

Parish News

St Peter and St Paul, Little Gaddesden

50p

April 2021



St Peter and St Paul, Little Gaddesden HP4 1NZ
Berkhamsted Team
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We are in the Berkhamsted Team Ministry with Great Berkhamsted, Great Gaddesden and Nettleden with Potten End. Enquiries regarding Baptisms, Banns, Weddings, Funerals and Memorials in the Churchyard should be made to the above-mentioned email address. Messages can also be left with the Churchwardens. If the Vicarage telephone is on the answering service please leave a message. It will be attended to as soon as possible. To contact The Berkhamsted Team, please call The Parish Office on 01442 878227.

All are welcome to our House of God. All have their place in His Kingdom and their part to play in His work

Phone numbers preceded by code 01442 except Heather Tisbury

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SUNDAY SERVICES:

Due to the Covid pandemic, our normal rota of services is still disrupted but we are starting to get back to a more regular timetable.

From this month, we are having many more services in church.

By May, we anticipate being able to start our Evening services (either Evensong or Evening Worship) at 6.00pm and the Mid-week service will resume on a Thursday morning at 10.00am.

However, please do continue to check our website for the most up-to-date details.

BELL RINGING: Sunday 8.30 am Practice: Tuesday 8.00 pm
Tower Captain – Mrs Virginia Westmacott LG 842428

CHOIR PRACTICE: Friday 7 pm – Mr John Leonhardt LG 843550

LITTLE GADDESSEN C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL: We welcome all children aged 4 – 11. Contact the Head Teacher, for more information on 01442 842464 or admin@littlegaddesden.herts.sch.uk

PARISH NEWS EDITORS: Mrs H Hockings, Mr D Nowell-Withers, Dr N Murray, Mr M Walsham
See inside back page for contact details.

SAFEGUARDING OFFICER: Mrs Heather Tisbury 01582 842807

WEEKLY UPDATES: PEW SHEET distributed each Sunday. Items for inclusion should be sent to Helene Hockings, a_dmin-church@outlook.com by 9 am on each **Thursday**

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR: Helene Hockings on a_dmin-church@outlook.com or 01442 842493

Vol 44 No.04

Dear Friends,

Easter is upon us!

There is a real sense this year that it marks a turning point in the Pandemic. We are not out of the woods yet, but there is light at the end of this long dark tunnel. Spring is here, new life is appearing all around us emphasising all that Easter means. So afresh, we mark the death and celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. There is new purpose and more hope perhaps than ever this year.

Here are the words of the Easter Anthems taken from St Paul's letters to the Corinthians and Romans, reminding us of that message in St Paul's words:

'Christ our passover has been sacrificed for us: so let us celebrate the feast, not with the old leaven of corruption and wickedness: but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.' 1 Corinthians 5.7b, 8

'Christ once raised from the dead dies no more: death has no more dominion over him. In dying he died to sin once for all: in living he lives to God. See yourselves therefore as dead to sin: and alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord.' Romans 6.9-11.

Thinking back to a year ago, when there was so much uncertainty, I was streaming all the services live from my sitting room, not knowing what was going to happen next and things became no more clear as the weeks and months rolled on. For my generation and younger, in fact all those with no living memory of the last world war, it was the first time we had had to face the reality of death on our doorsteps, from a source beyond and outside our control. We were all in it together, the virus as indiscriminatory as any weapon of mass destruction, with so many families affected and afflicted by isolation, illness and the death of loved ones, family members as well as friends. Mercifully, many of us in this area have been spared the very worst of Covid 19, but the frustration of life that the pandemic has brought has been there for us all. Seemingly inconsistent rules and regulations have left us bewildered at times.

But it has not been all bad; as people we have learnt to adapt and live within our new environment – hand washing, face mask wearing and of course social distancing. Perhaps in some ways, things may never be quite the same again and perhaps in some ways, that might be a good thing? We have learnt new skills; I for one have become (slightly) more adept at live streaming and recording services. Through the support and knowledge of others, I have learnt much more about recorded sound and websites and Facebook pages and YouTube. We have discovered meetings on Zoom (other platforms are available). Who would have thought it?

Another benefit I have also found is that I have had much more time to read and reflect. Unlike many of my colleagues around the country, I have been spared the need to take as many funerals as I might have expected, and certainly there has only been one wedding and perhaps three baptisms in all this time. You might be justified in thinking that I've been putting my feet up, unfortunately not! One of the most difficult things I have had to do is make decisions which affect the church and the parishes. As a result I have a great deal of sympathy for our Government and all those in authority and continue to pray for them with extra verve for all that they have to do.

I suppose above all, sadly this Pandemic has brought the reality of death very much closer to all of us and amongst the reading I have been able to do during these months, I found this:

As we look towards the ending of our own lives or grieve for the loss of a loved one, we would be wise to reflect on this truth: that the life we regard as lost was just the early, still-unformed image of the fullness of all it shall be, just the brief trailer for an adventure into a life we cannot yet imagine. Grief will obscure our vision, but love is the key that unlocks this deep truth. All the love we have given and received is indestructible. It's the golden thread that binds our partial earthly life to our complete eternal life. Love never dies. Love grows. Love alone abides.

That is at the heart of the Easter message. Happy Easter.

I am yours in Christ, John.

**Annual Parishioners Meeting
and Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

Thursday 22nd April at 7.00pm via Zoom
(this is a change of date and venue)

**Please let the Vicar know if you would like to attend this meeting.
The Zoom invitation will be sent out a few days before.
vicar@littlegaddesdenchurch.org.uk**

All parishioners on the Electoral Roll are very welcome to 'attend' this meeting to find out what has been happening during the last year and to ask questions of the Vicar and the Churchwardens.

The Thomas Field Hall

Friday, 26th February 2021 will be remembered as a special day: Practical Completion of the Thomas Field Hall was certified. The builders handed the keys over to Vicar John and we had possession; it was a very exciting moment.

The building is now an extension to our church and stands ready for use. Of course, while the Covid 19 restrictions are still in force we can't occupy the building so while we wait, the kitchen is being equipped and cupboards built to provide storage for the items which were in the old vestry and are necessary to the life of the church. We have had many sort outs and removed a lot of redundant material in order to end up with only what is really needed, plus important historic documents and records, which will be carefully stored. We will then be able to move into the new building, empty the Bridgewater Chapel, take down the temporary screen and restore the church to its normal state.

Barbara Sheard

FOREST ASH TO FOREST TRASH

How sad to see all the felled ash trees, I never realised just how many ash there were. (Thinks: Duh, the clue's in the name, Dummy - 'Ashridge'). But anyway, you can only hope that they do not go the same way as the mighty elm. Ash do tend to grow like weeds - ask anyone who lives near a tree - the seedlings are very difficult to pull out and they take over with spindly, mis-shapen outcrops crowding out light and everything else if allowed to and are much more likely to succumb to the ash dieback disease.

Ash is a very useful wood, though. In the good old days of hedges and ditches ash would be grown in the hedge near the farm gates and used for wagon wheels as it is malleable but strong. It makes beautiful furniture; I recall some that had been felled in Dancers End Nature Reserve near Tring which was a lovely pink colour and intended for a table. Ash wood is just the best for fires; it can be burned green without smoking or spitting (unlike some of the old lumberjacks and cowhands in Western movies).

Of course, it is also notorious for the old saying (I hate to say this, honestly. I had promised I wouldn't), 'ash before oak, in for a soak, oak before ash, in for a splash'. At the time of writing it looks like the oak is ahead, but as ash isn't well, it's not a fair comparison anyway. Although, ahead of any hosepipe bans, might it be a good idea to put out a few buckets? On the brighter side, much of the ash has been used by National Trust workers to create lovely habitats for invertebrates, insects, small mammals such as the beloved and frighteningly scarce hedgehog, and birds such as wrens, which are so badly needed, and of course some trunks are being used to protect verges and other badly damaged places due to irresponsible and selfish visitor car parking.

I hope that the violets which grow alongside the footpath down to the Valley, outside the south end of the N.T. meadow on the far side of the Green, which also shelter some beautiful white ones, won't have been

trodden out of existence by the footpaths being widened by all the extra footfall over the past year. I know that it is hoped that heifers, when separated from their Mum's, can be grazed in that meadow as usual, which will mean blocking off the car park again as grass contaminated by dog poo if ingested, can cause cows to abort.

Here is some exciting news. Clever scientists have created a mutant squirrel gene. Yea! But never fear, they won't be like the mutant bunny in the Wallace & Gromit film. No, this will be a grey squirrel, genetically modified to pass on infertility genes. It's believed that if 100 such were released into the wild that there would be 3,000 fewer within 15 years. It would take a long time to eradicate the more than 2 million estimated to be at large currently and would probably never get rid of them completely. But in the meantime it would help prevent millions of trees and habitat being damaged plus the millions of pounds cost to the forestry industry, farmers, wildlife reserves and the taxpayer and help preserve small song birds eggs and young; there are so many predators of them that each non breeding grey will help make a difference. And just imagine, if we can welcome back our native red squirrel! Some visit the garden of friends on the Isle of Wight and they do very little harm and have a natural place in the landscape, unlike the trashy greys. There, that's cheered me up.

Josie Jeffrey

**St Mary's Church in Northchurch (Berkhamsted) is looking for an
Organist and Director of Music.**

This is a permanent position to replace Jenny Hoare, who is relocating to Shropshire. To find out more please contact Revd Canon Jonathan Gordon, mobile 07752 261679 or email revjagordon@gmail.com

The Porch

R S Thomas (1913 – 2000)

Do you want to know his name?
It is forgotten. Would you learn
what he was like? He was like
anyone else, a man with ears
and eyes. Be it sufficient
that in a church porch on an evening
in winter, the moon rising, the frost
sharp, he was driven
to his knees and for no reason
he knew. The cold came at him;
his breath was carved angularly
as the tombstones; an owl screamed.

He had no power to pray.
His back turned on the interior
he looked out on a universe
that was without knowledge
of him and kept his place
there for an hour on that lean
threshold, neither out nor in.

Ronald Stuart Thomas was a poet and Anglican priest. He was a man of exceptionally strong and often contradictory opinions: a convinced Welsh nationalist, he disliked the anglicisation of Wales but also the nationalist Plaid Cymru party (for being too accepting of Westminster). He and his wife lived a most frugal life: he rejected (and preached against) most modern technology such as fridges and washing machines because such comforts distracted men from God. The only modern gadget in his home was a vacuum cleaner, which he forbade his wife to use as it was too noisy. He approved of the Book of Common Prayer (the Welsh translation) but opposed the 1966 changes to the service of the Church in Wales because they involved the minister facing the congregation, rather than facing east to lead his flock towards God.

R S Thomas spoke no Welsh until he was thirty, too old he thought for writing decent poetry in Welsh. Much of his poetry is about the often harsh scenery and natural world of Wales and the hard lives of its inhabitants, his parishioners. There is also a strong religious theme. Like his hero, the Danish philosopher Kierkegaard, he was 'a great articulator of uneasy faith', the threshold between faith and doubt. His poems deal with absence of God, but definitely not the non-existence of God. He was a poet 'of the Cross, the unanswered prayer, the bleak trek through darkness'.

A very different Anglican poet, John Betjeman, recognised Thomas's talent early on, when reviewing one of his first volumes of poetry; he declared that Thomas would achieve more lasting recognition than he (JB) ever would. He did indeed receive many awards - a few years before his death Thomas was nominated for the Nobel prize for Literature but lost out to Seamus Heaney.

Nick Murray

Christian Aid Week 10th – 16th May 2021

Helping to fight the Climate Crisis

Droughts are now much more frequent and more intense due to the climate crisis. Millions of people in Kenya, including Rose and her family, are struggling to get enough food and water.

Your gift could help a community build an earth dam, so that when the rains do come, they will have the water they need to live. People like Rose need every last drop to survive the drought.

For more information, visit the Christian Aid website on www.christianaid.org.uk

WARBLERS – it's the song that matters

Now is the time to look out for, and especially to listen for, birds of the Warbler group as they return from warmer climates – some have spent the winter in southern Spain or north Africa, most were much further south. Very broadly, warblers are small, rather plain-looking birds, mostly somewhere in the lightish brown/dull greenish/greyish range and often with a paler throat or breast. There are about ten species which are reasonably common in their favoured territories in the UK, and many others which turn up once in a while, more or less by accident.

Crucially, they warble, or give out a tuneful, quite rapid and bubbling series of notes. This song is pretty much essential for distinguishing different species – relying on appearance really doesn't work very well. They are hard to see because they're small, generally prefer to spend their time in trees, shrubs, or undergrowth, mostly won't keep still, and they all look much the same anyway.

As ever, for every generalization about even the common warblers, there's a huge exception. So, comparing some of the commoner warblers hereabouts:

Willow warbler and Chiffchaff: these are the two most common British warblers and they are just about identical in appearance (the Chiffchaff has darker legs and slightly shorter wings as its migration is shorter!). The Chiffchaff breaks the rule by not really warbling, it just says 'chiff chaff' (equal stress on both syllables) ad infinitum. It's very common from late March on. The Willow warbler is less common around here and has a beautiful little song from April, a sweet whistling descent down the scale, just lasting a few seconds then repeating. One of my favourites.

Blackcap and Garden warbler: the Blackcap is significantly the more common in this area. These two sound almost identical but look different. The Blackcap has a very obvious black cap, or at least the male does, the

female is more chestnut. The Garden warbler is pale brownish with nothing else to say about appearance - no cap, no stripe, no green etc... Both have beautiful and very similar warbling songs, the Blackcap perhaps a little purer and with little breaks every few seconds whereas the Garden warbler's song just keeps on going. The rule of thumb is if you can see it, it's a Blackcap, if you can't, it's a Garden warbler.

Reed warbler and Sedge warbler: as you might expect, these like water. The Reed warbler really does prefer reeds to anything else - in appearance it's another plain brown one. The Sedge warbler is happy with brambles and scrub as well as reeds; it's brownish too but with a prominent white stripe above the eye. They both sing for most of the time - quite similar and neither has a particularly sweet song but the Reed warbler's is more Regular, Repetitive and Rushed, the Sedge warbler's more Scratchy and Syncopated (and less boring).

Grasshopper warbler and Cetti's warbler: two very contrasting songs here. The Grasshopper warbler is a rarity but one was around Little Gaddesden for much of last spring/summer. It's extraordinarily secretive and skulking but has a striking song which can go on for minutes on end, more like a fisherman's reel or (I'm told) an old-fashioned sewing machine than a grasshopper. Cetti's warbler is more common, again near water if possible, and its song is musical but astonishingly loud and powerful for a small bird. The bird itself is secretive and usually hard to see despite the song, jumping from bush to bush. Cetti's warblers are resident throughout the year, surprising for a bird that was unknown in the UK before about 1960. By the way, Cetti was a zoologically-inclined Jesuit priest of the 17th century. He knew very little about warblers!

Nick Murray

SOME MORE 2021 FIRSTS

continued from February 20th

Consider the lilies of the field

FLOWERS

I missed in the last issue, the **Hazel** and a **Willow** which I noticed round about February 14th. The first Hazel catkin had just extended to its full length and was starting to make pollen. The Willow, whose exact name I don't know, had fattened its buds to the point when they became silvery pussy willow. By about March 14th they had become covered with golden stamens. It arrived in our garden of its own accord about 5 years ago.

The list below shows the first date this year on which I noticed the open flowers or the animals mentioned. The first 10 flowers and 16 birds were listed in the February magazine, and a further 8 flowers and 6 birds in the March one. Here are 7 more flowers and 3 birds to add to the above.

February 26th **Violet** (dark purple sweet-scented kind)

March 9th **Common Field Speedwell, Cowslip**

March 17th **Common Chickweed**

March 18th **Ground Ivy, Early Dog Violet, Hairy Bitter Cress**

BIRDS HEARD

February 22nd **Tawny Owl**

March 1st **Blackbird singing** (but first seen on January 1st)

March 11th **Starling singing** (but first seen on January 8th)

BIRDS SEEN

March 16th **Raven**

March 18th **Goldcrest**

OTHER ANIMALS

February 23rd **Frog**

February 26th **Frogspawn**

March 1st **Bank Vole**

John Leonhardt

CHILDRENS' PAGE

St. Luke tells a story of two men walking along a road on the first Easter Sunday. They were joined by a third man who asked them what they were talking about. They told him how Jesus was crucified and the empty tomb was found. Jesus had disappeared. How sad they were.

Where did they start?

MUSEJALRE



The man tells them what Moses and the Prophets had said about the Messiah who had to die and come to life again.



What was the man's name?

SSUEJ

Help the men find their way along the road.

St. Luke ch.24 v.13-34



When they reached Emmaus they invited the man to stay for supper. He said a blessing, took some bread and broke it. THEN they realised who He was!!



Where did they end?

MUSAME



Colour in all the shapes with a dot to find the message.

*Open our eyes, Lord,
We want to see Jesus,
To reach out and touch him,
And say that we love him;
Open our ears, Lord,
And help us to listen;
O, open our eyes, Lord,
We want to see Jesus.*

WHAT MAKES US LAUGH

Beyond our Ken, ITMA, Around the Horne,
Brought joy before some of you were born,
Spitting Image (1st series) satire using clever puppets,
The Good Life, Life of Brian, those lovely Muppets.

Malcolm in the Middle and The Fast Show, both made me howl with
laughter,

The Goon Show, Monty Python, Milligan, who cares which one was dafter?
Red Dwarf, Ab.Fab. Green Wing, Father Ted, you just laughed for hours,
Also Drop the Dead Donkey, Blazing Saddles and Basil's Fawly Towers.

And Outnumbered, Tiz Woz, (remember The Bucket of Water Song?)
Those silly Leslie Phillips movies? What the heck--- Ding Dong!
Three cheers for Dad's Army, repeats still going strong,
I'm hoping that they'll bring back Motherland before too long.

The real comic genius of Victoria Wood, and antics of Eric & Ern,
The Two Ronnies' musical numbers, Les Dawson's baby faced gurn,
Let's bring back Blackadder, yes, and Peter Cook and Dudley Moore,
And Not the Nine o'clock News and The Comedy Store.

I loved Eddie Izzard when in his prime,
And old lag Fletcher, as he did his time,
So, forget snow-flakery, because the antidote to 'woke'
Is simply laughing along with some very bright and funny folk!

Josie Jeffrey

From the Registers:

23 rd February	Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Brian Saunders, formerly priest of this Parish (recording)	
8 th March	Requiem Mass	Julie Leonhardt

PRAYER PAGE

A Prayer for our Nation

God of hope,
in these times of change,
unite our nation
and guide our leaders with your wisdom.
Give us courage to overcome our fears,
and help us to build a future
in which all may prosper and share;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Lord God, whose Son, Jesus Christ,
understood people's fear and pain
before they spoke of them,
we pray for those in hospital;
surround the frightened with your tenderness;
give strength to those in pain;
hold the weak in your arms of love,
and give hope and patience to those who are recovering;
we ask this through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen

Be thou a bright flame before me,
be thou a guiding star above me,
be thou a smooth path below me,
be thou a kindly shepherd behind me,
today, tonight and for ever.

Amen

St Columba (521-597)

Parish News Editors:

Helene Hockings, Nick Murray, David Nowell-Withers, Mike Walsham
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Deadline Date for next edition of Magazine: Sunday 18th April

CHURCH SERVICES – APRIL

I Sunday 4th April, Easter Day		
8.00am	Holy Communion	Nettleden
9.30am	Family Service	Little Gaddesden
11.00am	Family Service	Great Gaddesden
II Sunday 11th April, Easter 2		
9.00am	Morning Prayer	Netteden
9.30am	Morning Prayer	Little Gaddesden
11.00am	Morning Prayer	Great Gaddesden
III Sunday 18th April, Easter 3		
9.30am	Parish Worship	Little Gaddesden
11.00am	Parish Worship	Great Gaddesden
6.00pm	Evensong	Nettleden
IV Sunday 25th April, Easter 4		
9.00am	Morning Prayer	Nettleden
9.30am	Parish Worship	Little Gaddesden
11.00am	Parish Worship	Great Gaddesden
I 2nd May, Easter 5		
8.00am	Holy Communion	Nettleden
9.30am	Parish Worship	Little Gaddesden
11.00am	Parish Worship	Great Gaddesden
6.00pm	Evening Worship	Little Gaddesden

As you will see above, we are starting to get back to our usual diary of services.

Evensong and Evening Worship services will resume in May as will the usual Mid-week services (Tuesdays at 9.00am at Great Gaddesden and Thursdays at 10.00am at Little Gaddesden).

However, please do still check our church websites for the most up-to-date information.

We apologise if we have to change details with little or no notice.

greatgaddesdenchurch.com
littlegaddesdenchurch.org.uk