

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



Weekly newsletter 23 April 2021



Our 50th edition of this



benefice weekly newsletter

From Hilary:

This comes with very much love to you all. I have been reflecting on how we can know ourselves loved and it has led me to offer a profound prayer that you may have a sense, for yourself, of the Divine love for you personally. That love is there for us, absolutely freely given without measure of deserving. BUT it requires our acceptance - as the hymn says 'Easter triumph, Easter Joy, sin alone can this destroy'. When we stop feeling God's love it may be that we are doing things to block it. This is not necessarily our deliberate choice or will, but can be because grief, or some other life circumstance, is getting in the way. While we are blaming God, or someone else, for our pain or trouble it is difficult to receive the loving acceptance that Jesus tells us is there and which Christians (at their best) throughout the ages have lived in.

As I've been grumbled at or challenged once or twice recently, either directly or by implication, with individuals pointing out that what is being done in the Benefice, or to them, is unkind or unfair, I have had to really have a word with the Almighty. Constructive criticism is one thing, condemnation for that which can't be helped, especially when best intentions are taken amiss, is another. This is what I got back:

- There is always an opportunity to address my faults where I have failed in some way, and I must never refuse to do that. In Christ we are offered forgiveness as we repent and through that repentance we have new life. I can make the choice to receive that - it isn't about other people.

- I do not have to carry a burden of unfair condemnation of others, Jesus has done that for me already.

So, let us go on doing our best together - for we have been given to each other for this season of our lives. I will continue to serve the parishes of this Benefice to the best of my ability for as long as God grants me the means to do so. I continue to encourage us all with 'do what we can, let go of what we cannot' - and encourage those who think it's not good enough, to find things to be grateful for rather than being tempted into unkindness over what is not considered good enough.

Thank you, well done

Our Benefice Churches marked the funeral of HRH Duke of Edinburgh with an hour of tolling of bells in all three churches. John Boocock, as well as ringing at Gamlingay, has seen to the recording of all three tributes.' Thank you' to him.

Unsolicited leaflets

One of the Wardens and I have removed a significant number of leaflets put in Gamlingay church without permission. I doubt that any of the readers of this Newsletter would have been responsible but just for clarification: Notices in an Anglican Church are the responsibility of the Vicar and Church Wardens, and their express permission must be requested and given in advance for anything being introduced either around the building or on a notice board.

We will only display notices of general community interest that are also compatible with our mission and ministry and we do not normally provide a platform for anything we are not directly associated with as a whole church - so nothing connected to party-political or single-interest groups.

In this case the leaflets were promoting conspiracy theory concerning Corona Virus and the vaccination programme, distributed by an organisation taking the name of an anti-Nazi student resistance group from WWII. The new group is calling on church people and others to oppose government and flout the law. Please contact me for a private chat about this most concerning phenomenon if you feel the need, and do not be drawn into a false world view by such a strange mixture of half-truths, lies and far-fetched and unprovable speculative assertions.

Services Update

Those who have attended in person have appreciated our return to Covid-regulated worship. We continue to make those services available on-line via Zoom and at Everton additionally on Facebook Live when possible.

To those who would like more or different service provision from that which is currently on offer, I extend my sincere condolences - I share and understand the frustrations of the current times and encourage us all to seek God in this. We are perhaps being given an opportunity to ask for the empowering of the Holy Spirit in a new way, as the need for the fruits of the Spirit are so much in evidence. As we feel our own need, it is easy to forget the needs of others, or at least discount and downgrade them. The reality of our present situation is that pre-Covid provision, often not feeling enough anyway, is just not possible.

We do have Holy Communion every Sunday in the Benefice, particularly important for those whose spirituality is based on the Eucharist, and there will be single parish provision for festivals.

For anyone who can reach Everton Church but not Gamlingay, please be in touch, we can make arrangements for communion there connected with an existing service.

Confirmations

Our confirmation service is now booked for the afternoon of May 30th with +Dagmar. Our prayers are with Peter, Jason and Wayne preparing for that occasion.

Please get in touch if this is something you or someone you know might be interested in, there are other confirmations around the Deanery in the next couple of months.

This week Sunday April 25th, Easter 4

9.30 am Benefice Eucharist at Gamlingay (also on zoom)

6.00pm Benefice Evening service at Everton (also on zoom)

Wednesday 28th 9.30 am Midweek Communion at Gamlingay zoom and in person

Next week:

Sunday May 2nd

9.30 Benefice Communion from Gamlingay

6.00pm Evening service at Everton

Wednesday May 5th

9.30 am Midweek Communion at Gamlingay zoom and in person



Churches Opening times

Everton church Friday-Sunday.

Hatley church can be opened on request.

Gamlingay church daily 9am-5pm

Silver Linings



I do hope the fact that no one has sent in any 'Silver Linings' to last year's clouds doesn't mean that no one can find any!



Of course, the experiences of the last year have been very varied according to individual circumstances, but I would like to suggest that there have been a few positive aspects even for those in the hardest of places.

I offer the following thoughts....

- The many acts of kindness from friends, neighbours and even strangers to those in a less fortunate position than themselves.
- The selfless dedication to duty of those who have continued working in order to keep us all supplied with our everyday needs : Delivery Drivers, Factory Workers, Shop Workers, Pharmacists, Bin Men, Teachers, Carers and many others, as well as all those working in the National Health Service.
- Although we both love it and hate it, Zoom (or whatever other platform you use) has been a blessing during these difficult times – enabling us to see as well as talk to family and friends.
- Zoom has also allowed us to worship together – not as we would like but surely better than nothing?
- For anyone able to get outside, even if only in their own garden, a very real 'silver lining' has been the joy of unpolluted clear blue skies.
- Everything in nature seems to have benefitted from the cleaner atmosphere and we have already, this year, been treated to amazing displays of snowdrops, crocuses, primroses and daffodils. The bluebells in Gamlingay Wood were spectacular last Spring and they are just beginning to show themselves again now.
- Living in a village, as we do, has made everything that much more bearable. For those able to enjoy daily exercise there is probably not an inch of the immediate surroundings that has not been covered and become boring! But how lovely it has been to meet so many other people doing the same thing and exchange a few friendly words or stop for a distanced (sometimes across the road!) chat with friends.
- What a huge debt of gratitude we owe to all those in the pharmaceutical industry who, while we were champing at the bit with all the restrictions placed upon us, were working all hours of the day and night to produce, in record time, the vaccines which are now giving us all so much hope.

Of course, we must not underestimate the horrors of the last year which for so many people have been extreme but in this 50th edition of the newsletter let's celebrate the positives and, if you have any more to add, do send them in for next week.

Brenda Elcome

Please let Brenda have any articles or pictures by Tuesday evening each week to Brenda.elcome@ymail.com



Open Garden Invitations - still available

If you would like a visit to a beautiful garden please contact Anne Clarke who is offering hospitality, and possibly plants to purchase, donations in aid of St Mary's Gamlingay. To make arrangements please contact Anne directly on 651932. Hilary is also offering hospitality in the Rectory Garden, again phone to make and arrangement.

For my recent birthday, I was given a card reminding me of 2 lines from my favourite musical, "Les Miserables", (words originally written in the book by Victor Hugo) both of which are certainly pertinent for me, and I suspect many others, at the moment:



Ian Parker

A reminder of some key contact details:

Hilary Young , Parish Priest	hilaryafyoung@gmail.com	650587
Alec Hissett , Gamlingay/Hatley Churchwarden (outgoing)	alechissett@hotmail.com	650052
Chris Miller , LLM/Reader, Gamlingay/Hatley Churchwarden	cfm55@btinternet.com	650779
Nick Ingles , Gamlingay/Hatley Churchwarden elect	nickingles@me.com	07828 934003
Valerie Miller , ALM Pastoral	vjm55@btinternet.com	650779
Sandra Macrow , LLM Children and Families' minister	sandramacrow@btinternet.com	07958 710703
Dawn Martin , Gamlingay/Hatley PCC Secretary	dawnbeckymartin@aol.com	652832
Eileen Thorpe , Gamlingay/Hatley PCC Treasurer	Eileen.thorpe@hotmail.co.uk	651197
Jane Gurney , Everton Churchwarden		
Jane Butcher , Everton Assistant Churchwarden	jane.butcher59@googlemail.com	680105