

Keep Connected! - Community Matters
Serving the Parish and Wider Mottingham

Issue 28, 7 March 2021

Dear Reader This issue's header photo was taken in the Tarn last Sunday, when Spring was definitely in the air and work in the garden beckoned. It's a busy time for gardeners as they prepare the ground for new growth during Lent and in the run up to Easter.

In response to the request on the parish website this issue reports readers views on Lent - its meaning to them and what they are doing to mark this year's Lenten season. Take a look at the item on the home page www.standrewandstalben.org.uk where you will find 'Love's Remedy', a poem by **Revd Ian** marking his seasonal reflection (hard copy will be circulated to those without internet access).

Community Matters - this time also includes responses to the Lent request (above).

Imogen, Rafe & Theo met **Alison** in a very wet Fairy Hill earlier this week, as you can see! Imogen said, "You can tell how wet the boys were. They got straight into the bath and stayed there for an hour!" Imogen went on to say, "The little Days are very excited to be going back to school and Sophia is happy to have secured a place at Eltham Hill. She's expecting to be able to lie in until she hears the bell!" (No doubt the big Days are just as excited! - Ed). Imogen would like to thank everyone for their ongoing moral and practical support during what has been an especially challenging time for the Day family.



(This cartoon (from Private Eye) is an observation on the impact of the pandemic on children's education - Ed)

David & Thelma sent this **Lent Acrostic**;

Lent is a time of moving forward
Eding towards the glory of Easter
Needing the amazing grace of the Cross
Treading in the footsteps of Jesus

In this way **Lent** is a bit like the whole of **L**ife



Iris Miller sent me this photo of her lovely Iris bulbs in bloom, saying that she has joined Revd Ian's Lent Course. She is also listening to Dean Robert Willis at Canterbury Cathedral and trying to keep a Lent diary at his suggestion.

Ray Andrew has been keeping me up to date with Silver Voices' campaigns on the NHS and Social Care as well as the restoration of free TV licences for the over 75s. A parliamentary debate was held on 1 March 2021. The matter is still under debate and we await the outcome.

Diane Hudson emailed saying, "Lent means that I will attend Revd Ian's Ecumenical Bible Study which I enjoy. Lent also means it is Springtime and I love this time of year." Diane also says, "Pauline and Clifford Mayes moved from Mottingham on 5 March having lived on Sidcup Road for 54 years. Many of you will know, Pauline was churchwarden and Clifford a sacristan at St Andrew's for many years. Pauline also helped with the Mottingham Ladies Afternoon Group. They

have moved to be near their daughter and now live at 11 Russett Road, East Peckham, Tonbridge TN12 5BS.”



Eliza Robinson has been busy with her paintbrush again, as you can see. She showed this painting after the St Andrew's Zoom service last Sunday (28 February), saying she felt inspired to do it; no particular reason. Another uplifting and lovely addition to her growing portfolio. Pictured here with Podge, her guinea pig, seven year old Eliza is growing fast and after a year of uncertainty, is looking forward to going back to school this coming Monday - at last!



Jane Cornish sent me this Daily Telegraph cartoon the other day. Another amusing and pertinent observation by Matt on the impact of the coronavirus pandemic! I met Jane's husband **Bob** as I was passing their house on my way home from the Tarn last Sunday afternoon. Bob is a keen gardener and also tends an allotment. Sadly, current restrictions prevented me from going into their back garden so I had to be content with this 'spring' view and a catch up over the garden gate!



Revd Anne Hoad's sermon on 21 February opened "In Lent we sometimes think of giving something up to increase our discipline. But I think we should reverse it and think of taking something up." Accordingly, for Lent, Revd Anne is reading and praying more often and more deeply. (You will find the full sermon on the parish website main menu under Faith/Sermons - Ed).

Iris Osborne sent me a pre-Lent letter with five facts about St Valentine's Day, the first of which I included in issue 26. Here is fact 2, *It all began with birds* - The association between St Valentine's Day and love didn't actually begin until the Middle Ages. The earliest example is in a poem by Geoffrey Chaucer in which he describes the day as the first when birds choose their mates. Traditionally, girls believed they could tell what kind of man they would marry by the type of bird they saw first on Valentine's Day. A blackbird meant they would marry a clergyman, a robin meant a sailor, a goldfinch a rich man, a bluebird a happy man and a woodpecker meant they wouldn't marry at all!

Sue Wood says, "With all the restrictions of lockdown I've found it very difficult to think about giving up anything or doing something extra for Lent. In the past I've given up chocolate, cakes and the like, but this isn't an option as my husband **Mick** and I are currently following a healthy eating plan.

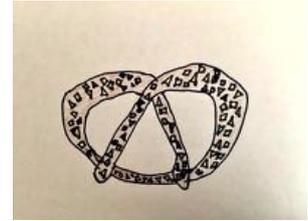
A few years ago I realised Mum (**Betty Walsh**) was using a small book 'Inspiring Women' for Bible reading every day so I started using her book during Lent. To my surprise, I'm still reading it every morning. Sometimes I fall behind with the readings, but I learnt this is meant to be, as when I do catch up, the readings are relevant to my needs at the time!"

Pat Hubbard sent me copy of the March issue of the Chislehurst Commons newsletter which features photos of birds recently spotted around Rush Pond, including long-tailed tits. Pat was amazed to discover that their nests are lined with over 1,500 feathers and wonders where they all come from! If you know the answer, please let Pat know. In thinking about my request on what Lent means, Pat was horrified to realise that Lent had already begun. Christian festival dates have come as a surprise and so, unusually, she hasn't prepared. Normally, she reads a book that she wouldn't usually think of. She rediscovered a book which has been on one of her shelves for many years, but gave up the struggle on realising the words didn't convey any meaning to her. She has since started reading *Life in the Garden*, by Penelope Lively and this is her book for Lent 2021.





Samuel Walsh, a talented young artist, drew this pretzel during last week's Zoom service. Mum, **Michelle**, says, "Apparently the pretzel is made in the shape of two arms crossing. In Latin, the pretzel is called 'bracellae', meaning 'little arms'. Pretzels are made of a simple mixture of water, flour and salt. an ideal food to be eaten during Lent. We're going to have a go at making them later."



Norman & Beryl Woodard have been in touch with **Ann Pilcher**, who sends her best wishes to everyone. Sadly, Ann's brother, David, passed away unexpectedly, recently. The funeral took place on Friday 19 February. Our thoughts and prayers are with Ann at this most difficult time. The recent report (Keep Connected! issue 27) of the Egyptian Goose, Alfie, in Mottingham Gardens prompted Norman & Beryl to say. "Bardhill Sports Ground opposite our home has been developed into a school activity centre. It has a pavilion for lectures and cookery classes, raised beds for vegetables, sports facilities and a pond, which frequently attracts Egyptian and Canada geese. We do not appreciate the night 'music' which is loudly accompanied by the local foxes!" (Have you seen any greylag geese there? They are now common visitors to the Tarn and usually outnumber the Canada geese - Ed).



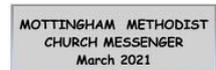
Church Matters

David Mouqué attended yesterday's (6 March) Woolwich Lay Conference and sent me this summary report:

Make a difference wherever you are!

This was Mark Greene's keynote speech at the Woolwich Lay Conference on Saturday. He told the story of a captured servant girl taken into exile, alone and isolated, in the wrong place with the wrong people at the wrong time (2 Kings 5). Yet she grasped the opportunity to point her master towards God's help, with boldness and faith, and she became the first link in the chain towards Naaman's healing and faith in God:

- There are more opportunities than we think; ask God to give us eyes to see them
- The earth is the Lord's and he works wherever he chooses, not just 'in church'
- God is with us wherever we go to help us make a difference and do what we can
- God can "stretch out his hand" to our neighbours, friends and the people we meet



Pause,
Pray,
Remember.



Ruth Henschel compiles the Methodist Church Messenger and has sent me copy of the March edition. Please contact Ruth if you would like copy. Alternatively, email me and I'll send it to you.

Archbishop of York Stephen Cottrell, has just published his latest book, 'Dear England; Finding Hope, Taking Heart, And Changing The World'. He says, "I'm writing this because I want to explain to you why I am a Christian and why I'm trying to follow the Christian way." In the words of reviewer Revd Malcolm Guite, Girton College, Cambridge, "the book is a refreshing, candid, unabashed and, mercifully, jargon-free letter to all of us." (I am reading this book for Lent - Ed).

St Andrew's Memorial Garden - **Alison Lawrie** writes, "Gardening work has been continuing throughout lockdown in the Church's Memorial Garden, by the side entrance to the Mumbray Hall. **Tessa Andrew** and **Beryl Woodard**, with the help of **Ray** and **Norman**, have regularly visited to maintain the plants and flowers which have been placed there, watering in summer and tidying throughout the autumn and winter months. Painted pebbles have been placed on the bench and amongst the blooms, a touching reminder that this space attracts visitors who wish to keep alive memories of loved ones. The flower beds and borders visible from the road are also showing signs of spring. Thank you Beryl and Tessa for your work, which is much appreciated.



CTIM World Day of Prayer - On Friday 5 March at St Edward's, **Revd Catherine**, on behalf of Churches Together in Mottingham, introduced the 2021 World Day of Prayer Service. Readers and singers, representing the five churches of the CTIM group, joined forces, via Zoom, to present a special service prepared by the Christian women of Vanuatu, a cluster of South Pacific islands. The service highlighted the difficulties faced by Vanuatu's women to access education, nutritional food and employment, but emphasised the hope and strength received through their Christian faith. Juliette Pita designed the striking cover to the service booklet.



Mottingham Matters

Mottingham Library - Librarian **Christine Davis** runs the library book club which has been meeting over Zoom on Friday evenings throughout the lockdown. If you are interested in joining a book club, email Chris at christine.Davis@gll.org.

Library re-opening plans are as follows: The library will be open from Monday 8 March for *Click & Collect* only (Sadly, food bags, garden waste stickers etc are unavailable and there is no access to computers or photocopying). Opening hours are: Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat -all from 10am to 2pm. To reserve items for collection please visit <https://capitadiscovery.co.uk/bromley/> or email mottingham.library@gll.org or phone 020 8857 5406 (have your library card to hand) or drop a note through the door.

You can request a random bag of books on a specific theme (eg cookery or crime etc).

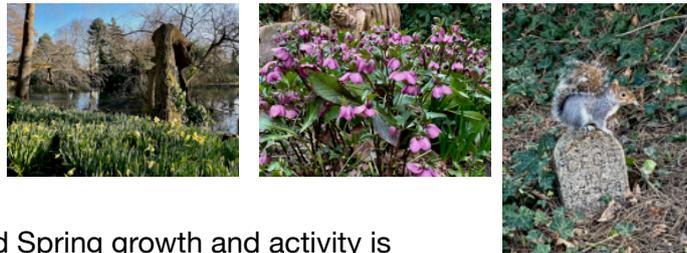
Environment Matters

Here are some photos taken in local areas of natural beauty recently:

Sutcliffe Park- Heavy rain in February caused the Quaggy to flood the park which has served as a natural water meadow since it was re-landscaped in the 1960s. A few trees on the river banks had fallen. Water levels had receded when I visited, although the Quaggy was still pouring in. The cormorant was in its element!



The Tarn lake and wildlife have benefitted from increased water flow during February and Spring growth and activity is beginning to appear. The volunteers continue to work hard in keeping this lovely local amenity looking clean, tidy and attractive, despite the constant battle with litter and rubbish.



Chinbrook Meadows These photos were taken on a recent walk from home to the meadows via Mottingham Lane and Marvels Lane. Quite a few people were there despite the lack of them in the two adjacent photos.

Our walk also revealed the less attractive side of humanity too, as you can see in the two photos below them - a discarded saw in the Quaggy near Marvels Lane ('Eye-saw' - Ed) and 'No Fly Tipping' - says the sign to the left of the abandoned bed and mattress outside Marvels Lane Pre-School! Surely we can do better than this?



In Closing - We all know the terrible impact that the pandemic has had. We are now at the point where life can gradually return to normality - children will return to school tomorrow! The first anniversary issue on 28



March will be a special edition at a time of hope. Our congregations will meet again soon. The combined 2020/21 Annual Parochial Church Meeting is scheduled for 23 April. It will review the period, appoint church officers and outline the future. Attendees can express views. If you have ideas on the future direction of St Andrew with St Alban share them with Keep Connected in time for the next issue. Be bold and reach for the moon!
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