

Parish News

St Mary the Virgin, Saffron Walden
St John, Little Walden and St James, Swards End

Part of Saffron Walden &
Villages Team Ministry

November 2019

FREE

Cycling with David

It won't be long before David leaves us and I thought I'd reflect on our cycling escapades together over the last 4 years or so and take the opportunity to write a little about our Irish trip in June during David's sabbatical.



Our cycling became especially serious when we both committed (many thought we should be) to cycling from Lands End to John O'Groats for the Building Project in 2016. Since then we've cycled coast to coast across England through the Lake District across the Pennines to Tynemouth, cycled right around London mostly outside of the M25, climbed Leith Hill and Box Hill in Surrey and this summer we cycled up the west coast of Ireland.

Four of us cycled from Mizen Head to Malin Head, which are the most south westerly and north westerly points respectively in the Republic of Ireland, starting on Friday 21st June. The night before we stayed within 10 miles of Mizen Head at a little place called Goleen. Goleen is not much bigger than Swards End and definitely not as big as Ashdon but had 3 bars all selling excellent Guinness (so we were told.....).

The weather was excellent overall but we had heavy rain when cycling through Galway on our third day. Arriving at our B&B for the night, we were quite wet and were greeted by the landlady who with emphasis stated 'NONE of those wet cycling clothes are going inside my house.' We glanced at each other, all thinking exactly the same thing, and started slowly to remove our cycling shoes, dripping wet socks, water-proof jackets and helmets. Once we had done this we were told 'that's fine you can go in now'! Phew.....!

We reached Malin Head on Thursday 27th June in brilliant sunshine cheered on by our support drivers who included Judith. Little did we know before we got to the final 100 yards that they would be the steepest of the whole ride (about 1 in 6) but we made it without dismounting and celebrated with chilled champagne and chocolate cake. It was once more a very enjoyable trip (about 510 miles and 20,000 feet of climbing in 7 days) with superb scenery all the way and first class company. It has been a great privilege to share some wonderful experiences cycling with David. All of the trips have been enriched by him being such a good team player and looking out for others all of the time and most especially by his sense of humour and fun. Thank you David, chapeau!

Steve Hasler

Thank you to everyone who sponsored me on the Prudential 100 ride through London and the Surrey Hills, which I completed on 4th August. With your help, I raised just over £3,100 for Alzheimer's Society and the Society raised over £413,000 from all of their cyclists that day. A truly fabulous result. Chapeau (hats off) to you too. Steve Hasler

Contents for November 2019

THE RECTOR'S LETTER	5
NOTICEBOARD	
Church Calendar	18
From the Registers	23
The Christmas Fair	34
REPORTS	
Harvest Festival at St Mary's Church	21
St Mary's Book Group	27
Mothers' Union Report	31
Music News	32
Heritage Open Day	33
FEATURES	
Cycling with David	2
Charles Cowper reflects	6
Remembrance Sunday	9
White Poppies	11
Taking Action on Climate Change	13-15
From Forest School to Forest Church	17
You in the Pew	20
Prayer for the month	21
Gelio	22
God in the Arts	23
The Class of '39	25
Graham & Jenny Cottam	29
Archive Group: November 1939	30
Gardening Notes	31

PARISH NEWS EDITORIAL DEADLINE

The deadline for contributions for each issue is the 2nd Sunday of the month. Hence, the deadline for the **December-January** issue is **Sunday 10th November**.

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The Rector's Letter

Dear Friends,

My final Sunday is 24th November and my final service is at 10 am. Then in that following week I move to Birmingham. This is, therefore, my final magazine letter.

Having to write my last words reminds me of some of the funny things famous people have said on their death beds. The most amusing is probably Oscar Wilde's, 'This wallpaper and I are fighting a duel to the death. Either it goes or I do.' Spike Milligan, the comedian, put on his gravestone, 'I told you I was ill.' I want to round off by talking about the final phrase of each of my preceding letters over 11 years 'with love.'



In our culture, the various uses of 'love' and its overuse have devalued its currency and made its definition rather loose. If we turn to the Bible, the thirteenth chapter of the Paul's first letter to the church in Corinth is a hymn to love and the middle section gives us a description of love.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or restless; it does not rejoice in wrong doing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.

The supreme symbol of love is the Cross of Christ. Here in the crucified, stretched-out body, we see that Jesus Christ holds nothing back but gives everything, even life itself, for us. This death shows us the height, breadth and depth of God's love. When we gaze at the Cross, we hear God's response to the question, 'How much does God love me?' His answer is 'This much.' Isaac Watts put it beautifully in one of my favourite hymns, *Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.*

However, I remember the story of how Truth went down to the market place to instruct people but despite his best efforts nobody paid much attention. He came home and put on his best robe called Story and went back. This time, everyone wanted to listen and when he went to leave, plead for more. Truth is best heard and understood in a story. Therefore, I want to end with the story of love, known as the parable of the prodigal son or the parable of the waiting father. This is love defined in a narrative. Rather looking at the whole story, I want to narrow our focus on a short phrase that has always spoken powerfully to me of God's love. You will remember how the younger son goes away to a distant

land. After many days of revelry, he runs out of money. Then a famine strikes the land. Poor and hungry, he ends up working on a pig farm and is about to eat the swill, when he decides to head home to plead with his father to give him a job as a servant in the family home. He begins the journey back. Then we come to the phrase that tells us that his father has been longing for his return. We can imagine him scanning the horizon every day, aching to see his son. The Father is waiting. These words packed with emotion tell us that the bonds of love are not strained by geographical distance. 'When he was still far off...'

With love
David

DAVID'S FAREWELL: There is to be a Barn Dance at Great Chesterford Community Centre on **Saturday 23rd November** at 7.00pm. There will be a sign-up sheet at the back of St Mary's church, SW. If you attend one of our village churches you are welcome, but please let Dawn know if you wish to come as this will help with catering. There is also a card to sign at the back of church. If you wish to donate to a present for David, please hand to the wardens or parish office. On David's final Sunday, **24th November**, we will have drinks and nibbles after the 10.00am service. *Gill and Denis*

Charles Cowper reflects on his time in the Parish

Dear brothers and sisters,

Now settled in at Ridley Hall in Cambridge after a very busy summer and before my studies begin in earnest, I'd like to share my reflections of my year with you all. I had very few expectations when arriving in Saffron Walden of what God had in store for me that year. I had a letter which had the agreement David and I had reached as to what my role would be within the church; I had met Graeme and Sue Walker twice to get to know them before moving in; and I had visited a few times to explore the town.

The biggest surprise for me was my enjoyment of being part of the Tinies' team. Given that my mum had run a church baby and toddler music group nearly all my life, I suppose it was a part that I had suppressed somewhat. Under Alison, however, I was thrown into the world of infant



discipleship which I had not been a part of since I was that age myself. Throughout my life my faith had grown more and more complex as I encountered new and different traditions, read more of the Scriptures and learnt of more facets of theology and I now realise how necessary it was for me to be plunged back into the simple faith and discipleship of a child. It did not take very long before Christ's teaching that: 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven' reverberated around my head each Tuesday afternoon.

Working alongside Matt was a fantastic experience. It was such a joy to be working alongside him in the gospel, sharing our faith with and discipling young people in Saffron Walden. I am especially thankful for those who came to the Youth Bible Study which started in January, where we were able to contemplate Luke, Daniel and the Petrine Epistles together. I learnt a lot from Matt, and indeed Nic, and I hope that it'll stick with me in the years to come.

Being part of the home group which met in Graeme and Sue's house was a real privilege. We contemplated, discussed, and prayed through Henri Nowen's *The Return of the Prodigal Son* and the Book of Revelation. I found our meetings a wonderful time to ground myself spiritually and learn a lot from older and more experienced Christians than myself. I am also especially grateful for my meetings with Andy which helped me through my discernment process and guided me in theological reflection.

I am privileged to count myself among the many blessed people who receive such generous and warm hospitality from Graeme and Sue. I found their home to be a place of such prayerful support and eager encouragement, as well as a place of wise counsel when things became difficult. I am glad to count them as friends for life and am confident in the knowledge of the constant prayer and support. I sincerely thank them for hosting me.

My special thanks go to David for his time, his wisdom, and his guidance. From our first meeting, he continued to be a tremendous inspiration, and I will continue to pray for him and the parish in your discernment process. In addition, I thank Rachel; Oli, Bron and the choir; and Dennis and Gill for all their support, guidance and company in my time in Saffron Walden.

There are so many experiences that I haven't had space to touch on, and people I haven't had space to thank. I am not far away, in Cambridge now and hope to visit shortly. If anyone would like to get in contact in the meanwhile then I'm sure Dawn will be able to provide my contact details.

Peace be with you all,

Charles



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Remembrance Sunday this year is on Sunday 10th of November

The Sunday nearest to the Armistice Day anniversary of 11th November 1918.

On this day 'We will Remember Them'.

Since the earliest time mankind has remembered those they knew or loved who have died. Be they a prominent person or a loved one.

As man became civilised, and worked collectively, group gatherings were held to recall those who have died. Egyptian, Greek and Roman histories, particularly, include many such gatherings, especially on return of an army, when those who have failed to return were remembered. History is full of military and civic parades through towns and cities, to remember the dead.

The First World War, 'the war to end all wars', ended at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month of 1918 when an Armistice was declared. The original 1918 Lutyens wood and plaster Cenotaph for Armistice Day in London was replaced in 1920 by the present permanent structure of his same design. Many towns and villages set up their own memorials to remember their dead.

From a Christian point of view one cannot imagine the earlier disciples and followers of Jesus Christ not remembering the anniversary of the Crucifixion. Henceforth, Good Friday has been remembered. Anniversaries of Saints, with particular days, has added to the religious concept of remembering the life of others as an example to us all.

War, in the sense of military conflict, has taken place somewhere throughout the world since the end of the Second World War in 1945. A British soldier, sailor or airman has been killed in action every year since 1945, except 1968 and 2016. The majority we have never heard of and never will. They were killed doing their duty for others. Field Marshal Montgomery declared that we fought to bring Freedom and Justice. Thereby, setting the stage for God's Peace and Love to grow in the World.

Today, we not only remember those killed in action but we recall all those who died, contributing to Freedom and Justice, whether in the sea, on land or in the air, whether in some far off land or at home in their own towns and countries.

Joe Hordern



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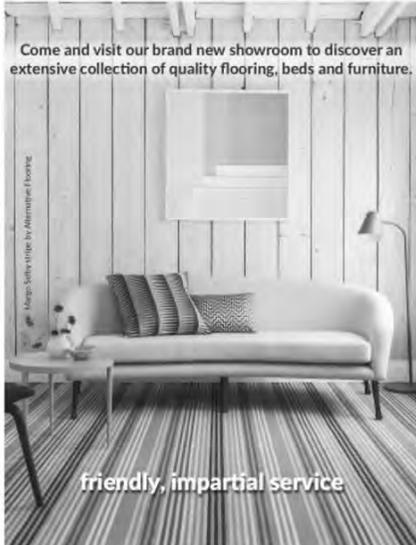
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White Poppies - Actively Seeking and Praying for Peace

More than 1 million British Military died as a result of World Wars I and II and over 70k British Civilians lost their lives, mostly in WWII. Of course, we must also think of the millions of others in the world who have died as a result of wars and of those who continue to give their lives in the name of World Peace.

Since WWII over 8,000 people of the UK Armed Forces have died in conflict and 10,000 injured as casualties of war. The Royal British Legion directly supports the UK Armed Forces Community.

We wear our Red Poppy as a symbol of Remembrance and Respect for all those who have gone before us in conflict. The Royal British Legion states - it has no objection to any other colour of poppy and some of their volunteers wear them side by side.

In 2003 UNICEF and the European Council stated that since 1990 nearly 4 million people have died in wars and that 90% of them were civilians, including children – mostly due to the changed technologies in fighting.

As Christians we pray and strive for mutual understanding, reconciliation and peace in the name of Christ. In our services we offer one another a sign of Peace and as we leave our services we go out into the world with the prayer and blessing that peace may be amongst us and remain with us always.

To wear a white poppy with your red poppy shows that you will not forget what has gone before and that you are actively seeking and praying for peace in the world. The white poppy has been worn as a symbol of Peace for 85 years.

Please feel free to collect yours free from the back of the church at Family Communion on Sunday 3rd and 9.30am on Sunday 10th November.

In Peace,
Diana Hoy



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Taking action to change climate change

Here is an extract from Bishop of Chelmsford's recent letter about climate change sent to all clergy and PCC Secretaries. Further information listed in the letter appears on page 15.

Dear friends in Christ,

Two years ago, when I visited our partner diocese of Marsabit in Kenya, it had not rained for 18 months. Bishop Qampicha drove me across the diocese... We passed dried up rivers where I saw an elephant digging for water with its trunk... I visited villages where the water hole had been empty for months. We went to a reservoir where many people gathered with their animals, but I was told there was only enough water left for another two months. People were travelling vast distances to come to it. Fighting regularly broke out, fuelling already anxious and volatile tribal tensions. We came across nomadic people who had abandoned the lifestyle of centuries to settle by the edge of the one tarmac road... They showed us the skeletons of their animals that had died. They now spent their days by the side of the road waiting for the little aid that was available to fill their containers with water. I was witnessing a whole way of life disappearing, and with it, violence was escalating: scarcity of water was the reason.

Everywhere we went children hailed us as we drove by. At first I thought they were just pleased to see us... Then I saw they were shaking upturned plastic bottles... They knew we had water on board and they were very thirsty. Most painful of all, I saw some children drinking water from what appeared to me to be a dirty, stagnant and semi-polluted brook. I dread to think what manner of diseases that water contained. But if you are thirsty you will drink whatever is available.

Kenya used to measure the year by the seasons of short and long rains. But what was once predictable is now erratic. Drought is followed by flood. And uncertainty breeds further uncertainty. A whole region is thirsting. But it isn't just Kenya. Our whole world is facing a climate emergency. Our faith tells us the world was created by God and that as part of that creation we have responsibility for it. Scientists tell us that we need to make large changes fast to avoid catastrophic threats to the conditions that support life on earth. Images of the fires destroying the Amazon have brought the immense damage being done to our world into sharp focus. The actions of young people and Greta Thunberg have spoken truth into the situation and challenged us about our way of living.

Christians across our diocese are engaged in seeking to prayerfully respond to climate change. Our faith is a response to the good news of the gospel. This good news invites us to live lives that proclaim that truth. ...please join me in asking God to guide and inspire us to find the courage to live and act differently that we may be good stewards of the earth.

The Rt Revd Stephen Cottrell

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Taking action on climate change

In his letter Bishop Stephen listed events that were going during October but he also included these websites which you may wish to visit: -

Christian Aid (www.christianaid.org.uk) which fights poverty and works to change the structures and systems that favour the rich and powerful over the poor and marginalised.

A Rocha (<https://arocha.org.uk>) is a Christian charity working for the protection and restoration of the natural world.

Christian Climate Action (<https://christianclimateaction.org>) is a charity that has worked for many years to raise awareness of climate change and support Christians in thinking about their response. Bishop Stephen writes, 'We recognise that not everyone in our diocese will be comfortable with public protests albeit non-violent, peaceful protest. It is worth noting however, that there is a long history of Christians taking a public stand for matters of faith and justice.'

Faith Climate Action Week (<https://www.faithclimateactionweek.org>) a charity which has written the following prayer for our use:

We Hold the Earth

We hold brothers and sisters who suffer from storms and droughts intensified by climate change. We hold all species that suffer. We hold world leaders delegated to make decisions for life. We pray that the web of life may be mended through courageous actions to limit carbon emissions. We pray for right actions for adaptation and mitigation to help our already suffering earth community. We pray that love and wisdom might inspire my actions and our actions as communities. . . so that we may, with integrity, look into the eyes of brothers and sisters and all beings and truthfully say, we are doing our part to care for them and the future of the children. May love transform us and our world with new steps toward life.

Why not write an article for *Parish News*?

We are a vibrant, thinking, Christian Community in the heart of the town and the magazine should reflect this and encourage interest in what's going on here. So we need a good balance of reports on past and forthcoming events, plus feature articles, both sacred and secular. Any topic of interest to you that is informative, encouraging or amusing, would be most welcome.

Handwritten or typed articles can be left at the Parish Office, St Mary's Churchyard, CB10 1JP Emailed articles should be sent to: office@stmaryssaffronwalden.org

The copy deadline for each issue is the second Sunday of the month prior to publication.

Please be aware that 400 words fits comfortably onto an A5 page and that any article over 800 words will need to be edited to ensure readability.

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From Forest School to Forest Church

One of my earliest memories of feeling close to God was as a six-year-old, lying on my back in a park, surrounded by tall oak trees that were silhouetted black against a moody evening sky. Their strength and grandeur made me connect to God in a way that I had never felt in my church or Sunday school lessons. This feeling of being closer to God in the outdoors has never left me.

It is little wonder then that I am at my happiest when I'm outside and that a large part of my working life is spent outside, with children in Forest School.

Forest School was an initiative inspired by Danish kindergartens where children as young as 2 or 3 years old spend all their time in the outdoors, whatever the weather! In this country Forest School has been around in various forms for over 20 years. Today the term Forest School equates to an accredited course, which teaches an ethos about leading children to nature and allowing them to learn, take risks and explore with minimum input from adults.

It may seem a big leap from letting children loose in nature to holding a Church service in forest, but that is just what we have done at St John's. The concept of a service in the forest is very new and there are not many examples of churches locally or indeed nationally that are doing it. We have had two services to date with a third planned. Whilst the format is still being developed, we know that we want the services to be God centred, informal, inclusive and interactive. How we deliver this may change according to the weather and the natural resources that are available.

To give you an idea of what you can expect, our next service will be focussing on the verse from Isaiah 64.8

Yet you, LORD, are our Father.
We are the clay, you are the potter;
we are all the work of your hand.

At the forest we will welcome everyone around the campfire, some people bring chairs for comfort, then we move into the forest to hear God's word. Following this everyone will be invited to take part in an activity to help them think about how God wants to shape them. The congregation will be called back to the circle to share what they have made and any thoughts they have. There will then follow a time of quiet with everyone finding a space in the forest where they can be quiet and invite God into their hearts. The service finishes with a shared prayer and then refreshments around the fire.

It sounds very simple and it is! The service gives people a chance to be still and come closer to God in the beautiful environment that he created. I pray that we are at the beginning of a new and lasting way of worshipping in nature.

Helen Nash



Calendar for November 2019

See also *The Grapevine* for the latest information

St Mary's, Saffron Walden

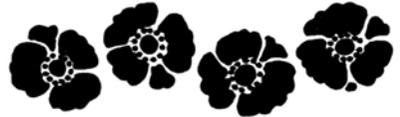
Sunday services

Sunday 3 November (All Saints/All Souls)

- 8.00am Holy Communion (1662)
- 10.00am Parish Communion
- 12.00 Holy Baptism
- 4.00pm All Souls Service
- 6.30pm H₂H Youth Led Service

Sunday 10 November (Remembrance Sunday)

- 8.00am Holy Communion (1662)
- 9.30am Parish Communion
- 11.00am British Legion Remembrance Sunday Service
- 4.00pm Words & Music + Compline



Sunday 17 November (2nd Sunday before Advent)

- 8.00am Holy Communion (1662)
- 10.00am Family Service + Baptism
- 11.45am Holy Communion
- 3.00pm Coffee, Cakes and Company (Parish Rooms)
- 4.00pm Evening Communion (with Wholeness & Healing)

Sunday 24 November (Christ the King)

- 8.00am Holy Communion (1662)
- 10.00am Parish Communion (David Tomlinson's last service)
- 4.00pm Evensong (said)

Weekday services

Morning Prayer

- 8.00am: every Wednesday
- 8.30am: every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday
- 9.00am: every Saturday (*not 30th Nov when it will be Holy Communion at 8am*)

Evening Prayer

- 5.00pm: every Tuesday

Holy Communion

- 9.30am: every Wednesday

St Mary's Tinies (*in Church*)

2.00pm every Tuesday during term time

Festivals this month

Saturday 30 November (*Andrew the Apostle*)

8.00am Holy Communion



St James', Swards End

Sunday 3 November (*All Saints/All Souls*)

4.00pm All Souls Service

Sunday 10 November

3.00pm Remembrance Sunday Service

St John's, Little Walden

Sunday 3 November

11.15am Family Service

Saturday 9th November

10.45am Remembrance Service

Sunday 17 November

11.15am Holy Communion



Lay Funeral Minister

Judith Hasler has been authorised by Bishop Stephen as one of the first Lay Funeral Ministers in the Diocese. She was commissioned on 12th October, along with three others in a Service of Celebration of Lay Ministry at Chelmsford Cathedral. Judith will take funerals within the Saffron Walden team ministry, alongside the clergy, licensed lay ministers and readers in the team.

YOU in the PEW interviewed by Chris Bishop

Tim Game

Tim was born in Harlow and was brought up in Epping Green. He went to Epping Forest College and from there to Loughborough University where he studied Electronic and Electrical Engineering graduating in 1999.

As a young man one thing he wanted to do was backpacking, so off he went overland across Southern Africa, then onto Australia ending up in America where he 'found' Karen in Washington DC. He first met her in a Youth Hostel. Not having the right crockery to make tea with, he used a lunch box to boil water, one which happened to belong to Karen! It was there that their story began.



Karen was from Kansas, courting was done by mail and they met up again when she came to Cambridge for a Summer School, but back she went to Kansas. Tim admits that because flights were so expensive a marriage proposal was a better idea. Faith was also an important ingredient in their decision to get married, and so on May 4th 2002, they were married in a little 'tin shed' church in Kansas.

Back in England, after a day trip looking around, they decided to settle in Saffron Walden. Originally, they lived in Debden Road but with a growing family they needed to move, so Peal Road met their needs.

An important link with St Mary's was made one day when Tim, having a problem with the plumbing, managed to disconnect the water for all the nearby houses. The Rector at the time, Duncan Green, happened to be on hand to help save the day with some valuable practical support.

They both enjoy being in Saffron Walden and they and their children; Eleanor, Peter, Isaac, Matilda and John, are all very much involved in the life of the church. Tim has been a Server for a good number of years and as well as being in charge of looking after the church gutters he also chairs St Mary's support for the Cambridge based homeless charity Jimmy's.

As two committed active Christians I asked them whether they had a kind of motto. 'Faith with perseverance' was suggested or would 'just keep going' be just as apt, they suggested?

Harvest Festival at St Mary's Church



St Mary's Church celebrated Harvest Festival at a special family service on Sunday 15th September. Members of St Mary's Church Guides and Brownies attended the service and the church junior choir led the singing of traditional and contemporary harvest hymns. An emphasis of the service was the story of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, looking for a lost sheep and included the curate, Rev'd Rachel Prior, leading children on a 'sheep hunt' around the church. The message was that we should help others to know God's love. The congregation brought harvest gifts to be given to Jimmy's in Cambridge which works with the homeless, one of the charities supported by St Mary's throughout the year. The rector, David Tomlinson, commented, 'It was great to welcome over 200 people on Sunday, to celebrate God's love shown in the harvest and in Jesus Christ who explains his own mission in the parable of the lost sheep: he came to seek and save us. I am delighted too with the generous collection of food for Jimmy's in Cambridge.'

Clifford Want

Prayer for the Month *provided by the Prayer Committee*

Creator God, we thank You for this beautiful world with its amazing variety of animals and plants. May we never forget that we are stewards of Your Creation and that we hold it in trust for future generations. Help us to respect the earth's rich diversity by living and sharing with each other and all living creatures in responsible ways.



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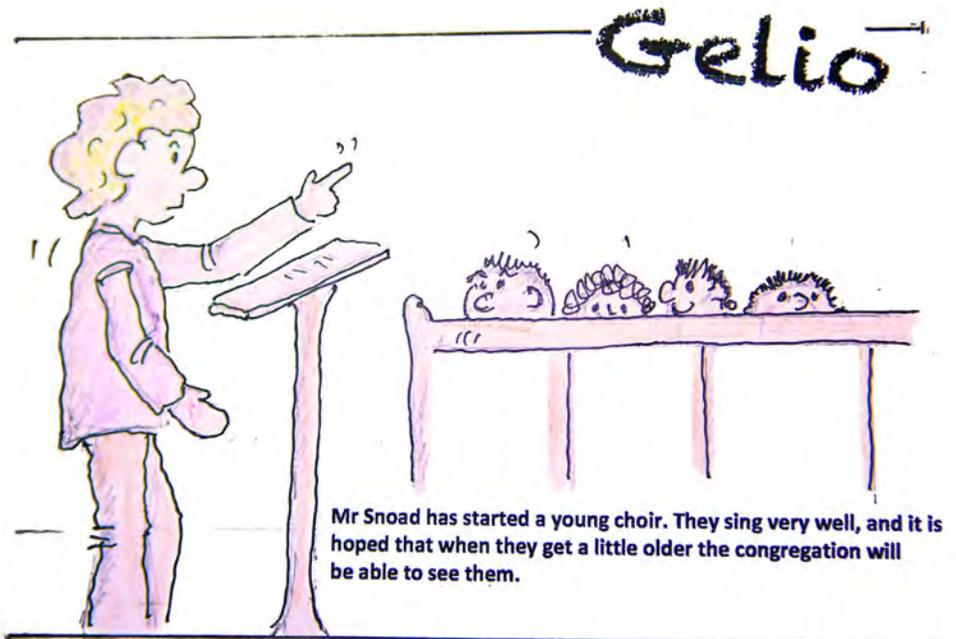
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Gelio

Mr Snoad has started a young choir. They sing very well, and it is hoped that when they get a little older the congregation will be able to see them.

From the Registers

Baptisms

8th September

We welcome into the family of the Church and pray for:

W.G.J. Jopling

A.B.G. Jopling

I.B.P. Jopling



Weddings

12th October

They offer their Married life to God:

David Curtis & Alicia Rippingale



Funerals

13th August

We send our deepest sympathy to the families and friends of:

Cyril Frank Thake

29th August

Diane Doreen Smyth

Praying for them and for those who mourn

"May they rest in peace"



God in the Arts

'The Virgin and Child with Saints' by Giovanni Martini da Udine

The National Gallery in London is a remarkable treasure house of art, founded in 1824 and home to over 2,300 paintings. Much work goes on behind the scenes to maintain this collection, and in August after a seven-year restoration project, a particular painting went on display for the first time in over a hundred years.

It is the work of an Italian Renaissance artist, Giovanni Martini da Udine, who died in 1535 - an altarpiece depicting 'The Virgin and Child with Saints.' Restoring the painting was complex and demanding work for the staff had to remove the varnish, repaint some areas and treat the woodworm. Thanks to the skill of those workers, we can now see the painting in all its beauty and grace. On the right St George has vanquished the dragon and is turned in prayer to the Christ-Child. On the left St James, the brother of John, has his hand on the shoulder of the patron. But he looks out at us and invites us into this scene in what is known as a 'sacra conversazione' – a holy conversation.

On the 1st of this month we celebrate the great feast of All Saints – that rich communion of saints like James and George, whose lives we know, and also the many thousands known only to God: all who have offered their lives in His service. Just as specialists worked for seven years to restore this painting after the ravages of time, ...

P.T.O.

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...so, on this day we give thanks for God working in the lives of His saints. Men and women like us: a mixture of hopes and ideals, of frailty and weakness, but ready to open their lives to be raised up and restored. These holy ones call us to travel in their company with our eyes set on God, who seeks to restore all of us to be channels of His grace.

Revd Michael Burgess
(Parish Pump)



The Class of '39

The 20th of September saw a gathering of 10 people who either worship at St Mary's or who have strong links to St Mary's and who have already or will celebrate their 80th birthdays this year.

A delicious bring and share lunch was enjoyed by the group and some of their close friends and family. Short stories about incidents in their lives were shared and a competition was organised to identify photos of those present taken when they were much younger!

Special thanks are due to Jeremy and Margaret Collingwood for hosting the event and to Ruby Parsons for co-ordinating the lunch. Carolyn Mann (Ruby's daughter) proved to be an excellent photographer.

Rufus Barnes



Hearing Help Essex
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Saffron Walden, CB10 1EQ**

3rd Monday of each month

Monday 18th February 14:00-16:00

Monday 18th March 14:00-16:00

Monday 15th April 14:00-16:00

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 - Learn about specialist equipment
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St Mary's Book Group

After the usual August break, nine of us assembled to discuss Amor Towles' novel *A Gentleman in Moscow* (Hutchinson, 2017).



Most unusually, the book met with unanimous approval. Its blend of gentle humour and suspense, set against a backdrop of Moscow between the 1917 Revolution and the end of the Stalin era, meant that there was plenty to discuss.

The author is not well known in this country, and, astonishingly, has apparently never visited Moscow, where the bulk of the action takes place. The story concerns Count Alexander Rostov, a Russian aristocrat who is tried by a Bolshevik court for being a social parasite, but whose good manners, charm and wit (as well as a poem that he may or may not have written) result in him being sentenced to life in the attic of a luxury hotel, rather than being shot. He believes that "adversity presents itself in many forms; and if a man does not master his circumstances, then he is bound to be mastered by them." In the Hotel Metropole, he meets a series of very different characters, many attracted by his broad knowledge and effortless conversationalism. After becoming foster-parent to Sofia, a precocious young girl who develops into a concert pianist, he is able to pass on his unusual experience of life and how to live it. Much of the book concerns good food and wine; the Count has a near encyclopaedic knowledge of both, and the good taste to match. In a well-plotted drama, his contacts come in particularly handy when arranging for Sofia's defection to the West. The Group's ensuing discussions ranged from the recipe for Latvian stew to the plot of *Casablanca*.

Especial thanks to the O'Neills for (again) hosting the evening, and for highlighting many of the book's different facets. Our next book will be Sue Monk Kidd's *The Invention of Wings*.

John Pickthorn

OUT OF WORK?

Need some practical support or just a chat?

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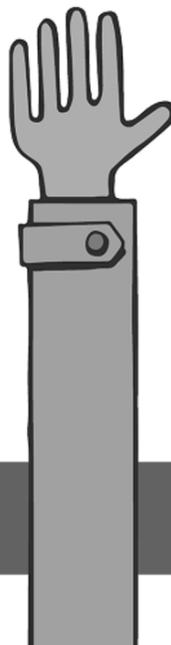
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Website: www.volunteeruttlesford.org.uk

Or come and see us at:

Uttlesford District Council Offices

London Road, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 4ER



"Be the change you wish to see in the world"

Gandhi

Graham and Jenny Cottam: We'll Miss Them

Judith and I first got to know Graham and Jenny in 1994 when our children started attending RA Butler School. We all moved to Saffron Walden because Graham and I worked for the same pharmaceutical company, which was moving its entire Epsom and Dorking based Research and Development (R&D) staff to Harlow. Having found school places for our children, Jenny and Judith would meet at the school gate and it soon became clear that we had all chosen to worship at St Mary's. Despite working for the same company, Graham and I didn't really know each other before 1994, even though we worked in the same department, although not at the same time! And R&D in SmithKline Beecham was 15,000 strong in those days.



Our children progressed through RAB and Saffron Walden County High School together and even did work experience and summer jobs, when university students, alongside each other at what was by then GlaxoSmithKline (GSK). James, Philippa, Katie and Matt shared a car to Harlow every day and it was clear that the journeys were full of music, fun and friendship.

It was at St Mary's where Graham and I worked closely together on our building project. We both got involved in the project in 2009 just as it was starting and before too long Graham had assumed the overall leadership of the Building Task Group at the request of the Rector. Graham was, and still is, an expert Project Manager (this was his day job in R&D at GSK) and he led the Task Group with his calm, logical, thorough and extremely effective approach. His legacy to St Mary's can be seen at the back of the church in our new servery, toilet and welcome furniture.

Jenny contributed a great deal to St Mary's too and was a longstanding member of the parish office team including taking responsibility for completing our wedding and baptism registers. Jenny was also a very capable and diligent assistant to our treasurer and when I was a churchwarden I recall that Jenny chased me politely many times for invoices to be approved or receipts to be made available in support of payments!

Jenny and Graham did much more too. Together they have led a Home Group, both played in the Brass Group and Graham led the Transitions Project for

about 10 years, helping those who had lost their job to improve their curriculum vitae and, consequently, their likelihood of re-employment. They were also St Mary's 'secret weapon' in the annual Deanery Quiz, securing victory on many occasions. They enriched the life of St Mary's in numerous other ways, always finding time to listen and to help. As the Rector commented on their last Sunday, 'they have shown us Christ's humility, courage, and willingness to serve'. We will miss them greatly but also know that they will be an asset to the community and church where they settle in Scotland.

Steve Hasler

Archive Group *findings...*

November 1939

My Dear Parishioners,

The outbreak of War has thrown this, as it has many other parishes, into a state of bewildering confusion. The necessarily strict lighting regulations have made our work very difficult indeed, compelling continual changes in the hours both of Weekday and Sunday Services. The presence too of so many strangers in our homes inevitably absorbs almost the whole energies of the household diverting him both from Church Work and Divine Worship. We used to be told that an Englishman's house was his castle which no-one could enter except by invitation of the occupier, but this doctrine must now be regarded as largely obsolete under present conditions. We are at any rate learning much as to how many of our countrymen live and our eyes have been widely opened as to the need for further social and housing legislation. Some very painful reports have reached me from other parts of the Kingdom as to the low standards of personal cleanliness which still prevail in some quarters and the hardship inflicted in consequence on some hosts and hostesses.....The evacuated children are responding wonderfully to their sojourn in Saffron Walden, and their physical appearance witnesses to the tonic effect of the fresh air and free life of the countryside - so much so that Mr Hitler may after all be proving in this limited respect something of an unintentional benefactor to the rising generation.

L. Hughes. Vicar.

Mothers' Union Communion in the North Chapel

On Thursday 12th September Mothers' Union members gathered together in the North Chapel for a corporate communion. Revd Canon Chris Bishop our MU Chaplain presided over the service and our guest preacher was Revd Canon Cilla Hawkes, Area Dean of Dunmow and Stansted Deanery. We were also fortunate to welcome a Mothers' Union member from Malawi who was staying in Saffron Walden with a friend.

The theme of the service was 'The seeds of faith' combined with harvest and a member read the Parable of the Sower. Revd Cilla preached on the parable and asked us how our faith began. She then invited us to discuss with our neighbour who it was, who was largely responsible for bringing us to faith. It was good for us to participate and it made us more aware of what we owe to those who have shown us the way.

Revd Cilla then reminded us that we are also responsible for bringing others to faith. She handed everyone a few grains of seed to place where they would remind us to pray for family members, friends and others so that the seeds of faith would be nurtured within them.

Intercessions were said by a member and communion followed. Two hymns were sung during the service, the harvest hymn 'Come ye thankful people come' and Revd Cilla's choice 'God is working His purpose out'. We thank our member who made this possible by playing the grand piano.

Refreshments were served from the servery after the service and notices given.

Brenda Sheath

Gardening Notes

I write this at the start of October, when most of your cropping is done but still that joyous feeling of success persists. I'm still picking runner beans 'streamline', a new variety for me, definitely to be repeated. My greenhouse tomatoes are finished and the outdoor ones nearly ready; they are an F1 of 'Ailsa Graig', grow into good solid plants with lots of fruit of medium size. Unfortunately, last week's high winds blew one short row flat, so the green fruit are ripening in paper-lined trays, in the greenhouse.

My bedding 'Impatiens' flowered well, and especially so where I close planted; one bed is now readied for the winter, cleaned of ground elder, cranesbill well thinned and two ornamental sages planted, eliminating the need for future annual planting. That leaves two other beds to be cleared of annuals, one of which the drier of the two, will be filled with various sedums and edged with widely spaced lavender clumps: that bed's existing tall trellis with its climbers will also be given a real birthday. I've not yet decided the perennial planting for the third bed: I believe I'll leave that decision for a little while, cleaning the bed first and 'thinking on'.

The best is yet to come!

Charles White

Music News

On 29th September the brass group performed a stealth operation to surprise two former members by substituting for the expected organ voluntary at the end of the morning service. The musicians gathered, set up and began playing almost without anyone noticing! It was a fitting tribute to Jenny and Graham Cottam as they leave St Mary's to relocate to Scotland. Graham has been the librarian and administrator for the Brass group for a number of years, and he and Jenny have played in the group for an even longer period and both will be greatly missed.

At the start of October the Rector formally welcomed Charlotte as a full Choral Scholar, following a three month probationary period. Our Choral Scholars are all between 14-18 and form an important and strong section of the choir.

This is a time of preparation as we look forward to a particularly busy period musically. At the very start of November we celebrate both All Saints and All Souls on the same day. The All Souls service, in particular, is always one of reflection and the music naturally is chosen carefully to facilitate this. Currently the choir is preparing a few of the spirituals from Michael Tippett's *Child of our time*. The following Sunday will see the annual services for Remembrance Day: the weekly celebration of communion at St Mary's, followed by the British Legion Service of Remembrance when our church is packed with people of all ages coming together. This year at 4pm the same afternoon there will be a time of Words and Music for Remembrance Day. We are delighted that the music will be provided by a former head Chorister, Sian Tuson (née Newman), who will be accompanied by Oli King. This will be followed by a short service of Compline.

On Thursday 14th November at 7.30pm we shall be welcoming Tome Olives from Menorca, who will be giving the final organ recital in this year's series. The penultimate recital given at the start of October by David Poulter, formerly Director of Music at Chester, Coventry and Liverpool Cathedrals, was excellent and delighted all who attended.

Finally, on Sunday 24th November will be the final service before David Tomlinson leaves his post as Rector. We hope that the service music, which will feature the brass group, the full choir and organ, will be a fitting send off to a much loved figure who, throughout his time in Saffron Walden has been a strong supporter of the musical life of our church.

Bron Ferland

Organ Recital by Tome Olives (Menorca)

St. Mary's Church, Saffron Walden

Thursday 14 November 7.30pm - 8.30pm

Heritage Open Day at St Mary's Church

St Mary's Parish Church, Saffron Walden, took part in the national Heritage Open Days on Sunday 15th September. The mayor of Saffron Walden, Councillor Arthur Coote and his wife Elaine, joined visitors who were able to access areas of the church not normally open, such as the South Chapel containing the Audley tomb, the organ loft from which the organ is played and the bell tower where visitors could climb the steps to find out more about bell ringing and see the view over the town.

As the national theme this year was to mark the 200th anniversary of the Peterloo massacre, a main feature of the day was an exhibition of the contributions some Christians have made to social reform since that date. The Arts Society report on all the fixtures, furnishings, windows and paintings in the church was on display. There were also displays of church vestments, of some church records and vintage photos of clergy.



*The mayor and his wife examine Church records
Photograph © Clifford Want*

Rev'd Canon Chris Bishop, the church archivist, commented, 'Once again it was good for us to be able to contribute to the National Heritage Day activities. Among all the activities offered we enjoyed being able to introduce visitors to a number of committed Christians like Florence Nightingale, who over the past 200 years had been inspirationally involved in the work of social reform.'

The rector, Rev'd Canon David Tomlinson, said, 'I was delighted to welcome Arthur and Elaine, our mayor and his wife, to another successful open day. I am grateful for the team of volunteers who welcomed the visitors, and those who put together the displays. I was impressed and inspired by the display about notable Christians who have been at the forefront of prison reform, caring for war veterans and the hospice movement.'

This is the fourth year that St. Mary's have taken part in Heritage Open Days and they look forward to taking part in the future to share their treasures with a wider public.

Clifford Want

CHRISTMAS FAIR

Are you ready to FOLLOW THAT STAR at St Mary's on Saturday 30th November between 10.00a.m. and 2.00p.m?

Shepherds and shepherdesses, angels and kings, cherubims and camels, innkeepers, sheep and donkeys, Marys and Josephs and, of course, lots of stars will be most welcome at our annual Christmas Fair!

Preparation continues apace, posters will be going up all over town soon, flyers are available at the back of the church, tickets for the Grand Draw are already on sale and our wonderful Stallholders are busy planning their displays. Do join us, buy some Christmas presents perhaps, find a bargain and help support our magnificent Church. As before, we shall be selling scrumptious food in the Parish Rooms, to be known on the day as The Starlight Cafe, and our talented musicians and choirs will be supporting the joyful atmosphere in the Church.

Help is still needed to set up the stalls on Friday 29th November between 12.00 noon and 2.00pm and stallholders will be laying out those stalls from 2.00pm till 6.00pm. Please note that, because of a service in the Church at 8.00am on the Saturday morning, all donations to the stalls should be delivered the previous afternoon when stallholders are present. Assistance on the day of the Fair itself would also be much appreciated, in the Cafe, on the stalls and with tidying away afterwards.

Please do sign up on the different sheets on the noticeboard by the vestry if you can help in any way – volunteers are worth many times more than those pressed into service!

Please contact Richard Garvey on 01799 521129 aptonfields@supanet.com if you have any questions about the Fair. Pamela Mugliston 01799 521697 pjmteddybear@btinternet.com is masterminding arrangements for the stalls, Sue Birchall 01799 521297 sbirchall29@gmail.com is i/c catering and Paddy Carver is getting our message out and about. We would love to hear from you.

Please note:

1. The opinions expressed in the articles in this magazine are those of the authors.
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4. This magazine is also available on the parish website and is distributed to local press where extracts may be used in their columns.
5. The Editor reserves the right to edit, or exclude, any article submitted. Please be aware when submitting articles 400 words fits comfortably onto a page and that any article over 800 words will need to be edited to ensure readability.



Do you play a Brass instrument?

St Mary's Brass meets on Monday evenings
6.15–7.15pm during term time.

The group plays at various events in the year including our
Easter Service, Christmas Carol Service and Christmas Fair.

New members of any age are always welcome.

If you are interested in joining or would like more
information, please contact Oli King
for further details.

Email: music@stmaryssaffronwalden.org



Follow that Star

To St. Mary's Christmas Fair



**St Mary's Parish Church, Saffron Walden
10am - 2pm Saturday 30th November 2019**

**Christmas stalls, children's games, music & fine food
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