



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

Issue 29, 28 March 2021
First Anniversary!

Dear Reader, welcome to the 29th issue since Keep Connected! was launched a year ago, on the imposition of the first Covid-19 lockdown in 2020. Now, as the vaccination count nears 30 million, the third lockdown is gradually easing and Spring has arrived, we look forward to regaining sorely missed freedoms; freedom to be with friends and loved ones, freedom to visit and travel and freedom to worship together in church again. I hope this issue brings some further encouragement and cheer to our local community.

Mottingham Matters

Magpie Dance has drawn my attention to the work of Magpie Dance, an inclusive charity for people with learning disabilities. Through dance, participants gain life, social and communication skills with added health and wellbeing benefits. Laura Graham, Magpie Dance Team Executive Director says, “We have received funding to deliver an Easter and Summer School in Mottingham. The first event will take place on Zoom, but when it is safe to do so, future events will move to Mottingham including a Summer School in August and ‘Days of Dance’ across the year.”



“The online (Zoom) Easter school events will be held at 10:30am-3pm each day from Tuesday 13 to Thursday 15 April and costs £12.50 per day or £30 for all three days. Separate sessions for juniors (aged 8+), youth and adults; join in the fun of 3 days of dance and creativity to live music. What’s more, there is a special offer for Mottingham residents. If you’re based in SE9, you can attend the first day for free, with no obligation to join for the rest of the week. Just quote ‘SE9’ when booking for this exclusive offer. Email admin@magpiedance.org.uk or call 07597 266717 for details and to book.” For more information visit www.magpiedance.org.uk.

Ted Rowlands sent me this article on ‘Shopping in Mottingham Village’ encouraging us to support our local shops -

Late last year I took my car in for a service at the main dealer in Orpington. Whilst the car was being serviced the garage phoned me to say that the car needed a new tyre, and they gave me a hefty price and said they would proceed. I stopped them there and then, and made enquiries of local tyre depots. Mottingham Tyre Centre in the village said they could fit 2 tyres of the same specification for virtually the same price as the main dealer wanted to charge for one tyre. Mottingham Tyres got the business. This made me think....

Here in Mottingham Village we have a fine local shopping area facing Mottingham Road and Court Road. There is variety. We have a Post Office, a chemist, two full local supermarkets and a small general grocery. Eateries abound from takeaways to eat-in’s. Car spares: pets: carpets: estate agents? Mottingham’s got them - and more. The local shopping area has had its ups and downs

over the past few years. A number of shops closed as their leases came up for renewal, and some have not re-opened. The pandemic will take its toll as well, the florist on Court Road has vacated the premises (pity as it was a good florist), and other retailers may well be affected. As the pandemic eases, and shops re-open, let’s not forget the shops in Mottingham Village. There are good reasons to shop there.

Research on spending by local authorities shows that for every £1 spent with a small or medium-sized business 63p stayed in the local economy, compared to 40p with a larger business. Local jobs are created, with local retailers tending



to be more flexible employers; and local business owners tend to hire people who represent the demographics of the surrounding community. Public benefits far outweigh public costs. Local businesses require comparatively little infrastructure and more efficiently utilise public services relative to chain stores (Lidl wanted the roundabout area in the village to be reconfigured to accommodate their proposed shop- good job the council threw out their planning application).

In Mottingham we tend to walk to the local shops if we live near enough, and there's free parking if we drive. The environmental footprint is smaller shopping locally. We often use local shops for top-up shopping, when the paracetamol has run out, or we have run out of milk; if we didn't have our local shops, we would really miss them. So it certainly is a good idea to shop locally; it helps to give Mottingham Village its identity, and it shows our loyalty to our local retailers. The shops are a friendly environment, and I find that I get better customer service. Let's go for it. Shopping local really does benefit the local economy. *(Well said, Ted - Ed)*.

Other News: Sadly, it seems that local crime is on the increase so you are urged to be vigilant and look out for your neighbours and one another, where possible. **David & Thelma Mouqué** had the catalytic converter on their Toyota Prius stolen recently. **Kay & John Ash** and **Beverley & Geoff Howard** own the same model of car and have also previously suffered this fate.



A spate of burglaries have been reported in Court Road near St Andrew's in the last week. Details are reported on the Court Road WhatsApp group.

On a more uplifting note I spotted **Simon Charlick** clipping the tree shrub in his and **Barbara's** Court Road front garden the other day on my way to the Tarn. *(Good to see you at work, Simon and hope you are soon back on the golf course! - Ed)*

Community Matters

Beryl & Norman Woodard celebrate their diamond wedding anniversary this coming Easter. Here they are emerging from the west door of St Andrew's 60 years ago flanked by a guard of honour from the 16th Royal Eltham scouts, who look very smart in their uniforms. The wedding took place on 1 April and in their keenness they had overlooked the fact that it was April Fools' day - it was OK though, as the wedding was held at 1pm! **Congratulations Beryl & Norman on your 60th anniversary** and thank you for your long



association with and support for St Andrew with St Alban and in particular the uniformed organisations. More recently, Beryl & Norman were following the Green Chain Walk along Southwood Park in New Eltham and came across this beautiful rainbow. It was created by the Friends of Southwood Park in memory of all those who have passed over the rainbow during the current pandemic.

Iris Osborne keeps in touch and sent me this poem by John Darley. You may recall that Iris sent me five facts about Valentine's Day. Here is the fourth: "In the 1800s Richard Cadbury produced the very first box of chocolates for Valentine's Day, something we exchange more than 35 million of on 14 February! If you've ever wondered why chocolate boxes are often tied with ribbon it's because of a middle ages tradition where knights competing in tournaments would receive ribbons as good luck tokens from their sweethearts!"

*I can feel that it's coming - there's change in the air
The barometer's showing, the weather set fair
It may be too early, to hope that it's true
Yet the dark skies of winter, have begun to turn blue.
Life stirs in the garden, as Spring now attends
With flowers returning, like favourite old friends.*

Tessa & Ray Andrew sent me a photo of this recent Spring visitor to their garden. They say it's the third one they've seen in their garden in recent times and apologise that the photo doesn't show more detail. Understandably, they didn't want to disturb it. It's good to know that this once common garden visitor has reappeared in Mottingham (*If you have seen a hedgehog in your garden recently please let me know - Ed*).



Church Matters - St Andrew with St Alban

C **Mothers' Sunday** this year was celebrated in children's paintings, cards and flowers, some of which you can see here:

Laura Baugh received these cards (right) from her children Rosa and Roman. She said, "Beautiful cards to wake up to this morning. Thank you for always thinking of the children of the church on important days."



Sophia & Theo Day showed their spring paintings (left) after the Zoom service on Mothers' Sunday.

Beverley Howard received this lovely bouquet and card, (pictured right) from son Dominic



Young Tate Mottingham

The Spring/Easter exhibition display is now on St Andrew's noticeboard and features some lovely paintings by the children including Kostas Makaranidu, Eliza Robinson, Austin Bird, Sophia Day, Theo Day and Atticus Bird. Do take time to have a look if and when you are passing by the church. Thanks to Sarah Bulford Welch for organising and arranging the display of original artwork.



The Online Auction organised and run by Revd Ian on Saturday 20 March to raise funds for the Greenwich and Bexley Community Hospice raised over £1300 and was a great success. Many lovely items were generously

donated, including original paintings by Geoff Howard (right), Andrew Howard, Linda Robins and Phyllis Luyt (Beverley's mother), as well as jewellery and greeting cards made by Dawn Potts. Other items included Wedgwood, Thomas bone china and a classical guitar! Great fun was had by all and many thanks to the generous donors and purchasers. The Hospice greatly appreciates the generous contribution and the effort that went into raising the funds.



Holy Week and Easter Services are listed on the homepage of the parish website together with the 2021 Electoral Roll notification and information on this year's Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM), which, because of the pandemic, will cover both 2020 and 2021.

Please check the website for the details, copy of which will be provided separately and distributed with the printed edition of this issue for those without internet access.

Existing PCC members are aware that the position comes with legal responsibilities and duties as a trustee under charity law. The Church of England booklet 'Trusteeship - An Introduction for PCC Members' outlines these clearly.

It is recommended that prospective PCC members should read and understand these *before* considering any nomination. The six page booklet is accessible via the link in the APCM information on the homepage. I can provide printed copy if you are interested.



Rector's Pastoral Message Holy Week & Easter 2021

Revd Ian's pastoral letter has been circulated to parishioners. The full letter is on the website and is accessible via a link below this summary message on the homepage:

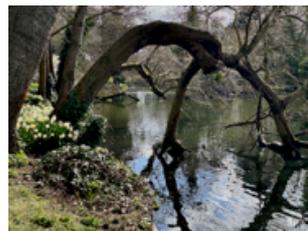
This holy Season of Easter coincides with the anniversary of the first lockdown; it is a time to reflect on the trauma, the challenges and the lessons that the last year has brought. These have been unprecedent times for all of us. The Covid-19 death toll is now more than three times the number of those who lost their lives in the blitz of 1940-41 - the last great national trauma. This is a sobering statistic. It calls, more than ever before, for the counter-balance of the hopeful Christian message of Jesus Christ's Resurrection: the message that out of bleak despair and death, God can create a hope and glorious gift of life beyond our imagining! This is the joyful message we share at Easter-tide.

Wishing you and your loved ones a holy, blessed and joyous Easter. Revd Ian Welch.

In closing Church Matters, here's the Church Times' take on a Palm Sunday service over Zoom, which has literally been a Godsend during the past year! What would we have done without it? Nevertheless, we are all looking forward to meeting one another in church again.



Environment Matters: Just a brief mention of our local nature reserve - The Tarn. I've visited on several occasions this month to observe the arrival of Spring. Here are a few recent photos, which I hope will encourage you to visit and enjoy the daffodils before they fade and 'go over'.



In Closing: It has been my privilege to launch, produce and edit Keep Connected! since we came up with the idea at the outset of the first lockdown in March 2020. I was able to take this on because of my past work experience and my role in developing and managing the current parish website. A long-term and ongoing interest in photography, which started when I was a student, has been an invaluable asset.

A website is a repository for information, a platform for communication and an opportunity for growth. This was made obvious when the parish joined HeartEdge as a founder member in 2017. Other member churches' websites were better than our existing one, so that stimulated the development and launch of our current website in Holy Week 2018. Yes, it's been 'live' for three years now and has gradually developed over that time. So, we have a valuable asset, but could and should we use it to better effect? The answer is undoubtedly, yes.

Many churches have suffered a drastic loss in income over the last year; many will struggle to recover and some will not. Significant effort focused on clear vision, plans and a communications strategy will be essential to encourage growth and promote interest and take-up. These challenges face all PCCs to a greater or lesser extent; our own being no exception. The upcoming APCM will affirm the membership of a newly elected PCC as required by the rules. It will be its challenge to address these issues and work together for a sustainable future. Clear leadership and co-ordinated communications will be a 'must'. The website and a newsletter are fundamental components of this. The new PCC will need to consider how these and other key activities could and should be managed to address the current shortfall and achieve the growth needed for future sustainability.



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