...when can I start?

About the author: Dr Jane Williams is Assistant Dean and Lecturer in Systematic Theology at St Mellitus College of which she is a founder member. She has written several other books including, 'Why did Jesus have to die?' (2016) and 'Faces of Christ' (2011).



Stephanie Baker and Mary Hawes

For a while now St Leonard's and St Luke's Mothers Union along with other local organisations have been involved in setting up a new charity in the town called SeaFriends whose aim is to combat social isolation and loneliness. We are now a registered charity and four of our MU members are trustees. The Covid pandemic has magnified the problem and changed the ways we were planning to start but start we have. Here is a report from our development manager Mary Hawes on our progress so far.

2020 has indeed been an unusual year with uncertainty and restrictions affecting all our lives but the one good thing that has emerged is the community spirit and willingness to help others we have in Seaford. At the start of the year SeaFriends came together to provide a befriending service for the

town and the timing couldn't have been more apt with a rise in people reporting they feel lonely and isolated. Not just older people but younger ones too. In the last seven months SeaFriends has gone from strength to strength and now has almost 30 volunteers offering regular friendly chats to anyone who feels they would like to connect. We have had some great friendships born from the matches with some real life changing stories coming through. Not having someone to share your stories with, reminisce or just have a laugh with is tough and it affects both our mental and physical health. 4.2 million people report feeling lonely or isolated some or most of the time, this is up from 2.6 million before Covid.

Christmas this year is going to be especially tough for those who are



alone, many will not be able to see family or friends due to restrictions. Here in Seaford we pull together and there are usually many Christmas meals put on for those who will be alone but this year Covid has put a stop to these. SeaFriends have decided to try and bring a little festive cheer to our service users and let them know that someone is thinking of them and does care. The children at Anney School are busy decorating bags that we are going to fill with festive goodies and drop off to our service users, currently we are stocking for 30 festive parcels. If you feel that you may want to contribute to the parcels, however small we

would be very grateful for items or small donations to enable us to make sure Christmas comes to as many people as possible in Seaford. Please contact Stephanie Baker on 893082, or SeaFriends on 01323 914689, hello@seafriends.org.uk or via our website at www.seafriends.co.uk.

We would love to hear from you too if you would like to volunteer with us or feel you, a friend or family member would benefit from a regular friendly call or you just fancy a chat to find out more about what we do.

Wishing you all a peaceful and joyous Christmas and New Year.

Communications News... St. Leonard's Sound & Vision

Many of you will be aware that the sound and vision systems in St. Leonard's are showing their age, becoming increasingly un-reliable and working at the edge of their capability. Over recent months, as we have started to livestream services, sadly, there have been occasions when the technology was not able to cope and we were unable to send a clear and audible sound signal over the livestream. We do send our apologies for that. However we have now acquired a new mixing desk which has made a significant difference to the sound in church and on the livestream. The tech' team are delighted with the improvements and hope that this has made a real difference for those joining us online. It certainly has improved the sound in church!

We are working on a scheme to continue the improvements to the sound and also to the vision system. You may have noticed that the central projector is very dim and needs replacing having been in use since just after church was re-ordered. As you can imagine these replacements and improvements come at no small cost (we are looking at tens of thousands for a complete upgrade) and whilst we do have some funding from the Dollin legacy this will not enable all the work to be completed. If you feel able to make a contribution please send this to Stephen Gauntlett or place your donation in an envelope marked Sound and Vision Appeal and drop it in jar in St. Leonard's. If you can gift aid your donation please do so. Thank you for your support and for the notes of encouragement that we have received.

Malcolm Anderson



Our background

For 20 years, Lewes District Churches HOMELINK has been helping people into housing. It has now over 400 local tenants who are benefitting from its interest-free loans repayable in easy stages. These loans, averaging £1500, pay for all or part of the amount needed to obtain rented accommodation. Trustees come from all Churches as part of Churches Together in the District. HOMELINK works with the Housing Department of LDC who refer the majority of our applicants to us for whom they have no statutory liability.

The current situation

In spite of Covid, we expect to house 100 tenants this year costing £150,000 mostly paid by loan repayments. Pippa our Service manager has to deal with interviews by phone and obtaining IDs by email which has meant a lot more work and responsibility has fallen on her shoulders. Nevertheless we have had some very heart-warming tributes and I include two of the shorter ones:-

'I am so grateful for your help. At the time myself and my son were facing homelessness due to the property I was renting being sold. Financially I

was struggling and you were there to help us without any problems whatsoever. We are truly so thankful for your help and understanding at our time of need. We wish you all well.' ST

'Thank you for everything - without HOMELINK'S help I would be completely lost and my kids would not now have the essential space they need. As a single mum with limited resources you and HOMELINK have been a ray of hope and light for us a little family just trying to get a safe home set up around us. Your charity is truly a godsend, and from the bottom of my and my babies' hearts we thank you.' TB

#homes4families

On World Homeless Day (October 10th.) HOMELINK launched #homes4families – a new fundraising and awareness campaign to future-proof the support given to local parents and children affected by homelessness.

Since the Coronavirus pandemic started, HOMELINK has seen a concerning increase in applications for loans to help local families into housing, with relationship breakdown, mental health issues, domestic

violence and the loss of employment all factors that have led people to need support.

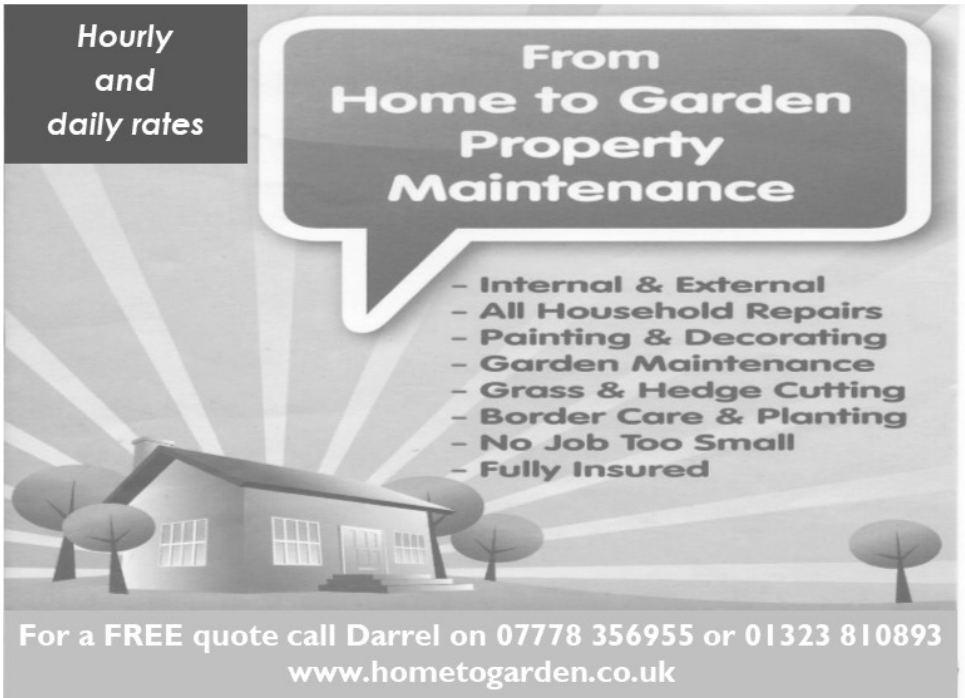
HOMELINK's Development Officer, Georgina Clare, on: 07903 729 106.

Prayer

#homes4families has a target of raising £10k a year to help parents and children affected by homelessness into housing. HOMELINK welcomes one-off Christmas gifts or the set-up of regular monthly donations which can all be made via our website www.leweshomelink.org.uk. You can also keep in touch with #homes4families events planned for 2021 and other HOMELINK news by subscribing to their newsletter. For more information or any queries regarding #homes4families contact

Thank God that we have been able to continue to help people and have the finance to do so. Please pray for Pippa's health and strength and for the admin team who work with her. Please pray for the success of the #homes4families Campaign.

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Over the past month or so we have had some fantastic fun. Unfortunately we decided to cancel the planned holiday club, due to the rise in infection rates as we came closer to a second lock down. However, instead we ran 3 Messy Church events in October Half Term which turned out to have a brilliant turn out with 2 of the 3 days completely fully booked and people on the waiting list. We had 45 children who came with 32 adults across the week, with many coming back for a second day.

It was brilliant to see kids and families just enjoying themselves in a Covid-safe environment.

A huge thank you to all of the volunteers who came along to help with these services, who were able to make sure that we stuck to the Covid-19 guidance.

The idea had always been to make use of October half term to launch a

children's group. So as we worked our way forward with these plans, the youth group had been set a challenge over the summer. That challenge was to come up with a set of three names which would work together for three different age ranges, ages 4-8, ages 8-11 and ages 11-18. So they all needed to be able to have a form of connection to one another. The names which have been selected to be the names of the groups are: Kindles (for ages 4-8), Sparks (for ages 8-11) and Ignite (for ages 11-18).



After the Messy Church Services, we launched our brand-new children's group. To start off with we are combining the children's groups into one to make it easier to get running. Therefore, the group is called Sparks and is for those aged 4-11.

At the same time as the launch of Sparks we changed the name of the youth group from Lamsjenga to Ignite. We follow a Scripture Union programme called Rooted, asking young people to look into themselves and find out what they think and feel about God.

As we plan for Christmas we will be having Messy Church services once again with laughter, fun, crafts and a few different wacky dances and maybe a visit from the Watt Family in some new dramas.

Whilst there are areas which are going well, I ask you to pray for the children and young people in Seaford. This is a challenging time where different messages are coming from Government all of the time. It can be hard for adults to keep up to date with the messages (mixed or otherwise). However children and young people like to and need to have a degree of



certainty and like to know what is going to happen. When their friendships and usual activities are hard to maintain outside of school, they too can feel the isolation of being stuck at home. We are still running Sparks and Ignite online, but my fear is they will still feel the impact of the measures which we need to take.

So over this time of Christmas, when at present we don't know what might happen, I ask that you pray for the children, young people and their families. Especially for those who are going through hardship and feeling the pressures of getting the best presents, food or drinks they can. Help them to remember it's not just a time for presents, but a time to be together and remember what God has done for us and the people he has put around us.





Hazel Bramley brings news about the Shoebox Appeal 2020

This Year

David and I start each appeal with a few hundred leaflets and a few empty boxes. We never know how many filled shoe boxes we will receive at the end of the appeal, but we are always amazed at the generosity of people in our churches and surrounding area.

There are many demands placed on us all and this year has been no exception, with Covid and lockdowns. We have taken 45 shoe boxes, 30 Family and 15 Elderly, plus numerous blankets, scarves, gloves, hats and teddies.

In addition we had monetary donations towards transport costs, filling shoeboxes and items to add into very light boxes. Unfortunately, due to changes in custom regulations, it is not possible to send knitted garments for children under the age of 3 years, garments larger than 20" chest are accepted.

So, what can we do for next year?

Maybe start collecting small items each month towards the 2021 Appeal. In January collect warm items such as hats, gloves and scarves. In February maybe heat and light such as candles and holders, hot water bottles, torches, socks and tights.

Does anyone have any DK or 4 ply yarn they no longer use. We have a group of people who work throughout the year, but they would appreciate some



yarn if you are able to help them. Contact me for more info.

Pray for the recipients and their families, the deliverers, the supporters and staff at Link to Hope Worthing. Their building is no longer useable and they need to vacate. They have new premises, but this needs a lot of work. Pray that they get the help needed from businesses and volunteers to make this possible.



Many, many thanks for your generosity.

For more information go to www.linktohope.co.uk or contact Hazel Bramley on 01323 892883.

With a Song in Our Heart

Nicola Schmidt

Do you ever sing out loud at home? We may absentmindedly hum along to a tune every now and again, but how many of us consciously sing?

One Sunday, years ago, a neighbour said to me, 'I heard you singing this morning.' Before I could reply, she continued, 'It's OK, I didn't mind, I was just surprised that's all' But it hadn't been me, I told her. I didn't sing. Until this last Remembrance Sunday... Here in lockdown, with no service in Church or gathering at the memorial, I settled in front of the screen. I started the day with the Church of England service at the Royal Military Chapel and hummed through 'O valiant hearts' and 'Now thank we all our God'.

After the service I switched to the TV and watched the service at the Cenotaph, moved by The Pipes and Drums of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards playing 'The Skye Boat Song' and at that very moment, I remembered my late father singing. His voice had been clear and rich and tender as he sang 'The Naval Hymn' during that Remembrance Sunday of 1968. It was the first time I had seen him cry, but he'd squeezed my hand and carried on singing beautifully to the end. It had been heartfelt.

I had decided to keep our St Leonards service till the evening. When our choir started singing, 'Eternal Father' I found myself off the sofa and on my feet and singing out loud! It was croaky and it was hoarse and it made me cry, but it filled me with joy too. It felt natural; like breathing. Since then, I have read much about song in prayer and prayer in song. So maybe we might all try a song out loud at home to fill our hearts.



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December-January Prayer Diary

This prayer diary offers a focus for our personal and corporate prayers and may be incorporated into our own Prayer and Bible Study times. The first section for each month focuses on our Mission partners followed by a topic for each day.

"Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. Matthew 18: 19

Pray for Missions Partners during December

Caring and Sharing

- For Ian and Simea Meldrum – My Father’s House and for further development of the farm.
- For the 11 boys who have found new families in late adoptions this year.
- Bishop Flavio appointed to lead Living Waters Church.

Church Army

- For all Church Army Evangelists across the country especially those working with children, young people and families in the NE and NW of England like Martin Jos.
- For the Centres of Mission we support as a parish in Hackney - Stephen Plumb and Andrena Palmer; and in Southampton - Tim and Cathy Hyde and Ruth Hills.
- For the Marylebone Project in London working with women who are homeless and the difficulties which confront women during this second Lockdown.

Mothers’ Union

- For MU members Family, friends and loved ones as they pray and speak clearly against domestic abuse in a world where the vulnerable strive to be heard.
- For women who are victims of trafficking as domestic or sex workers.
- For transformation of our societies which often find it easier to judge the victims of violence than to solve the problems of injustice.

Daily Prayer in December

1. For our Churchwardens, Fred and Lisa (Churchwardens), Stephen (Treasurer) and the PCC as they make decisions regarding the parish.
2. Safety for those who work with others, concentration and productivity for those working at home.
3. Clergy and members of churches in Seaford as they come to grips with the challenges of presenting the Christmas message in our present day.

4. Government ministers and officials negotiating possible post-Brexit trade deals.
5. People coping with poverty and where the pandemic brings excess hardship.
6. For continuing revelation of God's vision for us as a church and as individuals, and the will to put it into practice.
7. Those living in Church Lane, Church Street, South Street, Broad Street, Place Lane, Clinton Place, Clinton Lane, Blatchington Road and Richmond Terrace.
8. Teachers, students and governors of the diocesan church schools.
9. The Prime Minister, Cabinet and Members of Parliament – for wisdom and integrity.
10. Courage and fortitude for those who daily face the risk of persecution and hardship for their faith.
11. The children, families and young people in the parish. Also for Stefan, Alice and the volunteers who minister to them.
12. Local tradespeople and businesses struggling to recover after a 2nd lockdown.
13. Churches in the Diocese of Chichester reaching out to their communities during Advent and Christmas.
14. NHS, ambulance and care services for protection, wisdom, resilience and fortitude.
15. World and its future in the light of environmental and climate change. Our response.
16. Tots and their families unable to meet at present – success in coping with isolation and maintaining friendships.
17. All living in Saxon Lane, Blatchington Hill, Sutton Park Road, Avondale Road and Warwick Road.
18. All watching the Christmas services either online or in person that Emmanuel, God with us, will be made known.
19. Wisdom and integrity for our government, local MPs and councils.
20. Families who, because of travel restrictions, face separation, especially grandparents, that they will know peace and comfort.
21. For the elderly and those living alone who are facing Christmas by themselves.
22. For children and adults where home is a place of fear, anxiety, insecurity or material poverty. For those who offer refuge & support to rebuild lives.
23. Chaplains in hospitals and hospices in the diocese offering support and comfort.
24. For military services, police, fire and rescue and emergency health services who provide "business as usual" over Christmas season and their families.
25. As we greet the Prince of Peace, pray for those living in places of war and unrest.
26. Bless James and Lucy, Derreck and Corrinne, Stefan and Alice with rest and relaxation.
27. All living in High Street, Crouch Lane, Crooked Lane, East Street, West Street and Green Lane.
28. The ministers, leaders and members of St Thomas More Church and King's Church.

29. Headteachers, teachers and students – for rest and recovery ahead of the new term.
30. Give thanks for the Queen and her many years of service and Christian witness.
31. Give thanks for God’s faithfulness, provision and loving care this year.

Pray for Mission Partners during January

LAMA Ministries

Due to Covid restrictions - no school, no travel & not accepting referrals from Social Services. There are just 2 girls in their care. They have had to let some staff go. Doing renovations the roof of the building.

- Pray for Sam to find work.
- For the boys who went home in June, we stay in touch via facebook – Jo, Ji and K are working and with their fathers, pray they can manage to continue school from home. I (and his sister) are with Granma and studying from home
- For V, R and JL who are not in a good home situation.
- Give thanks for keeping everyone safe.

Church Mission Society (Grace & Festo Kanungha & family)

- For the family as they settle into life in Cornwall, where Grace & Festo will be working with St. Martin’s Church, Liskeard
- For Grace and the children who have moved into a house in Liskeard.
- For Festo that his spouse’s visa will come through quickly and easily so that they can be together as a family again.

Daily Prayer in January

1. As we begin 2021, let us commit – ourselves, our hopes, dreams and fears, one another, our Parish, Seaford and the UK to the care of our Heavenly Father.
2. For those living in care and nursing Homes and those who care for them – for peace and security.
3. Those who are unemployed and for those whose job future is uncertain - hope.
4. Archdeacon Martin and our Rural Dean for guidance as they advise, support and encourage clergy.
5. United States of America for peace in the lead up to the inauguration of the new President on 20th January 2021.
6. Good stewardship of all our resources, human and material, especially in these times of economic difficulty.
7. For the leaders and members of Seaford Community Church and Redeemed Christian Church of God in Seaford.
8. Students returning to university for wisdom, safety and protection from harm.

9. Bless shopworkers, refuse and recycling operatives and all key workers who continue to provide essential services during lockdown.
10. The hospitality and airline industry globally facing economic challenges and uncertainty.
11. Homegroup leaders as they meet with their group 'online' or by phone for opportunities to encourage and build one another up in faith.
12. All living in Dane Road, Dane Close, West View, Pelham Road, West Street, Chatham Place and Richmond Road.
13. Parishes awaiting a vicar and for those who do not have regular clergy.
14. The Chancellor of the Exchequer and advisers - wisdom in responding to our economic situation and planning for the future.
15. For the widows and orphans and all who grieve loved ones from the pandemic around the world.
16. That as a parish, this year we will grow numerically and in love & spiritual depth.
17. The judicial system and police for wisdom and integrity in a changing world.
18. Ministers and all who worship at Chyngton Methodist Church and the Clinton Centre.
19. Health professionals working in GP surgeries, community centres and hospitals.
20. Victims of trafficking, slavery and exploitation that they will know freedom and justice this year.
21. Damien and ordinands in training for God's guidance, provision and enabling.
22. All living in Barcombe Close, Barcombe Avenue, Steyning Road, Steyning Close, Findon Close, Lindfield Avenue, Ladycross Close and Rodmell Road.
23. Rev. Arwen Folkes and all at St Peter's, Blatchington and St Andrew's, Bishopstone.
24. For clinical commissioning groups, hospital managers and boards as they respond to healthcare demands and make plans for the future.
25. Pray for the ongoing situation in the Middle East where communities live in fear of bombing.
26. Office staff, cleaners, vergers and all working behind the scenes to ensure the smooth running of the parish.
27. For Seahaven Storehouse, Citizens Advice Bureaus, Christians Against Poverty and other initiatives helping those in need.
28. Archbishops of Canterbury and York. Bishops Martin, Ruth and Will as they lead Chichester Diocese.
29. Opportunities for the Church to show Christ's love each day to all we meet.
30. For those in the developing world struggling to keep safe and feed their families during the pandemic and in the months to come.
31. For those in the parish who are ill, awaiting hospital appointments, test results, treatment and operations. For those who care for them at home.

Next edition of the Prayer Diary in the Feb/March magazine, at the back of both churches or download from www.seafordparish.org.uk

A Labour of Love

Back in August, we asked if anyone would like to help knit 5 Nativity sets for the Care Homes where we normally take services, we felt this would be a tangible reminder of the Christmas Story for the residents. Hazel Bramley graciously agreed to be the technical advisor for this venture and the photo shows the results. Incredible isn't it? Nine people did the knitting doing mostly five times each character; to start with we hoped we could manage just 5 Marys, 5 Josephs and 5 Baby Jesus but look at the sets! Each figure is 27cm (10.5") tall, the sheep are 18 cm (7") long and the donkeys are 25cm (9.5") long, it's all double knitting yarn. We have borrowed a set in the past to show some residents in one of our Care Homes and, although short-term memory may not be good, it reminded those who used to knit just how special this knitting is. Importantly, it is a visual aid to Luke 2.

Each set will be 'quarantined' for a week and one each will then go to Nova House, Freshford Cottage, Westerleigh Nursing Home, Burdyke Lodge and Seaford Head Retirement Home. Would you join us in praying that they will be a blessing to each home and I suspect they will eventually be packed away with the Christmas trees etc and will come out again year after year.

Thank you all so much; for the nine who knitted with such skill, to Hazel for her help every step of the way. Most of all, thank you for your prayers; we may not be able to visit the residents this year but the Christmas Story will be evident to all.

From the Pastoral Care Team and those who faithfully take the Care Home Services under normal conditions.





Lewes, Seaford and District Branch



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Charlie Grimble

This turbulent year has tested our faith, our resourcefulness, and also demonstrated in new ways the amazing grace of God, in the way our homegroup leaders have responded to the needs of those in their charge. Not everyone has the latest computer with built-in camera, and the rules created for our own protection have varied with the ebb and flow of the pandemic amongst us. The chief feature of COVID-19 apart from its serious and sadly, fatal impact on our community, is to create a distance between us that is often hard to bear, and which can discourage if left without a response.

I have spoken to every homegroup leader and have been so heartened by the way they have taken steps to find safe ways to reduce that sense of isolation. These steps have been part of a much wider response from the St Leonard's & St Luke's team to all sections of our Seaford family, which shows that just like the old Sussex saying goes in relation to the pandemic, 'we won't be druv'!!

A common thread with all homegroups is the sustenance of

contact, in various ways; by phone, by visits when allowed, by shopping trips to provide food and other essentials to the housebound. I even found a case where one member of a homegroup had some gardening done for them!! I hasten to add that that is not a general offer!

Four homegroups have embraced ZOOM technology, and therefore restored a form of face-to-face contact and interaction. This has enabled Bible studies to continue. My homegroup also got onto WhatsApp really early and last week I had to delete all the posts, as they had filled up my mobile phone and almost stopped it working. I deleted over 900 posts dating back to March! Now my phone works again. WhatsApp has been a great source of contact for prayer requests, as well as corny jokes to lift the spirits.

I will give a more detailed update in the next magazine, with more stories of inventiveness from our team of homegroup leaders, and also a vision for how we can move forward with homegroups after the pandemic has passed.



Caring & Sharing East Sussex

Ian and Simea Meldrum

Thank you for your prayers & for your faithful support over many years

This year My Father's House was faced with new and immediate challenges.

Brazil has been facing an enormous number of Coronavirus death and new cases. We had a local lockdown, and most companies were forced to close, so many jobs were quickly lost, and families were faced with a daily fight to obtain the basic needs for survival.

In addition to the social and economic problems caused by coronavirus, recently the heavy winter rains began, and many poverty areas of Brazil aren't prepared, so some of the families supported by My Father's House, have been harmed, with their houses being flooded.

Please keep praying with us for those families who lost their jobs and for those who have their houses or goods destroyed by the flood, and for My Father's House, that God shows His new plans for them.

Please pray:

- For protection for My Father's House team as they continue to do what is possible to help the worst affected families.
- For former boys from My Father's House, and for those people who lost their jobs during this difficult time.
- For those families who lost their homes and goods by the heavy rain in Pernambuco, Brazil.

Distributing Food Parcels

My Father's House have been creating and distributing basic food parcels to those most in need in the community it serves. The project works with children from fifty families that are registered with them, and each family has received a weekly food parcel... That's a lot of food!



Health Education

Some sessions of basic health and care have also been implemented, with an explanation about the spread of the virus and how to keep the safe distance and the use of masks.



Cooking classes

To help people who lost their jobs, My Father's House started small groups, for cooking classes, where the people can learn how to produce pizzas, small pies, etc., and how to sell it and have some income.



Activities for Children

The activities in the group were suspended, but they have been encouraged to take part in remote activities in their place, including competitions drawing biblical events for the youngest and for the older ones, writing skill about the bible.

My Father's House Team

During this time, My Father's House team have learned new skills as well as using the time for much-needed repairs to the organisation's buildings.



The Football Team has a new look!

Twenty-four football kits arrived with shirts, shorts and socks. When group activities can be resumed, the children will be able to play with new uniforms showing them as the My Father's House football team.



As thunder rumbles in the background I sit down to share news with you from the last 3 months. Thunderstorms continue to roll through Juba in the afternoons, but now maybe 2-3 times a week rather than everyday. This brings with it water for the soil, however also has left areas of South Sudan heavily affected by flooding. You will see in one of my pictures below a swollen river that has engulfed the local thatched huts, Thukel's, around Akobo. There are many areas affected yearly by this flooding. The economy has been struggling. The south Sudanese pound went from 340ssp to 1 US dollar, up to 600 for 1 in about 6 weeks. This means the regular person on the street is left with less money to buy more expensive goods.

For the last few weeks I have been seeing the floods from the air, buying



the goods from the shops. However I am largely unaffected by it. It can be so hard to understand what struggles people are going through. Especially in this pandemic time we are learning about isolation and not being in control.

This only leaves us with the option to trust in God, to lean not on our own understanding, and to submit to His ways. I pray that is something I can learn through all the struggles around me.

For a month from the end of August I was so grateful to get out of Juba for a break back to UK, with half of my time in quarantine I was able to spend a bit of time resting. Having been in Juba since the start of January I was feeling a bit worn out, despite still enjoying myself and being grateful for being busy with essential flights. Breathing in fresh air, smelling the sea, going for long walks in green fields. These are a few of my favourite things! It may not be obvious but I can't get most of that in Juba. We don't get to leave the confines of the city, there isn't anywhere to escape to for a long weekend. Being back with family was so refreshing, the reunion was uplifting and I returned to Juba safely amongst the current difficulties of travel.

As I approached Maluakon airstrip in the northwest of South Sudan, I wondered what my sole passenger was heading up to this remote part of the country for. We had stopped at Mvolo and Tonj on the way up delivering 450kg of solar radios to each of the destinations. These are radios distributed by every village. They are pre-programmed to various christian



radio stations that play christian worship, story telling, preaching and the gospel. John had a long day travelling with me. As we waited for his contact he told me that he was a missionary pastor in Nairobi. He had heard about a pastor training conference going on here, and that he knew he needed to help however he could. John was going to be running discipleship training for a week along with local missionaries in the area. When his contact arrived on a motorbike, he told me that 1000 pastors had arrived for the training. Some had travelled for up to 2 days to be there! They had expected nearly 900, but obviously more had heard about it and wanted to be part of the programme.

<https://www.maf-uk.org/staff/gill-daniel>

Please Pray:

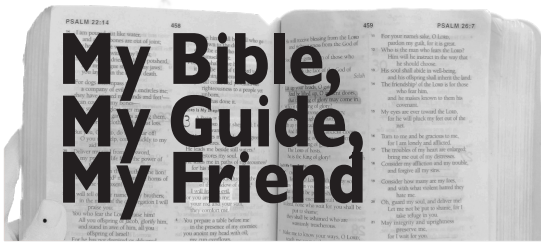
- We have been at about 3-4 pilots in programme since March, we hope to be back up to 7 by mid November. Pray the people out of country can get back in safely.
- For people trying to regroup in the flooded areas and the humanitarian response.
- For the Kenya MAF programme as it goes through a review process.

Praise God For:

- Continued serving of MAF here in South Sudan, we have a new full time Operations manager and deputy country director to help the team!
- For the privilege to visit family and be refreshed in that time.
- His grace in South Sudan during the pandemic.

I continue to be grateful for your prayerful and financial support, more so than ever! Often I will feel the desire to not be a burden, and completely understand if people were not able to contribute financially, however I have been amazed and humbled that my individual supporters have not stopped. Your generosity is a reminder to me of God's goodness and grace, and shows the beauty of the church working together.





With thanks to Pam Hill for sending this in following 'Bible Sunday', we took the liberty of a little research to find another verse...

The author is still a mystery!

Though the cover is worn,
and the pages are torn,
and though places bear traces of tears
Yet more precious than gold
is this book, worn and old,
that can shelter and settle my fears.

When I prayerfully look
in this precious old book
as my eyes scan the pages I see,
many tokens of love
from the Father above
who is nearest and dearest to me.

This old Book is my guide,
'tis a friend by my side,
it will lighten and brighten my way;
And each promise I find
soothes and gladdens the mind,
as I read it and heed it today.

To this Book I will cling,
of its worth I will sing,
though great losses and crosses be
mine;
for I cannot despair,
though surrounded by care,
while possessing this blessing Divine.

Newsflash, Covid-19 is not all bad.

Below are a few reasons why Covid-19 is not all bad.

- Many of the congregation have started talking to others, and, learnt their names!
- Friendships have blossomed, and parishioners have prayed more, not just for their own families, but for the Parish as a whole.
- We got a new Vicar, in the shortest time that has ever been seen in our Diocese! We all pray that that one does not backfire on us. So far so good. ☺
- When this strange period of time is over, we can delight in thinking of all the really clean hands we shall be able to shake, during the sharing of peace.
- Those of us 'Key Workers' that carried on as normal from day one, had no problem getting out of side roads, nor of finding parking spaces where we needed them. Who said driving was not enjoyable any more?
- We could breathe the purer air, and the sky was a lovely shade of blue. What a delight it was too, pre mask wearing of course.
- Shoppers never got in the slowest queue. There was only the one!
- We all found out who our neighbours were, on Thursdays at 8.00pm. Yes I admit, there may have been a few downsides there.
- We got to discover the most popular books in the country, and wondered why it had been decided, that a bookshelf was the obligatory video background.
- Shock news! We can survive without TV soaps, although hand soaps are a necessity. More importantly, it stopped everyone using the word Brexit each day.

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Baptism in the Sea

Charlie Christie

Though I know that Bryn was entirely eager and happy to be baptised, I cannot speak for him and his journey, so I shall tell you a little about mine.

Since I was a little girl I have prayed and spoken to God. Not within the walls of a church, but whenever I felt the pull – wherever that may be. When I started my role as Parish Administrator in November of 2014, I had no idea of how much of an impact it would have on my life. Three months after starting, my beloved Mum died unexpectedly. My first instinct was to telephone my new boss – Paul Owen. He was by my side in Brighton within the hour and from that moment, my faith began to grow. While my world was turned upside down in the tornado of grief and shock that followed, I know with absolute certainty, that if it had not been for the love of God that was shown in abundance through the support of the parish, I would never have made it through to the other side.

So, my journey began and eventually I plucked up the courage to do the Christianity Explored course that Derreck was running. The course took me through questions that I didn't think I could ask, through doubts and uncertainties and ultimately allowed me to accept my faith as a Christian, though I still didn't get baptised or even go to church very often. Time passed.

Fast forward nearly six years and along came our new vicar, James. While filing one day at the vicarage, we came to talking about the course that I had

done and how I wanted for Bryn and I to be baptised. Just chatting. A little later James asked "Do you swim?". I thought it an odd question, but answered that yes I do, but I'm not a strong swimmer. Again, just chat. Another ten minutes later James asks "How do you fancy a sea baptism?". Well, anyone who knows me knows that I'm up for a challenge and that I like to add a little flair to any occasion. We began to plan. Godparents, time (it would have to be soon if we wanted to go for it this year), Covid risk assessments and so on. It was finally happening, we were going to be baptised together, Mama bear and her cub.

It started out as a beautiful day, a day lovely enough to dip a toe perhaps even in the ocean. I had taken my puppy out for a walk along the beach after lunch and all looked calm, the sun was shining. I called the school to let them know that Bryn was needed out promptly as we had a ceremony to attend. He ran down the school hill, into the waiting car where we had a bag of essentials for what was about to take place (swim trunks for Bryn & our sea shoes). The weather had started to turn, the temperature had dropped considerably and the sky was darkening. When we arrived at the beach, I was completely overwhelmed by what we were met with. I could feel tears in my eyes and I just wanted to hug you all, but I couldn't.

So, we waited for James the Vicar. And we waited... with each passing minute, the sea became rougher, the wind

picked up and the skies turned darker. There were whispers of “Should we call him?” “Are we in the right place?” “Maybe the weather is too bad and it’s been called off”, when he appeared, walking up the beach. When he reached us, he looked at me with uncertainty and asked whether I wanted to go ahead considering the now very rough and cold conditions. I smiled and said, “Let’s go for it!”. So we did.

As we stood on the shore for the first part of the service, the wind whipped up around us and threatened the laminated service sheets in our hands, shouting our promises over the sound of the crashing waves. We then took our first tentative steps into the ocean and felt our feet freeze, I gripped Bryn’s hand as we buried our feet in the stones for anchorage. The moments that followed were intense and a little scary. We felt the full force of the waves as they hurtled over us, sending us onto our behinds (that’s one dunk), getting up only to be walloped again (that’s two) and again (we’ll count that as the third). When that part was over, we all waded out of the sea and quickly wrapped up in the waiting towels for the final prayers. I didn’t feel cold at all, neither did Bryn. The sheer emotion, and without doubt God’s love kept us warm until the service had ended – to huge applause. It was completely and utterly overwhelming. With tears in my eyes and Bryn asking for the hot chocolate from the flask, we said our hurried goodbyes (nobody wanted to hang around) and went home to get dry. On the way home the heavens opened – irony? Or maybe something else?



Once home and changed I reflected on what had just come to pass, I felt elated, but I also felt strange – different somehow.

On our first Sunday service after the Friday baptism, we received our candles and certificates, and gifts of bibles from the Mothers’ Union and Stefan. What I didn’t expect, was the outpouring of love, support and well wishes that flooded us in the form of messages on the luggage tags that were left on the seats in church. More tears and more overwhelming emotions, I am truly humbled. How very fortunate we are to have been welcomed so enthusiastically to this wonderful family.

Thus, I would like to thank you – all of you - for your truly-endless kindness, love and support. I could not have started this journey without you. With special thanks to those in the water – Stefan and of course James the Vicar (cheers for the post-baptism Twix bars!).



Dear Friends

Thank you so much for your support during this awful time.

We have closed the boys home and have not accepted any referrals - we have only had one anyway. Restrictions have not lifted here except briefly in June, when our Social Worker was able to accompany our remaining boys home to family. We are so thankful it worked out this way for us - particularly because of my (Lesley) health issues in the past. I am doing fine, we all are - but have been very careful.

We have had to let some of our staff go. Please pray for Sam who needs work.



The boys/young men are doing OK - keep them in prayer please:

- Ivan and his sister Jitel are with Grandma and doing home-schooling. Ivan will graduate high school next year, he is 18.
- Kevin is with his father and brothers, working together, he

seems to be doing OK. As soon as restrictions are lifted we hope to travel to Manila to visit him...whenever that might be, no end in sight!

- Jimo is working and taking care of his father - who suffers from depression.
- Joshua has been working but now wants to finish high school (all school, this year, is now via home learning by modules).
- Michael and Jose are both working and living with their Uncle. Thank God for all these answers to prayer for them.
- We have 2 girls, Nicole and Nikka, pray God will also make a way for them to be re-united with relatives.

We have been able to renovate both our own house and LAMA House, a lot of work has been done. We are fixing the roof. Pray for Arnold, Judy and Erwin who work so hard - and have done since we were putting up the building in 1990!

Due to Covid19 we are not allowed to travel at all except to buy groceries or medicine. It has been that way since March. So, we are not able to do very much at all. We always wear a mask and a face shield when we leave the

house and fill out a contact tracing form in every shop. Also have not been allowed to attend church since March or any gatherings.

There are very few cases in Bauang where we live, more in San Fernando, where Michael and Jeli live. They are no longer renting their own place as there were several positive cases near their new home and children are not going to school, they had only recently moved to be nearer the school! Rain and Riley now study online, it's not easy!



So back to our homestead!

Baby Nathalie is doing well, but Jeli needs prayer as she will need another operation in December due to fibroids. We are thankful for the Lord's provision and protection every day - and I always think of those believers who have always been in lockdown in persecuted countries. I would encourage you to pray for the persecuted church during this time. Widen your prayer life, encompass the whole church!

I recently did a recording for a church in Cornwall as I should have been there in person in September. Trying to do more of the online church.

What a blessing that has been, thousands more people are 'attending' online church. I also watch the St Leonard's & St Luke's online posts on Facebook. "Keep up the good work" as Dad would say!

Love to you all

Lesley, Peter, Ana and Simon, Michael, Jeli, Rain, Nathalie.



Lesley's heart was broken at 22 by the hopelessness in the faces of little children struggling to survive extreme poverty in the Philippines. This book tells their stories, and through them the story of God's amazing ways as Lesley established a charity; Life And More Abundant Ministries and built LAMA House, a residential home for abandoned, neglected children.

Free Copies of Have a Little Faith are now available. Donations will go direct to the work of LAMA Ministries. Please ask Esther or Ethel Keenan. Tel: 0782800556

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Whatever Happened to Holly Berries?



Back in the 1950s/60s we were still decorating the family home in Chelsfield with basic decorations- paper chains, green and red raffia cords, a bit of mistletoe and the all-essential holly sprigs, which of course had to have berries! If any local trees had survived the birds, or more likely the Travellers, the only way to get berried holly was to set off into Sussex.

My father's favourite county was always East Sussex and the Downs, so early December we would trundle down via Ide Hill towards Ashdown Forest area. A favourite spot was found to be a roadside old sandstone quarry approaching Hartfield. You could park anywhere in the 50's so Dad would pull off on to the verge in his Austin Seven and we would drop into this overgrown pit and collect several bunches. These would then be draped behind pictures,

mirrors and over doorways. It would last well into few days after 25th as the house was cold apart from the rooms with a fire in.

Mum never seemed to be too concerned about red stains on the wallpaper as the berries dried out! For the past 10 years at least, the birds seem to strip the garden trees bare, well before December, despite the milder winters. Dad still has a huge tree in his garden that was laden until 2 weeks ago, when every single one was eaten.

We still try to get one small piece to go with our "Real" tree. Here in Seaford our solitary young female tree has just had its three berries eaten. Hey Ho! Is this perhaps why so many people have *The Holly and the Ivy* as their favourite carol?

Philip Lane.

Hark the Sound of Christmas

This Christmas Carol was written by Philip Lane in 2014

*Hark! The sound of Christmas ring-a-ling
Hear the bells and heed their call
Oh! What wonders it is bringing-in
Heralds Peace for one and all.*

Star so bright that shepherds followed it
Then came kings, with gifts did bear,
Heaven made it but God borrowed it
Used its light to guide them there.

What they found was unbelievable
Lying on a bed of straw
We now find it quite remarkable
'Twas the Christchild that they saw.

Every year we have festivities
Every year that Story told
Of that birth—the rest is history
Saviour of this troubled World.

Poetry Corner

Praise the Lord for sea and sky
For the beauty seen with the eye
Autumn colours of red, brown and gold,
Such a sight to behold.

Each sky of blue
The stars twinkling bright,
Noon and night aglow,
Fluffy clouds white as snow.

Sun with its golden ray
Bringing joy to any day.
Thank you Lord for our world so grand,
Created by Thy powerful hand.

Linda S Parsons

The Black Cloud

Lift the black cloud from my mood, as the one up in the sky,
The one I cannot move myself no matter how I try,
From Behind the sun shines fingers of heavenly golden light,
Its rays streak across my face stroking my cheeks with delight.

The Lord caught my attention so I would see it thus,
For he moves in my life, often quietly with little fuss,
And I am grateful for such a sight for my eyes to behold,
To have seen a glimpse of God's love is more than even gold.

Bob Rice



Paul Hill

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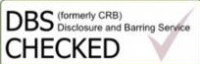
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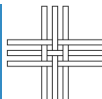
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Calendar and Lectionary



December

Saturday 5th	4.00pm	Messy Church	St. Leonard's
	9.30am	Parish Communion	Both churches*
Sunday 6th	11.15am	Worship	Livestream
	7.00pm	St. Luke's@7	On Zoom
Wednesday 9th	11.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	St. Leonard's
Saturday 12th	1.00pm	Nine Lessons and Carols	St. Leonard's
	9.30am	Parish Communion	Both churches*
Sunday 13th	11.15am	Worship	Livestream
	7.00pm	St. Luke's@7: Christmas Praise	On Zoom
Wednesday 16th	2.30pm	Communion (restricted numbers)	St. Leonard's
	9.30am	Parish Communion	Both churches*
Sunday 20th	11.15am	Worship	Livestream
	6.00pm	Nine Lessons and Carols	St. Leonard's*
	7.00pm	St. Luke's@7	On Zoom
Monday 21st	10.00am	Messy Church	St. Leonard's
Tuesday 22nd	3.00pm	Crib Service	St. Luke's
	10.00am	Messy Christingle	St. Leonard's
Christmas Eve	3.00pm	Messy Christingle	St. Leonard's
	11.30pm	Holy Communion	St. Leonard's*
Christmas Day	10.00am	Parish Communion	Both churches*
Sunday 27th	9.30am	Holy Communion	Both churches

Lectionary for December

6th December: Second Sunday of Advent

Reading: Isaiah 40:1-11*

Gospel: Mark 1:1-8*

13th December Third Sunday of Advent

Reading: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11*

Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28

20th December Fourth Sunday of Advent

Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16*

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38*

24th December: First Communion

Reading: Isaiah 62.6-12* , Titus 3.4-7*

Gospel: Luke 2.1-20

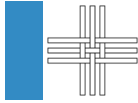
25th December: Christmas Day

Gospel: Luke 2:1-20*

27th December: First Sunday of Christmas

Reading: Galatians 4:4-7*

Gospel: Luke 15:21*



Calendar and Lectionary

January

Sunday 3rd	9.30am	Holy Communion	Both churches*
	11.15am	Worship	Livestream
	7.00pm	St. Luke's@7	On Zoom
Saturday 9th	4.00pm	Messy Church	St. Leonard's
Sunday 10th	9.30am	Parish Communion	Both churches*
	11.15am	Worship	Livestream
	7.00pm	St. Luke's@7	On Zoom
Wednesday 13th	11.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	St. Leonard's
	9.30am	Parish Communion	Both churches*
Sunday 17th	11.15am	Worship	Livestream
	7.00pm	St. Luke's@7	On Zoom
	9.30am	Parish Communion	Both churches*
Sunday 24th	11.15am	Worship	Livestream
	7.00pm	St. Luke's@7	On Zoom
	9.30am	Parish Communion	Both churches*
Sunday 31st	11.15am	Worship	Livestream
	7.00pm	St. Luke's@7	On Zoom

All communion services are said and will be taken in one kind.

*Also live-streamed and can be seen at www.seafordparish.org.uk/online

Parish Magazine

Items for the February-March edition of the Magazine are most welcome and should be sent to magazine@seafordparish.org.uk by Tuesday 19th January 2021.

Lectionary for January

3rd January: Epiphany

Reading: Ephesians 3:1-12*

Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12*

10th January: Baptism of Christ

Reading: Acts 19:1-7*

Gospel: Mark 1:4-11*

17th January: Second Sunday of Epiphany

Reading: Revelation 5:1-10*

Gospel: John 1:43-51

24th January: Conversion of Paul

Reading: Acts 9:1-22*

Gospel: Matthew 19:27-30*

31st January: Presentation of Christ in the Temple - Candlemas

Reading: Malachi 3:1-5*

Gospel: Luke 2:22-40*

* Denotes standard Year B Lectionary readings.

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Christmas Cartoons



How much.... "FARTHER, CHRISTMAS?"

Phil



With thanks to Philip Lane

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Rev. Derreck Lee-Philpot	01323 893391	dlp@seafordparish.org.uk
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