

A word from Patrick!! September 2020

Revd Patrick Mukholi makes his debut on the Parish Mag !

‘The New Normal language’

The language around Covid-19 has quickly become part of our daily vocabulary. Unwelcome phrases like ‘social distancing’, ‘self-isolation’, ‘Flattening the curve’ and ‘quarantine’ have invaded our daily conversations. The only place I could do with ‘Flattening the curve’ is my belly.

Incidentally, Karatina is a town in Kenya, which in colonial times was used for quarantining infected cattle. Popular legend says that the name is a result of local corruption of the word quarantine much like *Fearnbeorgan* morphed into Farnborough. Still, listening to the eminent professors of epidemiology at the briefings on BBC, I found ‘Herd immunity’ to be an intriguing phrase. Is that what they think of us?

More to the point, I come to the Benefice as everyone is invariably discussing a ‘New Normal’. Our lives have been turned upside down. What was normal is now the unexpected ‘New Normal’ with all its losses and complications. We are told that, as long as there is no cure or a vaccine for Covid-19, we may have to adjust to a ‘New Normal’. We are constrained into unfamiliar ways of work and social interaction. We have to muffle and suffocate ourselves in enclosed surroundings looking like bank robbers.

School is out and home-working is becoming a trend. Virtual teaching and learning is a nightmare for some as downsized classes are expected with their opening. Restaurants are no longer able to seat the same number of diners, and there are no live concerts or sports or cinema.

For me, the most disappointing of the many is the shutting down of places of worship. I miss the fellowship and congregational worship. I am sometimes tempted to think what a pain all this is. Then I remember that I am a citizen of a country whose economy is robust

enough to absorb all the effects of the coronavirus and lockdown albeit painfully.

I think of those who cannot afford a ventilator or even PPE and the pain of those here and abroad who have lost and those who are about to lose their businesses and jobs.

Does the COVID 19 cloud have any silver lining? Only God knows what the developing 'new normal' is going to be like. As I begin in the Benefice, I would like to apply all that we are learning from the lockdown. The 'New Normal' surely must include more purposeful and creative actions such as reducing our carbon footprint by reducing physical meetings. My pondering continues to consider what new paths COVID 19 has opened up.

Revd Patrick Mukholi, September 2020.

In Memoriam

Monica Cooley

We were very saddened to hear of the death of Monica Cooley at the end of July. She had not been well since a fall last year and, although she returned to Sunday morning worship before lockdown, her health deteriorated. Monica was a very loyal member of St Mary's and she had given enormous support to her late husband Brian when he was Lay Chair. She supported all our events and will be sadly missed by us all.

David Bennett

It is with deepest sadness that, we need to let you know that, sadly ,David Bennett, Margaret Birdseye's partner, died peacefully on Sunday 9th August 2020 at Frimley Park Hospital, with Margaret and one of his sons at his bedside. Please remember Margaret and the family in your prayers. May David rest in peace.

Services within the Parish

The publication of parish Service information for all St Mary's, St Martin's and St Peter's services is provided by the parish website:

<https://www.winkfieldandcranbourne.org.uk/>

Notices of St Mary's services and major parish events are provided less formally by the website of the Friends of St Mary's Winkfield:

<https://www.fosmw.com>

and this site provides an easily accessible link to the parish/benefice web site.

At the time of publication of this Parish Magazine, it has not been possible to provide an authoritative table of service for two months ahead, so the coloured centre pages that have carried this information in more normal times will not be published for now. We do have a draft table of services on page 7 that shows the closest that we can currently plan towards normality.

Virtual services have successfully been held in the Parish since lockdown, and have proved very popular. These currently comprise:

- An 11am service on Sunday mornings, alternating between Morning Prayer and Holy Communion
- Morning Prayer at 9:15am on Tuesdays
- Compline (Evening Prayer) at 8:15pm on Thursdays

The necessary links to these services can be found on the parish website by following the menu item at the top left of the 'welcome' page, (and the Friends' website provides a link).

[https://www.winkfieldandcranbourne.org.uk/livestreamsundayser
vices.htm](https://www.winkfieldandcranbourne.org.uk/livestreamsundayserVICES.htm)

Parish Notices

From the Parish Registers

We have received no birth/marriage/funeral notices from the Parish Registers.

Standing notices

Please note that church and other local engagements and arrangements of all kinds may be affected by the coronavirus situation as it evolves.

Please look for announcements on the Benefice Website.

<https://www.winkfieldandcranbourne.org.uk>

or on the Friends of St Mary's Winkfield website

<https://www.fosmw.com>

Office opening hours: the office is currently closed.

Contact info

Church Office: c/o St Martin's Church, Church Road, Chavey Down,

SL5 8RR Phone: 01344 882933 or email

admin@winkfieldandcranbourne.org.uk

Safeguarding

The welfare of the children, young persons and vulnerable adults within our Benefice is at all times paramount and takes precedence over all other considerations. Safe-guarding is part of our core faith and an integral feature of Christian life in our parish and its churches.

Should you have any safeguarding or welfare concerns, please contact our Parish Safeguarding Officer; via the Church Office:

Mrs Camille Jeffs

Telephone 01344 882933 or email:

safeguarding@winkfieldandcranbourne.org.uk

St Mary's Church

As of the publication date, St Mary' church has commenced physical services. Details of plans will be available on the Parish Website. See also draft plans on page 7 of this magazine.

St Martin's Church

We have no direct details of when St Martin's Church or associated activities will recommence. Please check with the Benefice Website .

St Peter's Church

We have no direct details of when St Peter's Church or associated activities will recommence. Please check with the Benefice Website

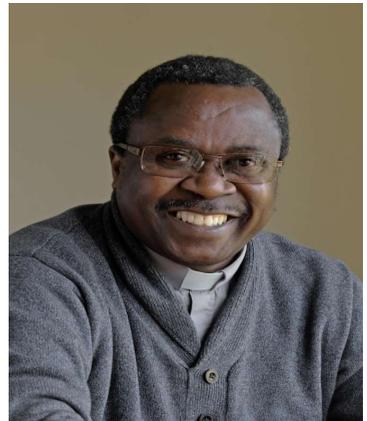
Parish Office

We have no direct details of when the Parish Office will reopen. Please check with the Benefice Website.

Interim Minister

The Revd Patrick Mukholi is now the interim minister of Winkfield, Cranbourne and Chavey Down. Revd Huw Mordecai, remains on sick-leave. And our thoughts and prayers are with him.

Patrick was licensed by +Olivia, Bishop of Reading at a zoom service on 1/7/20 , and since then, he has been very active in the Parish, officiating at services, meeting with Parish people, and engaging with the matters of the Parish.



The Vicar's 'musings'

To help keep Revd Huw Mordecai in your thoughts and prayers, do read 'Musings from a Mordecai' on www.fosmw.com or on the parish website.

Winkfield Parochial Charities - ALMSHOUSE VACANCY

One of the upstairs flats managed by Winkfield Parochial Charities in Church Road, Winkfield has become available.

The small community, with seven other residents, provides accommodation for single elderly women who have retired and face financial difficulties. There is no warden, so residents must be capable of independent living.

The flat with a fully fitted kitchen, living room, bedroom and bathroom with a walk-in shower will be available shortly.

Please ring Richard Wyatt on 07522 306988 or e-mail winkfieldparochialcharities@outlook.com for more information.

**The Winkfield, Cranbourne & Chavey Down Parish
RANELAGH SCHOOL APPLICATIONS
FOR SEPTEMBER 2021 INTAKE**

Four Ranelagh School Verification Surgeries for September 2021 intake are to be held at the Church Office, by appointment only, from 10am to 12noon on the following dates:

1. Wednesday 30 September 2020, 10am – 12noon
2. Wednesday 7 October 2020, 10am – 12noon
3. Saturday 10 October 2020, 10am – 12noon
4. Wednesday 14 October 2020, 10am – 12noon

Please email the Church Office, from Monday 7th September 2020 (telephone and email requests received before this date will not be accepted) to book an appointment. If you have any queries or comments, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the Church Office:

Email: admin@winkfieldandcranbourne.org.uk.

Flowers & Cleaning Rotas

This department will reopen when information becomes available.

Parish Mag preparation, compilation & collation

Please look for information on the Friends' website www.fosmw.com.

What's on

This department of the Parish magazine will reopen when possible.

Draft physical services for St Mary's church

This information is for advisory advance-planning only – please check with <https://www.winkfieldandcranbourne.org.uk> for confirmation or correction

September 2020			
6	10am	Family Communion	

13	10am	Family Matins	Bell Sunday needs to be decided
20	9:30am	Family Praise	
	11am	Holy Communion	Also Zoomed
27	9:30am	Messy Church	Noah's Ark
	11am	Morning Prayer	
October 2020			
4	10am	Family Communion	
10	6am	Evensong	This needs confirmation
11	10am	Family Matins	Harvest
18	9:30am	Family Praise	
	11am	Holy Communion	Also Zoomed
25	9:30am	Messy Church	Parable of the Weeds
	11am	Morning Prayer	
November 2020			
8	10:45am	Service Sheet	Remembrance
15	9:30am	Family Praise	
	11am	Holy Communion	Also Zoomed
22	9:30am	Family Praise	
	11am	Morning Prayer	Also Zoomed
29	9:30am	Morning Prayer	The Lord's Prayer
	11am	Morning Prayer	Advent Carols?

Events, Notices and Dates for your Diaries

NOTICE: 'Crafty Church' (formerly 'Messy Church')

In this popular service, the children are encouraged to participate in craft activities that help them remember a particular bible truth or story. Usually there are between 6 – 8 activities.

Obviously at this time we cannot continue that arrangement so we are trying a new format: 'Activity in the Pew'.

All youngsters will collect a bag as they enter the church containing all they need for the activity. The service will begin and, when it is time for the activity, the instructions will be shown on the screen.

The themes are:-

- ❖ August – Jonah and the Whale
- ❖ September – Noah's Ark
- ❖ October – Parable of the Weeds
- ❖ November – The Lord's Prayer
- ❖ December - Christmas

We look forward to trying this out.

Organ recital on Saturday 12 September

The Organ recital originally scheduled for 6 June then changed to 29 August will now take place on Saturday 12 September, all being well. This recital will be confirmed after the next round of Government Instructions are issued on 15 August.

Please refer to reports on the <https://www.fosmw.com> website.

Jonathan Holl will perform a recital on the recently renovated organ of St Mary's church, to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the instrument. This performance is sponsored by the Berkshire Organists Association, which supports the work of musicians who bring organ music year by year to churches and to the general public.

The performance will include an eclectic variety of works by English, French and German composers, and will explore the capabilities of the instrument in its present form.

Admission will be free, but there will be a retiring collection, and we hope that you will be generous to support the Berkshire Organists Association and St Mary's Church who will share the collection.

Heritage Open Day – St Mary's church – 12/19 Sept

Welcome to England's largest festival of history and culture!

The Heritage Open Days for St Mary's church are Saturdays 12 and 19 September from 10am to 4pm.

St Mary's will be open for visitors to look round the church and, if you wish, join a guided tour – you don't have to book.

Unfortunately trips up the tower this year are not an option, but we hope to have a handbell demonstration on 12 September.

We also hope we are able to serve refreshments.

Harvest Supper 10 October

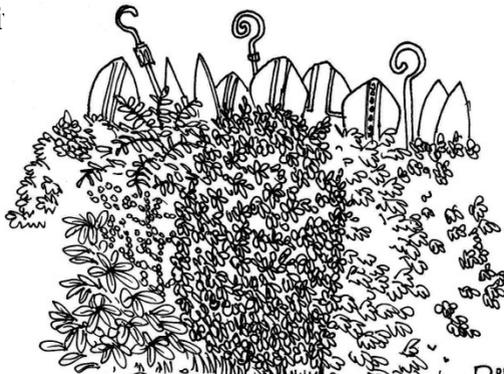
The Harvest supper is scheduled for Saturday 10 October in Popels Hall. Please keep an eye on the websites for the latest information in case there is a change of plan.

Novelty November Fayre – 28 November

The Splendid September Fayre planned for 5 September has been re-scheduled for 28 November 2020 and is now the Novelty November Fayre.

All our external stall holders have been contacted and notified of the change of date. One or two of the outdoor activities will still be operational outside!!

We shall also have stalls from our own Groups, Messy Church, the Guild, the Bell Ringers and the Friends of St Mary's. The Family Praise outdoor activities will probably move inside and Family Matins may gi



News and reports from around the Parish

Return to church

On 2 August, St Mary's held its first service since 15 March – and what a joy it was to be back! The service was a Family Communion. There was no Crucifer, Chalice or servers, and the elements were prepared by Rev Patrick Mukholi (and not taken to the altar by the children). Jonathan Holl provided the music on the organ, finishing with Bach's Prelude in D as a rousing 'voluntary'.

9 August was Family Matins. For nearly three years the children have prepared and performed a play at these services. During lockdown they continued the good work.

The performances were videoed and shown on both the FOSMW and Parish websites. The latest play was also videoed and shown at the service on the screen, as five of the young actors were on holiday at the time of this service.

As there were no hymns (apart from some favourite hymns played on the organ before the service) several musical youngsters played the piano, and the final contribution was a performance on the bell plates.

The readings were taken by the youngsters, and our collection taker guided people to the green bowl!

St Mary's Women's Guild

Unfortunately, as many of you will know the At Home was postponed. However, the draw for the Hamper which became two Hampers because of the generosity of members, took place after the Holy Communion service at St Mary's on August 16.

The winners were announced on 16 August at St Mary's church

We hope we are able to return to our regular meeting on Tuesday 1 September in St Mary's church, but if not, maybe we can meet in the church grounds as we did in July.

The Harvest supper is still scheduled for Saturday 10 October in Popels Hall. Please keep an eye on the websites for the latest information as you will appreciate things change very quickly.

Lesley Philpot, President.

Friends of St Mary's Winkfield

After four months in lockdown, the FOSMW committee was at last able to meet at the end of July. The project for an Improved Sound System was discussed. Initial contact with a couple of companies had been made at the end of 2019 and beginning of 2020 and these would now be followed up.

Discussions at the meeting were wide ranging and it was suggested that a company be asked whether they would be prepared to set up a sound system on a temporary basis (it would need to be paid of course) for a test period – possibly the Music and Merriment concert. This is being investigated.

The improved electrical wiring system will now be the project after that!!

We were very sorry to lose a member of FOSMW when Mrs Monica Cooley died after a long illness. Monica had been a member of the Association since we were formed, and was always supportive and exceedingly generous. She had not been well for some time and our thoughts and prayers go to her family.

'Splendid September Fayre' is now 'Novelty November Fayre', and will take place on 28 November – please see information on page 10 of the magazine. Many of the outside stall holders have said they will take a stall again and our own groups – Guild, Bell Ringers, Family Matins, Family Praise and Messy Church will also be represented. We hope it will be as successful as last year. All proceeds for the church.

We welcome Rosalind and Raymond Grace who have recently become members.

If you haven't yet joined then please consider doing so. Application forms are available in the Church and online on www.fosmw.com (click the [Become a Friend] button).

Lesley Philpot, Chairman

Bellringers

Greetings from the bell ringers!!! Hope you are all keeping well and virus free.

It has been a disappointing month in many ways, with all activities and events still on hold, but so exciting to be back in church!

The tower bells have been inspected and are fit to use; a risk assessment has been completed, and Patrick is happy for us to ring in a limited way.

The Friends of St Mary's Winkfield

Registered Charity: 1162342

present

Novelty November Fayre

Saturday 28th November 12noon-4pm

Carnation Hall, Chavey Down Road

Winkfield Row, RG42 7PA

Lots to do

Animal petting farm

Face Painting Football Fun

Messy Church activities

Pot Luck The Ladder Game

Lots to see

New & Pre-Loved Stall

Book and other stalls

Bell Ringers (sweets in the bell)

Chidren's Magic Show

Balloon modelling

Lots to eat

Afternoon Tea

Barbecue

Ice Cream

Tombola

Information - 01344 427561

info@fosmw.com

Proceeds to St Mary's church

We enjoyed ringing our hand bells before the first church service, on 2 August 2020, and it was wonderful to hear the tower bells again this morning – although we are limited to either 3 or 4 bells (depending on ringers coming from the same household!!).

The family Matins service this morning 9 August 2020 was lovely, with excellent readings and another playlet, on screen, by some of the younger members of the church.

During the hymn slots, as we are not allowed to sing in public, we were treated to musical performances by several of the youngsters.

We continue with our zoom meetings on a Monday evening, as we are not yet permitted to have practice sessions on the tower bells: it is a lovely way of keeping in touch with each other – though not ideal, of course.

We all really hope that we may soon be able to return to our ringing sessions on both hand and tower bells – like everyone at the moment we miss our hobbies!!

Take care and keep well.

Jill Glennerster

Ascot Horticultural Society

To my mind early autumn is a superb time of the year to be out and about enjoying the natural world. The weather can still be pleasantly warm and the sun, now lower in the sky, lengthens shadows and enhances colours. The countryside continues to buzz with life, yet for a while seems to have a more 'laid back' feel about it.

For those lucky enough to have one, an allotment is an excellent place in which to experience the great outdoors. Thankfully, many sites have remained open during the months of 'lockdown'. They have provided welcome opportunities to retreat temporarily from the daily troubles, to benefit from fresh air, healthy exercise and creative activity and to enjoy occasional social exchange whilst remaining adequately distanced.

Today local allotments are mostly around 2.5 poles (~12.5 metres) in length and about 5 metres wide. Tenants span a wide age range. A

liberal atmosphere encourages experimentation with cultivation methods and with plant types and varieties which can include some relatively new and even exotic species, such as bananas, figs, globe artichokes, blueberries etc. Flowers abound.

Sunflowers of all sizes and shades appear to be particularly popular for allotments these days. The huge open blooms are magnets for bees and other pollinating insects, and the seed-heads later offer valuable nourishment for birds. Throughout the growing season, many plots are peppered with bright yellow and orange calendulas (pot marigolds) which self-seed profusely and are simply hoed out wherever they are not wanted. They are said to be particularly good as 'companion plants' for all sorts of vegetables in that they deter aphids and other insect pests. Foxgloves, nasturtiums and poppies also seed themselves freely from year to year. The vibrant display is sometimes supplemented by deliberately planted annuals such as cosmos, ageratums, statice and zinnias. All have a crucial role of pulling in pollinators, and they provide a regular supply of cut flowers to brighten the house and perhaps also exhibit at local shows.

Looking back, the hours of bright sunshine interspersed with spells of gentle rain have made for a generally good growing season this year. A year when Ascot Horticultural Society, celebrating a century since it first affiliated with The Royal Horticultural Society, was expecting to present some particularly memorable events. However as we all know, 2020 has been far from a normal year. Sadly, like countless organisations up and down the country, our Society has not met since March and the programme remains suspended until further notice. Information on the website is of historical relevance only. For updates please call 01344 622086.

Peter Cleare,

The FOSMW Corona Page

We started on the Corona Page on www.fosmw.com in mid March, just after lockdown, as a web-spot to give advice and calm thoughts, even poetry. Over the next five months, it has become a daily

commentary on the corona-virus situation, almost a diary of thoughts on where we are with the pandemic, particularly from the viewpoint of Winkfield, as part of the Bracknell Forest local area. It was a point of policy from the start not to be gloomy, and the word 'death' has hardly ever been used, although the tragic loss of life has never been far from our thoughts, particularly in relation to family friends.

The page has just accumulated material, and nothing has been thrown away. As a consequence, the word-count is in excess of 35,000 – enough for a small book. It is thus very much a kind of diary

The source of information has mostly been the Public Health England website, which has provided raw information on Covid-19 cases, particularly in the six Thames Valley areas, including Bracknell Forest, that we chose to track as a unit. These amount to almost exactly 1M people – a sizeable population, and one that is big enough to be statistically non-lumpy.

Other information has come from journals that we regularly read, and an important additional source has been the New York Times. We were alerted to NYT by a friend living in Phoenix, Arizona, and found their calm and detached viewpoint to be wiser than the high-octane and sometimes hysterical viewpoint of the British press. We left it as a game for our readers to discard the froth from the local press for themselves. We also had some external opinions, including the MP's office, as well as other local government sources. All this was turned into a daily article or two each of 100 words on average.

How did the web-page fare? In mid-April, we linked into Google Analytics, a tool that creates website statistics: we used it to track the use of all the main web-pages of the Friends' website as a whole (www.fosmw.com) (not just the corona-page). This has been a useful and interesting exercise.

The Friends' website has hosted the editorial part of the Parish Mag for some years. The April/May parish mag was the first edition, because of the pandemic, to have had no full delivery of paper copies (there were enough printed copied to support those without access

to the Web); and the web version did not support advertising. The June/July Parish Mags did have the ads, and these created peak users of about 160 in mid-May, and 210 at the beginning of August. However, each peak was followed by a rather depressing trough. To try to counter this, we had introduced a Picture of the Day, with past pictures on their own webpage. This has been surprisingly popular, with more than 480 visits.

The corona- page itself has been visited more than 1,300 times.

Other additions to the website have been the carrying of the Parish Mag in colour and with ads for the first time for the July August edition, with more than 260 visits. The new web-page for parish mag advertisers has been visited more than 130 times.

Easthampstead Rotarians

Rotary Opens Opportunities

We celebrate 'centuries' in many aspects of our lives. People are sent a card from the Queen on their 100th birthday, and in our national sport, Cricket, we celebrate our batsmen scoring 100 runs. Well Rotary is a global charity that is more than 100 years old, growing today to over 1 million men, women and young people who have fun together and help others in the community, both locally and globally.



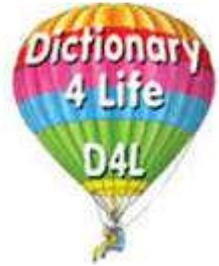
Unlike single purpose charities, Rotarians offer several areas of focus worldwide: promoting peace, fighting disease, providing clean water and sanitation, supporting education, growing local economies, and protecting the environment.

Each year, Rotarians adopt a theme. Appropriately, this year's theme is 'Rotary Opens Opportunities'.

Easthampstead Rotarians, from Bracknell Forest and Wokingham Boroughs, work with other local charities and schools on agreed projects. Most recently, during 'lockdown', we have supported our

Foodbanks, and The Cowshed which provides support to people of all backgrounds in a time of personal crisis. The Cowshed offers good quality cleaned and ironed clothes and other essentials free to anyone in need.

But as our schools plan to re-open in September, Easthampstead Rotarians from Wokingham, Alan Finch and Brian Sutterby, have already been busy delivering 'Dictionaries 4 Life' to several local Berkshire schools. The Dictionary 4 Life, published by Usborne is a 288-page full-colour guide for young enquiring minds. The encyclopedia includes 10,000 entries, 20,000 definitions, and more than 1,000 illustrations. Over 200 have been supplied to several local schools.



Brian explained: "Dictionary 4 Life is a Rotary initiative and represents an integral part of our support for young people."

"We also coach the older pupils on writing a CV and interview techniques" added Alan, who liaises with schools, colleges and local youth groups across Bracknell Forest and Wokingham Boroughs.

"And then there are the Rotary Youth Competitions which we run in partnership with local schools. In recent years, hundreds of our young people have benefitted by participating in our Youth Speaks, Young Writer and Technology Tournaments."

For the full scope of the Rotary Youth Competitions go to:

<https://www.rotarygbi.org/projects/young-people/competitions/>
Easthampstead Rotarians - Making a Difference in the Community

New members and supporters are always welcome. For more information, call Brian on 07720 321 526.

Check out our website: www.easthampsteadrotary.org or follow us on Facebook at

<https://www.facebook.com/easthampsteadrotaryclub/>

Thoughts of all sorts

Patricia Powell comments on her personal experiences during Lockdown

Lowdown on Lockdown

March 8th 2019 – moving day. 40 years plus in a Victorian terraced house in Windsor. A long wait – 4½ years - for Windsor’s first ‘retirement village’, Castle View, to be developed. Did I want to be tagged with ‘retirement’? Was I doing the right thing? Well, I’d had good vibes, so hopefully yes – and it was time to go.

Local man Robin Hughes, inspired by a vision of a comfortable older age for his mother in a thorough-going community, brought it to fruition. Settling into a different scenario of independent apartments with communal add-ons took me a while, but I came to like the easy facility of pleasant indoor and outdoor space, not least the spectacular Sky Lounge.

What has truly sealed it for me though has been lockdown. Even self-isolation, requested at the beginning because I and others had been shopping on that fateful March 2020 weekend, was not a hardship. Food available in-house, supermarket deliveries became the norm, the apartments are very comfortable.

And then! An immediately stepped-up programme of optional activities: films and screenings, life stories, ‘poetry & Prosecco’ (the latter kindly provided by the management), quizzes – all pretty much arranged/devised by residents. Zoom came into its own for yoga, talks and church services. And daily coffee mornings with free pastries!

Not forgetting NHS clapping and occasional balcony singsongs for VE Day and ‘just because,’ led by our singing Marketing Manager Ruth Wilson, out back with her music machine. And NHS Charities fundraising takes place, with measured laps at ground or roof levels, first marathon and now Land’s End to John O’Groats equivalents.

Whilst an urban site, Castle View has thriving planting and wildlife – bird boxes, a hedgehog ‘des res,’ butterflies, all lovely to see. Some residents help with gardening. And long-distance walking

equivalents aside, we have been able throughout lockdown to take the air downstairs and to do the same on the roof. Meteor- and comet-watching also happens there.

Importantly, there is 24/7 cover and there's been the added reassurance of Manager Lisa Fisher, her little dog Benjy, and Catering Manager Caz Hughes (ex-Squires Garden Centre) moving in, with other staff taking every possible care. Impeccable precautions continue. Even our cars have been fine, with driving up and down on-site permitted and tyres checked.

All to view at www.castleviewwindsor.co.uk (and there's still room! I can recommend it).

Patricia Powell

The story behind the Hymn ... ABIDE WITH ME

One of the most famous hymns in the world came out of Brixham, near Torbay, Devon, in 1847.

In those days it was a poor, obscure fishing village, and the vicar was the Rev Henry Francis Lyte. It was a discouraging place to be a pastor, but Henry felt that God wanted him there, and so he stayed, though it was lonely work, and he suffered constant ill health.

By the time he was 54, Henry had contracted tuberculosis and asthma, and he and his family knew he was dying. It would have been so easy for him to look back on his life and feel a complete failure. What had he ever much accomplished? And yet – and yet – Henry knew that in life it is not worldly success that matters, but how much we respond to Jesus Christ, and how much we follow Him.

In September of 1847 Henry was preparing to travel to the south of France, as was the custom for people with tuberculosis at that time. One day before he left, he read the story in the gospel of Luke about the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. They were met by Jesus on the day of His resurrection, and they invited Him to stay with them because it was getting late. “Abide with us”, they said “for it is towards evening.”

“Abide with us – for it is toward evening.” These words struck a chord with Henry, who knew that it was getting ‘towards evening’ in his life. So, he sat down and wrote this hymn as a prayer to God:

Abide with me

*ABIDE with me; fast falls the eventide;
the darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide!
when other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
help of the helpless, O abide with me.*

*2. Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
change and decay in all around I see;
O thou who changest not, abide with me.*

*3. I need thy presence every passing hour;
what but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
who like thyself my guide and stay can be?
through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me.*

*4. I fear no foe with thee at hand to bless;
ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if thou abide with me.*

*5. Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes;
shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies:
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
in life, in death, O Lord, abide with me!*

H F Lite

Shortly after Henry wrote that hymn, he preached his last sermon. He was so ill he practically crawled into the pulpit to do so. A few weeks later, in Nice, France, he died, and so of course he never knew that his hymn would go on to become greatly loved the world over.

Parish Pump

Eventide – story of a hymn-tune

The well-known tune 'Eventide' to which we always sing 'Abide with me' was not the original one. A possible original is suggested in the 1933 English Hymnal: the 'Old 124th' from the Genevan Psalter dated 1551 – and (apart from the latter requiring a repeated 4th line), there are strong musical relationships between the vocal line of 'Old 124th' and Eventide.

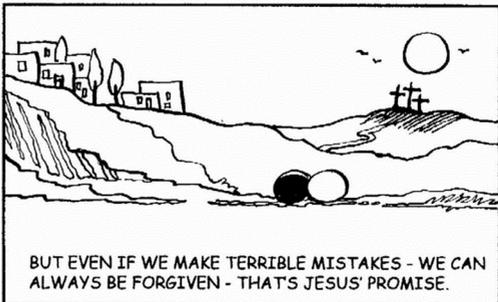
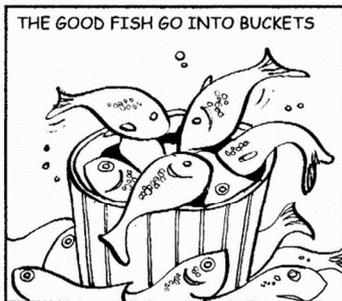
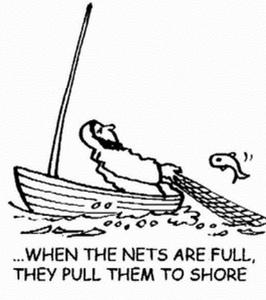
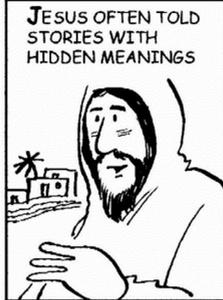
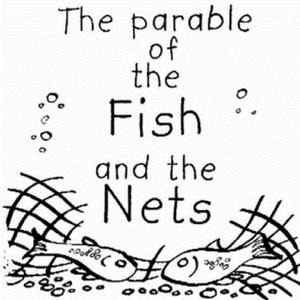
The composer of 'Eventide' was William Henry Monk (1823 – 1889). William came from a City of London Guild family (his father was a Tallow Chandler, and in 1846 he married Hope Pillow, daughter of a Master Lighterman). He was clearly very musical from a young age, and received a very good musical education towards becoming an organist. He became organist of St Peter's, Eaton Square in his teens, and became well established in the profession.

Their daughter Florence was born in 1849. Unfortunately, when she was a toddler she developed a severe brain complaint, and was only two years old when she died of a stroke. Her disease would have caused great anguish to her young parents. In a letter written in 1891, Hope recalls that, shortly after the tragedy of Florence's death, she and William were standing at a window watching the setting sun, and the words of 'Abide with me', new and popular at the time of Florence's death, came into William's mind. He immediately composed another tune for it – Eventide.

Why is it such a great tune? Its beautiful simplicity is a starting point. Each line goes only up or down a single step, except at one point per line. It modulates to the dominant at the mid-point – very common. The harmony was dissonant for its time of composition, surprising for contemporary ears, but clearly it struck the right balance. Having started from Old 124th, it transcended that tune.

Interestingly, some of William's other well-known hymn tunes come from old chorales (e.g. Crüger), so he was very aware of the hymn tune genre, new and old. Several of his tunes are well-known (e.g. Merton, Ethelwald), but he really hit the mark with Eventide.

Children's Corner



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