

ST MARY'S GAMLINGAY, HATLEY ST GEORGE & ST MARY'S EVERTON



Weekly newsletter 21 August 2020



From Hilary:

Thank you for responding, those who already have, about the wearing of masks. I look forward to being back in church for regular services - whatever the rules are about that by the time it happens. As I write it has been permitted for choirs to sing (within appropriate guidelines) but not congregations, which doesn't seem logical especially for our smaller congregations. We will continue to work on all this.

I am now on leave, though from home, so it is very possible you will see myself or Norman around, possibly on the way to or from visiting family and friends on days out. It is absolutely fine to speak to us(!) but, if at all possible, I will be avoiding dealing with parish matters - or even thinking about them too much - in the hope of coming back at the beginning of September feeling fresher. We will then revisit the reasons for the following:

Services during Covid

Currently this crisis plan, to take us through Autumn with special arrangements made for festivals, is as below. Concerns have been expressed by some Everton folk about the absence of a morning service there. I hope the Wardens can talk people through the limitations we are working with which have led to this decision. It is not 'the shape of things to come' and I do beg people to be generous with me and with one another as we seek to operate the art of the possible. Under present rules it is not possible to put services as close together as has been, partly because of what I can physically do setting up and clearing away. I find it hard to ask people to take care of me but the truth is that I have to be realistic about what I can do, needing to take care of myself in order to take care of others.

9.30am Gamlingay Communion

4.00pm Everton Service of the Word

Hatley services by arrangement to fit with the above

VJ Memories

There are several people who have shared at 'zoom church' their connections with the end of the war in Japan, which marked the actual end of WWII. It was so good to have the bells rung on that day and shared on Sunday, reminding us of those forgotten heroes. I didn't get to see the BBC tribute until later but, as others did, found it deeply moving. It reminded me that my father, Francis Mace, served as a very young Royal Marine Bandsman on HMS Ajax during the war, instead of taking up his university place. He hardly spoke of his experiences but we do know he visited Japan with his ship sometime after the atom bomb was dropped. He was somewhere near Nagasaki when he picked up this little Japanese tea-cup and saucer which survived the blast. It is not now radioactive but was when I was at school.

It was damaged but not destroyed in the blast and broken glass fused to it demonstrating the tremendous heat it was subjected to. It is a telling reminder of the destruction humanity is capable of and a profound push to us to work and pray earnestly for peace, giving thanks for the peace we have enjoyed in our lives.



Hilary

Sunflower Gallery



The Rectory sunflowers from Hilary

Two pictures from Ros and Alec - complete with a happy bee!

From Valerie:

A second verse to last week's Zoom limerick:

When the last one has entered the room
You think you are ready to Zoom.
But then one gets frozen
In an unfortunate pose, 'n....
The rest all wait to resume.

And a third.....

Zoom Bingo was played by The Guild
Home-made cards with choices were filled.
All were enthralled
As the numbers were called
And the winner was suitably thrilled!

(This could become a'Limerick Zoom Epic'! Do send some more verses if you can and we'll print them all in a future edition.)

A correction and apology from Jane Butcher at Everton:

The report in last week's newsletter should have said that the PCC is working on applying for a faculty for work to be carried out on some of the trees in the churchyard - NOT that we were putting in a bid for Lottery funding. That may well, however, be something we will need to think about for the future.

"I ordered a chicken and
an egg from Amazon. I'll
let you know what
happens"

(anonymous)

Your life is made up of two
dates and a dash. Make the
most of the dash.

THE CLOCKS OF GAMLINGAY AND EVERTON CHURCHES by John Boocock

St Mary the Virgin, Gamlingay

James William Benson was born in 1826, the son of a Reading watchmaking family whose business was founded in 1747. James William and his brother Samuel Suckley Benson founded a London company in 1847 making scientific instruments, watches and gold/silversmiths, at Cornhill and Ludgate Hill. The partnership was dissolved in 1855 but James continued the business as J.W Benson Ltd. This company continued to get a very good reputation and he became official watchmaker to the Admiralty and the War Department and also to hold a number of royal warrants, being watchmakers to Queen Victoria, the Prince of Wales, the Tsar of Russia, Abu Bakar of Johor and other royal families. He perfected a reliable turret clock design and made a clock for the Great Exhibition of 1862. Over a period of 50 years he supplied at least 300 turret clocks many of which, like the one at Gamlingay, are still giving reliable service and there is an example from 1899 in the Science Museum. J.W. Benson died in 1878 but the company continued until 1973 when it was sold to Garrards.

Gamlingay clock, dated 1869, required hand winding twice weekly, the massive weights travelling through holes in two corners of the ringing room floor. The clock indicates the time on a single face on the West side of the tower. The clock was overhauled and re-located during the re-hanging and augmentation of the bells in 2001. Prior to this the clock was situated in a clock room beneath the bells, where the new bell frame sits, and struck the hour on the tenor bell. It now sits on a purpose-built platform above the bells and strikes the hour on the new 3rd bell. It was fitted with an automated electric winding mechanism by A. James Ltd. of Saffron Walden at this time, which meant that the massive weights were no longer needed (they are still kept at the base of the tower).



In May 2014 the clock was fitted with an electronic regulator supplied by Richard White Clocks of Smeeton Westerby, Leicester. This regulator monitors the MSF 60kHz time signal transmitted by Babcock International, on behalf of the National Physical Laboratory from their transmitter at Anthorn in Cumbria. Any error in the clock is then corrected for during the following hour by applying a magnetic field to the pendulum to either speed it up or slow it down. The regulator is also able to automatically stop/start the pendulum in order to correct the clock when changing to or from daylight saving time.

Purchase of the regulator was made possible by grants from South Cambridgeshire Community Chest and the Friends of St Mary's Gamlingay, and the support of Gamlingay Parish Council.

A video of a working 1901 James W. Benson turret clock can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2k4-niUXWTA>

You can see that the design did not change in the 32 years since our clock was made.

St Mary, Everton cum Tetworth

As in Gamlingay, the church clock shows the time on a dial on the West face of the tower and it originally struck the hour on the fourth bell of a ring of 5 bells. Since the removal of the upper belfry part of the tower following the lightning strike of 16th June 1974 and the fact that the fourth bell now resides in Chicago, U.S.A., the remaining bell (the 3rd bell of the original 5) was used as the clock bell. This bell hangs in a canopied shelter on the tower roof.

The clock was originally housed in the stables of Everton House, a mansion which stood to the North of the church. The clock is dated 1742 but I know of no clue as to the maker except that later 1853 work was by Charles Pepper clockmaker in Biggleswade. There is evidence that James Pepper (the father of Charles?) was a clockmaker in Biggleswade in 1763. The clock was given to the church in 1852 by the Master and Fellows of Clare Hall, Cambridge, the patrons of the Living. The clock was installed in the church tower in June 1853 by Charles Pepper.



In June 1912 the clock was restored and fitted with an electrical winding mechanism by John Bull & Co. of Bedford and the dial plate records this information. John Bull still trade as Jewellers and watchmakers in Bedford but unfortunately have no records of the clock.

Everton clock stopped working towards the end of last year and efforts are being made to get it working and possibly even striking again.

I would like to acknowledge the work of Chris Pickford for the information on Everton's clock and bells.
Photographs by John Boocock

Just for fun....

A few anagrams of places in our Benefice for you to work out:

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|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1. OHCBEU | 6. SETHWAEFHA |
| 2. TPRTHBIUCASCTH | 7. WUODBFOF |
| 3. HANNMTOTSROR | 8. TOTAERHLTWLH |
| 4. SHCQETUNIE | 9. HAJENHATN |
| 5. LTATYEHSAE | 10. YTHROCTEER |

**Please contact Brenda Elcome with anything you would like to go in the weekly newsletter
 BY TUESDAY EVENING**

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A reminder of some key contact details:

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