

# Parish News



**July 2021**

**FREE**

**St Mary the Virgin, Saffron Walden**  
**St John, Little Walden and St James, Swards End**  
Part of Saffron Walden & Villages Team Ministry

## Pastures new

In early July, Sam, Magdalene and I will be moving to Black Notley, Great Notley and Rayne, near Braintree. My time with you has been full and our hearts are full as we leave. The last four years have certainly been ones of change: two ordinations; one Rector's Sabbatical; one vacancy; one pandemic; one baby! We have shared sorrows and joys



together with you, and I'm very grateful to all of you who have shared your stories, your faith, and your questions with me. I have learned much from you, and will carry you with me as I go. I'm thankful to all who have showed me the ropes, and done so with good humour, and for all the encouragement we have been given along the way. Our life is richer and our faith is deeper too.

We have many wonderful memories to treasure. At St Mary's, I won't forget the beauty of the Advent Carol service; the incredibly moving Devotional Offering of Chilcott's St John's Passion; the wonderful celebrations at Easter after entering into the drama of Holy Week; the chaos and glory of installing prayer as part of Thy Kingdom Come, and introducing Godly Play to the children of St Mary's school. After a year of maternity leave and a global pandemic, I feel even more keenly the privilege of preaching and presiding at the Eucharist, and will always remember the bittersweet feeling of presiding for the last time before the first lockdown began.

I've always said, to anyone who would listen, that I did not want to be an incumbent – however the old saying, "nothing makes God laugh more than telling God your plans" seems to be true here.

We are excited for all that lies ahead in our new parishes. Each church is very different from one another: St Peter and St Paul's in Black Notley is in the Anglo-Catholic tradition and worships in a church on a farm that is over eight hundred years old; The Church in Great Notley is an ecumenical church built in 2010 in the garden village, and All Saints in Rayne has just completed a building project to remove the pews and to make the church a more accessible space for the local community. Our home will be in the Rectory at Black Notley, which was purpose built, and so has a separate study area and living area, which will help us as we navigate ministry as a family. Sam will be able to work from home,

*Continued on page 4...*

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## PARISH NEWS - EDITORIAL DEADLINE

The deadline for contributions for each issue is the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the previous month. Hence, the deadline for the **August-September** issue is **Sunday 4th July**.

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Front Cover: A muntjac deer  
Photographed by Lesley Green

## During the lockdown...

If you would like to be added to our weekly mailing list, email: - [office@stmaryssaffronwalden.org](mailto:office@stmaryssaffronwalden.org)



## St Mary's Church Website:

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commuting to London occasionally, and Magdalene will start in nursery and have some grandparent time too.

There is a lot going on, and there is much to learn. It will certainly be stretching, but the one who calls us is faithful, and we trust that God will continue to call and equip us.

My final Sunday will be the 27<sup>th</sup> June, which will also be a thanksgiving service for our daughter Magdalene. Please do come along and keep us in your prayers.

With love,

Rachel, Sam and Magdalene

*Editor: At the time of going to press Jeremy is having a well earned holiday...*



*...and resting his very dry throat!*

## What does Climate Justice actually mean?

When I take to the streets to protest about the destruction of the planetary balance we depend on, the most popular chant is:

“What do we want?”                      “Climate Justice!”

“When do we want it?”                “Now!!!”     ... repeat until your throat is sore...

I wonder, though, what passers-by make of it. What does it actually mean?

In essence it is about the fact that the poor of the world will suffer, and are already suffering, the effects of the climate crisis long before the wealthy who have created the problem. We who have benefited from 250 years of coal and oil powered industries are in a better position to mitigate the effects than those who are only just beginning to emerge from poverty.

Our position on the globe, in relatively high latitudes and cooled by surrounding seas, mean that our climate will remain relatively benign, despite the extreme weather events we have experienced. However, it is still the poor of the UK who will suffer first: when failed harvests drive up food prices or old carbon-based industries are closed down, with no new industries planned to replace it.

Ocean warming, however, is already costing lives on a terrible scale. An international team of 14 scientists examined data going back to the 1950s, looking at temperatures from the ocean surface to 2,000 meters deep. They discovered that the world’s oceans are now heating at the rate of **five Hiroshima atomic bombs dropped into the water every second**. Mind boggling!

That energy has to go somewhere, and it goes up into the sky forming the vast cloud formations I sailed through in the Coral and Solomon Seas, which start to spin, gathering more and more energy as they turn into hurricanes and cyclones.



*Photograph: Edward Gildea*

The effects of Cyclone Idai, for example, which swept through Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe in March 2019, were still being felt a year later. Idai destroyed crops, ruined lives and left millions without food. At least 900 people were killed and around 2.5 million more were affected and face a grave hunger crisis as crop failures, drought and food shortages continue.

Hurricane Iota struck Nicaragua in November last year, just two weeks after Hurricane Eta caused devastation across Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala. It was the country's strongest hurricane on record and hit the poorest and most vulnerable people hardest. Landslides and floods caused mass destruction. Homes and crops were flattened. Some 160,000 Nicaraguans and 70,000 Hondurans were forced to flee, leaving everything behind to seek safety.

Despite tragedies such as these, I still hear people claiming that the problem is not driven by fossil fuels but by overpopulation. 'We need to reduce the world's population'. I asked where they would like to start that reduction. In North America, Australia and Western Europe, where the carbon footprint per person is by far the greatest? Or focus on the mega rich and their growing fleet of private jets? Ahhh.... That is not quite what they had in mind. They were thinking more of sub Saharan Africa and India. Starting their policy there would generate negligible reductions in CO2. The solution over population lies in the education of women and the elimination of corruption so that people have a chance of saving for a pension.

Sadly, however, the pattern of injustice is emerging clearly: our environmental crises will provide the 'solution' to the over-population of our planet, starting with the poor and most innocent. So what do we want? Climate Justice!!

Edward Gildea  
Church Eco Team Leader

*Editor: Congratulations to Edward who has been appointed as a Christian Aid Climate Action Organiser during the summer and up to COP26.*

## From the Registers

### **Baptisms**

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

6th June Emily Rosemary Francis  
Hamish James Robert Allan

13th June Olivia Tregarthen Boddy

### **Funerals**

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

*Praying for them and for those who mourn  
"May they rest in peace"*



## **YOU**inthe**PEW** interviewed by

Chris Bishop

### **Tracey Nicholls**

Unusually Tracey doesn't live in Saffron Walden but still lives in her home village of Duxford, approximately 9 miles away. She first visited St John's church in Little Walden as a guest of her sister who lives in the village and soon became a regular attendee. At that time her children were still young, and she started taking them to the



Aftershock group at St Mary's. Her daughter, not wanting her to leave, would take her car keys and so Tracey soon became a regular volunteer at the group and continues to be so to this day.

It wasn't long before Tracey started attending services at St Mary's on the weeks when there were no services at St John's. She was one of the first attendees at the growing leaders course held by David and Jenny Tomlinson, going on to take the Course in Christian Studies and then to train as a licensed Lay Minister. Today you will find Tracey taking services at St John's, the family service at St Mary's, our service at the ECL centre, helping with the church youth activities and occasionally filling in wherever needed across the team.

A keen cook, Tracey is also often found in the kitchen, often alongside her long-time friend Helen Nash. Together they have accompanied the youth to Soul Survivor, providing breakfast lunch and dinner for up to 50 attendees; provided a celebration breakfast for the early morning Easter services and cooked a 3-course dinner for attendees at the annual Aftershock Jimmy's Meal. Tracey firmly believes that feeding the body is as much a service as feeding the soul and demonstrates a deep sense of caring that can be appreciated by people of all ages and from all parts of the community.

Although not living in the town, Tracey loves to spend time here, enjoying the market and the array of independent shops as well as a good selection of restaurants and coffee shops. Saffron Walden has the heart of a large village rather than a town and Tracey loves the way that the community works together. VBS was a great example of this and Tracey has fond memories of this wonderful outreach, both as a volunteer and

from her children attending. Her prayer is that, as we come out of this pandemic, we find new ways of connecting and supporting each other.

If she had to choose a motto for her family coat of arms it would be “Love faithfully”. She explains this by saying that we are made in the image of God and just as his love is faithful, so too must ours be. This isn’t always easy and it is only in the growing understanding of how we are loved despite all of our faults that we can be humble enough to love others with that kind of grace.

## **Being a Sidesman/Welcomer**

I could list here lots of duties required for these posts, setting up , clearing away, handing out books and leaflets etc, nothing too onerous for sure but they will vary depending on what you might volunteer for. It could be one week a month at the 10am service or one of the 20+ Special Services during the year for instance, but you would be given the necessary training and information by your Team Leader or the Wardens as appropriate.

What I really wanted to talk about was the spirit of the role. It has always been fulfilling to be able to greet our congregation with a smile and a few caring words, equally to be on the receiving end of a welcome greeting. Now we are open for more services and people will be returning, perhaps for the first time. There will also be new people joining us as our town grows and I know that they will be given a warm welcome.

We have all experienced a very difficult period in so many ways. After such long periods of isolation, shielding and keeping our distance, how magical it is and will be to see a smiling, welcoming face at the door of the Church. For some it will be an emotional experience but hopefully just being there will help everyone get their confidence back, their feeling of belonging, being back within the Church Family.

Welcoming is a giving and receiving role, one that can warm your heart. We all have special little meaningful memories that meant so much to us on that particular day, I know I have. Perhaps you would like to join the Sidesmen/Welcomer Team and create that special memory for someone. If so please contact me via the Parish Office.

Pamela Mugliston  
Sidesmen Co-ordinator.

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## The Gospel and Technology (Part 3)

Although Marconi demonstrated his wireless radio system in 1896, it was initially a curiosity used mainly by inventors and amateurs transmitting in Morse Code. It was another ten years before a Canadian engineer, Reginald Fessenden, made the first radio broadcast of speech and music on Christmas Eve 1906 from the coast of Massachusetts. It was heard with amazement by the crews of several ships in the Atlantic.

After World War I, broadcasting via radio became a commercial reality. The first station was in the Netherlands (1919) but it was not a success. The following year, station KDKA was established in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and on 2 January 1921 it broadcast the first ever sermon heard on radio from the city's Calvary Episcopal Church. There was a rush by churches to set up their own radio stations, including the Lutheran Church which established its own station in 1930. Its flagship programme "The Lutheran Hour" (still going after 91 years and now available on MP3 and an app) was for a while the most popular programme on American radio.

In the inter-war years, valve radios were big, heavy and quite expensive. They were mostly the preserve of the Western World and expatriates in the British, French and Dutch empires. Churches used their airtime to reach listeners in their own countries. The idea of broadcasting the gospel in the vernacular to otherwise inaccessible countries would follow in post-war years, including the Arab World. But it needed a new technology.

In the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century, the transistor radio, provided a new window for presenting the gospel in the Middle East and North Africa. It was usually Japanese, small, battery-driven and fitted into a shirt pocket. It was immensely popular and became a status symbol, the iPhone of its day. Low levels of literacy contributed to its success, a fact not lost on the rulers who used it to spread government propaganda. Numerous Arabic-language, Christian radio stations were established, supporting the indigenous churches and offering an alternative to Islam. Although Jesus lived and died in the Middle East, for hundreds of years there had been intense opposition to the gospel. Radio provided a direct, uncensored route for the gospel to the hearts of people in the Arab World.

Ian Sutherland

[My thanks to Rev'd Dr J M Strengholt for permission to use his Ph.D thesis "Gospel in the air" (published by Boekencentrum Publishing House, The Netherlands in 2008) as a primary source for this article.]



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## Archive Group *findings...*

July 1890



From parishes within the Deanery

### Debden

The members of the Choir (21 in number) enjoyed their annual outing on Thursday June 19<sup>th</sup>. The Rev. W.B. Bliss with his Choir joined the expedition, bringing the total number up to 32. On this occasion the place selected to visit was Greenwich. The day was fine throughout and the selection proved a happy one. The journey by rail to Town and the crossing through the City to London Bridge was pleasant enough, but the trip down the river by steamer to Greenwich was thoroughly enjoyed by all. At Greenwich there is much to see of historical interest. A part of the day's entertainment of special interest to the juveniles of the party was the donkey riding on Blackheath. The substantial dinner provided, and the ample tea, added no inconsiderable part to the whole day's pleasure.

### Chesterford School

Inspected May 9<sup>th</sup> 1890. No of books 126. No present 105 Viva. Voce. "The general results of the Examination are very satisfactory. The children answered the questions in the Old Testament very creditably- not quite so satisfactorily in the New. The higher Standards displayed a far better knowledge of the Catechism and Prayer Book subjects, than is usually the case, and they have done their teachers much credit.

*Written work* - The writing out of different parts of the Catechism is not so good as it might be. The Papers of Standards V -V11 are very good.

Chesterford Infant School, inspected May 9<sup>th</sup> 1890. No of books 60. No. Present 46

*Viva Voce* - The infants in this school are well and intelligently taught, and the progress is satisfactory.

Francis E Smith. Diocesan Inspector.

Quendon

Mothers' Union

We hope during this month to start a branch of this Society, though we cannot yet give particulars as to date. There will be a Special Service in Church and a Meeting in the Rectory garden, at both of which we hope to see as many "Mothers" as possible, both from our parish and also from the neighbourhood.

Canon Chris Bishop. Archivist



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# Calendar for July 2021

*This calendar is provisional and subject to change with government restrictions, see The Grapevine, the church website or weekly bulletin from Parish Office for the latest information and login details and for services streamed from village churches.*

## St Mary's, Saffron Walden

One service each Sunday is streamed on YouTube [Y] and some on Zoom [Z] - details from the website. Restricted pre-booked congregations can currently be accommodated in church [C] for some services under compliance with current restrictions - see website or contact Parish Office. The church is currently open daily at least from 10 am to 4 pm.

### Thursday 1 July

1pm Service of Prayer for Wholeness and Healing [C]

### Sunday 4 July

8am BCP Holy Communion [C]

10am Holy Communion [C] [Y] [Z]

6.30pm H2H Youth-led Service for All [C]

### Sunday 11 July

8am BCP Holy Communion [C]

10am Holy Communion and Baptism [C] [Y] [Z]

### Sunday 18 July

8am BCP Holy Communion [C] [Y]

10am Family Service [C]

6.30pm Holy Communion with Prayer for Wholeness and Healing [C]

### Sunday 25 July

8am BCP Holy Communion [C]

10am Holy Communion [C] [Y] [Z]



## Regular weekday services - See weekly bulletin for Zoom sign-in details

### Tuesdays

5pm Evening Prayer [Z]

### Wednesdays

9.30am Holy Communion - to be confirmed whether [Z] or [C]

## St James', Sewards End

### Sunday 11 July

9.30am Holy Communion [C]

### Sunday 25 July

9.30am Morning Praise [C]



## St John's, Little Walden

### Sunday 11 July

11.15am Family Service [C]

### Sunday 25 July

11:15am Holy Communion [C]



## Prayer for the month of July

*provided by the Prayer Team*

We live in a world with ever increasing conflicts and suffering, at a time when Governments issue orders, counter orders, and generate confusion over the Coronavirus restrictive regulations and advice.

This confusion and the state of the world concerns all of us to various degrees at different times. So, what do we pray?

Let us turn to the prayer Jesus taught us, and thoughtfully, with intensity, and repeatedly pray that the prayer "Thy will be done on earth" may be fulfilled.

## A Cheesy Joke

Q: What did the Greek cheese say when it looked in the mirror?

A: Hallou Mi

*Paddy McKeown*



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## God in the Sciences

*Dr Ruth M Bancewicz is Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge. Ruth writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.*

### Exploring the Big Questions: scientists and theologians share their views

It's important to have debates about science and Christian faith and to dig into the hot topics, but we can't exist solely on a diet of controversy. I find it helpful, at times, to simply enjoy the wonders revealed by science and the big questions they raise about meaning and purpose. What's the universe for? What do you do with your feelings of awe and wonder? Where do we get our sense of the value of the living world from? I had the privilege of meeting a group of Christian scientists and theologians who shared thoughts about these big questions, and will share some of their thoughts here.

The Oxford-based theologian Alister McGrath shared that "science is wonderful at asking questions. Some of those questions can be answered, but very often when you do answer them, they simply open up yet more questions. But of course, there are some more fundamental questions I think science simply cannot answer...questions like, 'Why am I here?'"

Rhoda Hawkins, a physicist at Sheffield University, has had a similar experience. "I never cease to be amazed at quite how impressive the world is, and how impressive the mechanisms are for how things work...It really is beautiful in many ways, and it leads me to think about God. I'm not saying that I have any proof, but I'm saying that by looking at the world around me it tells me more about God and it leads me to worship Him."

Another scientist who appreciates beauty is Jeff Hardin, who explained that "studying the wonders of the living world is an exercise in art appreciation. For me, God is the creator of everything... so the joy of discovery is also the joy of appreciating the world that God has made...and leads me to thank God for the amazing world that we have to enjoy and to explore."

I will close with some words from Jeff Schloss, who – like the others quoted above – finds that Christian faith makes science more satisfying for him. "Once I became a Christian...I had the sense that I was studying the marvels of the natural world, which are marvellous in their own right but become more profoundly engaging and enticing when one thinks that you're studying the works of God." Perhaps if we can spend more time listening to people like this, our discussions about science and faith will also be richer and deeper.

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## **From the editor...**

Although the pandemic has severely restricted many of our Church activities, PARISH NEWS continues to need news items and interesting articles from local sources.

Whilst we are fortunate to have material available from the excellent website 'Parish Pump', what is most prized is material from within our parishes. Your editor will be pleased to receive copy on any topic of general interest to our readers. These can be sent at any time and will be considered for inclusion in future editions. Many thanks in anticipation!

**Please note:**

- 1. The opinions expressed in the articles in this magazine are those of the authors.**
- 2. 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.**
- 3. Illustrations and photographs are the property of the copyright holders and should not be reused without permission.**
- 4. The Parish News cannot accept responsibility for the goods or services advertised in this magazine - advertisements are accepted in good faith.**

## **Church notices that didn't quite come out right....**

The preacher for Sunday next will be found hanging on the notice board in the porch.

The minister is going on holiday next Saturday. Could all missionary boxes be handed into the vicarage by Friday evening, at the latest.

Ladies, when you have emptied the teapot, please stand upside down in the sink.

There will be a procession in the grounds of the monastery next Sunday afternoon. If it rains in the afternoon, the procession will take place in the morning.



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## St Mary's Music News

Despite, and in some cases because of, the continuing restrictions imposed on musical life by Covid-19, it has been a busy time for the SMMA. Extra work behind the scenes has included, for example, endless risk assessments to ensure that safeguarding is still robust with the new focus on online working, and that the latest set of guidelines has been met.

The Spring Guidance limiting amateur choirs to a maximum of 6 singers indoors brought surprise and disappointment to choirs throughout the country, and led to the last minute cancellation of the plan for the Family Service on 16 May to be led by the Junior Choir. Accordingly adult choir rehearsals have remained on Zoom, though the Juniors have managed at least 1 indoor practice, and singing at Sunday services has been restricted to 6 members of the adult choir. However, groups of up to 30 people can sing outdoors, so an Adult Choir rehearsal is planned in the churchyard for later in June, weather permitting.



Meanwhile, as Juniors move on to become Choral Scholars, vacancies have become available in the Junior Choir, and Joyful Noise will be re-starting in the autumn for our youngest musicians with Lizzie Bennett very kindly taking this on. A recruitment event will be running on Saturday 3 July from 3 to 5 pm for both the Junior Choir and Joyful Noise. The SMMA has produced a short video to support this event. The link is: <https://youtu.be/yy327Dliesw>

Although the Brass Group has to remain in abeyance for the present, there has been significant progress in relation to the Michael Swindlehurst Organ Scholarship, which has the support of both St Mary's and Wendens Ambo. Information about this opportunity has been sent to Heads of Music in local schools and colleges, and several potential scholars have already expressed an interest. The closing date for applications is 1 July, with auditions and interviews on 11 July. Further information can be obtained from Oli King at [domstmaryssw@gmail.com](mailto:domstmaryssw@gmail.com).

Partly as a lockdown project, Peter De Vile has edited and updated the leaflet about St Mary's organ. He and Jim Butler have produced a new 8 page booklet which will be printed shortly, the cost being split between the SMMA and a private donation. It is hoped that the booklets will be sold at £1 each, probably to visiting groups of organists, and that the church will take on responsibility for the booklets in due course. Looking after an instrument as large and temperamental as a church organ is a complex process. For example, ours has been badly affected by the long period of dry weather in the spring, but the onset of rain, and Peter's ongoing ministrations, have solved the problem.

As unlocking continues, we are still hoping that the Choir will be able to lead a "Come and Sing" Faure Requiem (Hill's arrangement) on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> July, accompanied by harp, violin, cello and organ. Now that the organ has been fixed, the most difficult logistical aspect has been transport of the harp, though this has now been organised. The event is intended to be a fundraiser for church funds, so there will be a £15 participant fee for adult singers, with a retiring collection for the audience. Under 18s can listen, or sing, for free. The performance will be at 5.15pm.

Ottilie Lefever

## **News from the 'Daughters'**

### **St James' Swards End & St John's Little Walden**

Once a quarter there will hopefully be news, views and reflections from the 'daughter' churches in Swards End and Little Walden, starting in the joint August and September issue of this Parish News.

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## God in the Arts

### 'The Peaceable Kingdom' by Edward Hicks

When St Peter preached his first sermon on the day of Pentecost, he showed how the life, death and resurrection of Jesus had to be understood in the light of the Old Testament. The promise of the Old was granted fulfilment in the New. This is how we understand the unity of the two Testaments: the messianic hope in one finds full expression in the other. We read of the Suffering Servant in Isaiah and look to the life-giving sacrifice of Jesus. Earlier in that prophet we read of a wondrous Child who is granted the spirit of the Lord to bring Paradise once more to the world:

*'The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.....They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.'* (Isaiah 11:6,9)

That vision of peace and harmony inspired this month's painting, 'The Peaceable Kingdom' by Edward Hicks. He was born in Pennsylvania in 1780 and worked as a carriage and sign maker. After a rebellious adolescence, he became a Quaker, living as a preacher and minister before taking up his brushes. His fellow Quakers were uneasy with this pursuit of such a worldly profession, and so Edward Hicks tried his hand at farming. His efforts proved unsuccessful, and he returned to painting, creating a whole series of canvases on this single theme. He painted almost a hundred versions of the Peaceable Kingdom of which over 60 still exist. This one is from 1834.



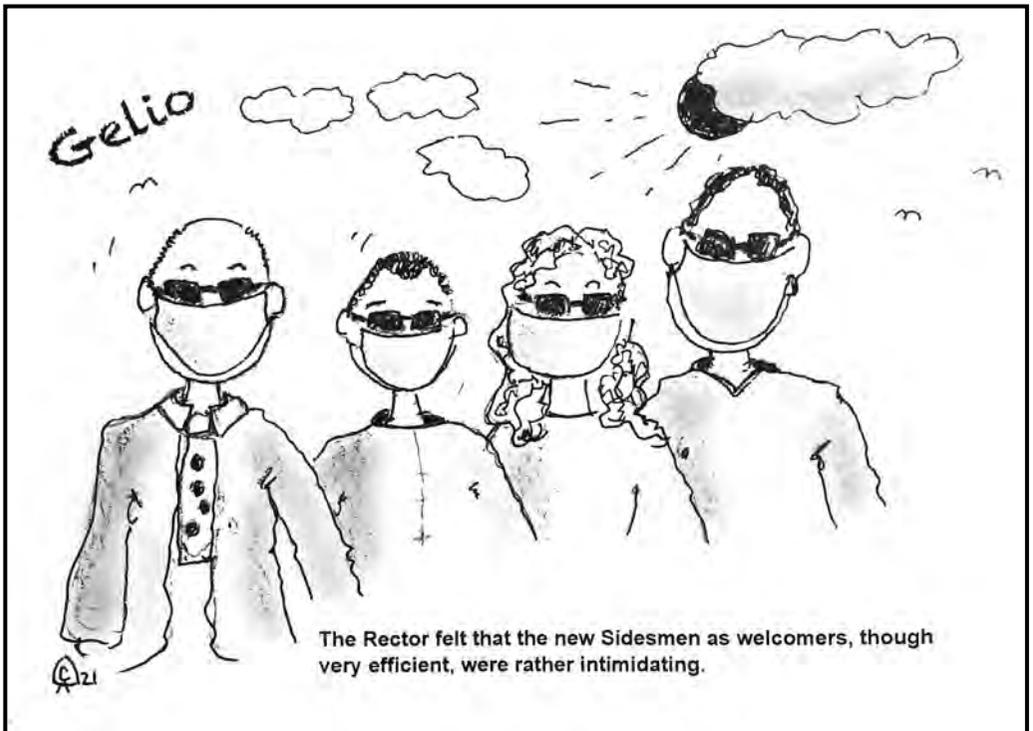
The foreground is occupied by not just one child, but several. They are innocent and free, playing with the animals around – lion, tiger, leopard, bear, wolf, cow and lamb. There is no sign of 'nature red in tooth and claw' here for all is peace and tranquillity. The bear and cow nudge each other in the bottom corner with no fear and no assertion of strength. That vision of peace is being realised in the distant scene, where we see William Penn and his fellow Quakers working on a treaty of co-existence with the Indians. The animals in the

foreground symbolise the human traits we see at work in the background: leadership and strength, sensitivity and gentleness.

As he worked on later versions of this painting, Edward Hicks knew that such peace was not an easy and simple achievement. Arguments and misunderstandings divided his own flock, and as a result the animals he painted look tired and anxious with sad eyes and white whiskers.

But here in 1834 there is a freshness and a promise of paradise restored. The cow and the calf, the bear and the bear cub, and the other animals are at one with the children playing. That harmony can be realised in human affairs also, the artist is saying. 'Follow the Inner Light' and Isaiah's prophecy can be fulfilled in our world. It needs both the innocence and strength we see here; it needs action and waiting, it needs wisdom and gentleness as we take counsel one with another. Follow those qualities to be channels of God's peace to make this world the Peaceable Kingdom.

The Rev'd Michael Burgess (Parish Pump)



## Mudlarking on The Thames



*The view of the foreshore from the Southbank*

One grey lockdown morning the phone rang: 'Hi Dad, would you like to go mudlarking on the Thames in the summer?' It sounded like my daughter was inviting me to a mud-wrestling contest, or at least a waist deep trudge along the estuary. Anxiously, I said 'Yes, of course, thank you', but then I was reassured to discover she meant an afternoon's beachcombing organised by The Thames Explorer Trust.

Unlike many other capital cities, London's river is tidal so its foreshore is exposed at low tide. A mudlark is someone who scavenges in river mud for treasure, making it a common occupation amongst the poor of London in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Today there has been a renewal of interest in mudlarking, but on The Thames it is now carefully controlled by the Port of London Authority, which issues 'mudlarking permits' to accredited persons to explore the beach for archaeological objects.

I met our daughter Jo, and grandson Sam, at Liverpool Street Station on a gloriously sunny day in June, we took the tube to St Paul's and had our lunch by the Cathedral. Then it was a short walk to the north end of the Millennium Bridge where we met our guide and other members of our party. In the shade of the bridge we were told of the long history of settlements along the river since Roman times. Our guide brought her own box of treasures - collected before the PLA regulations changed. These included pieces of Tudor pottery, animal bone, and the neck of a bellarmine jug made in the Rhineland about four hundred years ago. We were told that in 2019 a mudlarker had found a fragment of human skull;



*Mudlarks of Victorian London  
from The Headington  
Magazine, 1871*

radiocarbon dating revealed it to be from the Neolithic period. It is now on display in the Museum of London.

Fired with excitement that we, too, might find similar treasures we all made our way down the steep wooden stairs to the river bank below. My first impression of the shoreline was that I was walking on a thick layer of broken roof tiles, fragments of shattered crockery and bits of old animal bone. According to our expert guide, the very first fragment of pottery I picked up was medieval. We had about 150 yards of shore to explore, beyond which we should not go because it is a sight of special scientific interest. Indeed we could see the remains of wooden posts marking the position of an Anglo-Saxon pier.



So, what did we find? Lots of interesting looking pottery fragments, apparently some medieval and Tudor, but more were Victorian; scraps of Roman brick, and many pieces of clay smoking pipes. Jo found our greatest treasure: the bowl of a clay pipe, identified from our expert's chart as dating from 1660—1700. Photographs were taken as mementoes, but The Trust requested that in order to preserve the historic nature of the foreshore, we should leave our finds behind.

It was a great day and a super vantage point from which to view the river, and we didn't even get our feet muddy!

Andy Colebrooke

N.B. Thames Explorer Trust does not recommend accessing the foreshore without an experienced guide. Access to the foreshore requires a permit from the Port of London Authority – Thames Explorer holds such a permit.



# Choir Taster Day

**Saturday 3 July 3-5pm**

St Mary's Parish Church invite you to come along to a Taster Day and try out our two children's choirs

**Joyful Noise 5 1/2 - 8 years    Junior Choir 7 1/2 - 13 years**

To Register (essential before the day due to Covid)  
or for more information, please contact Bron Ferland:  
[choirsmw@gmail.com](mailto:choirsmw@gmail.com)



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