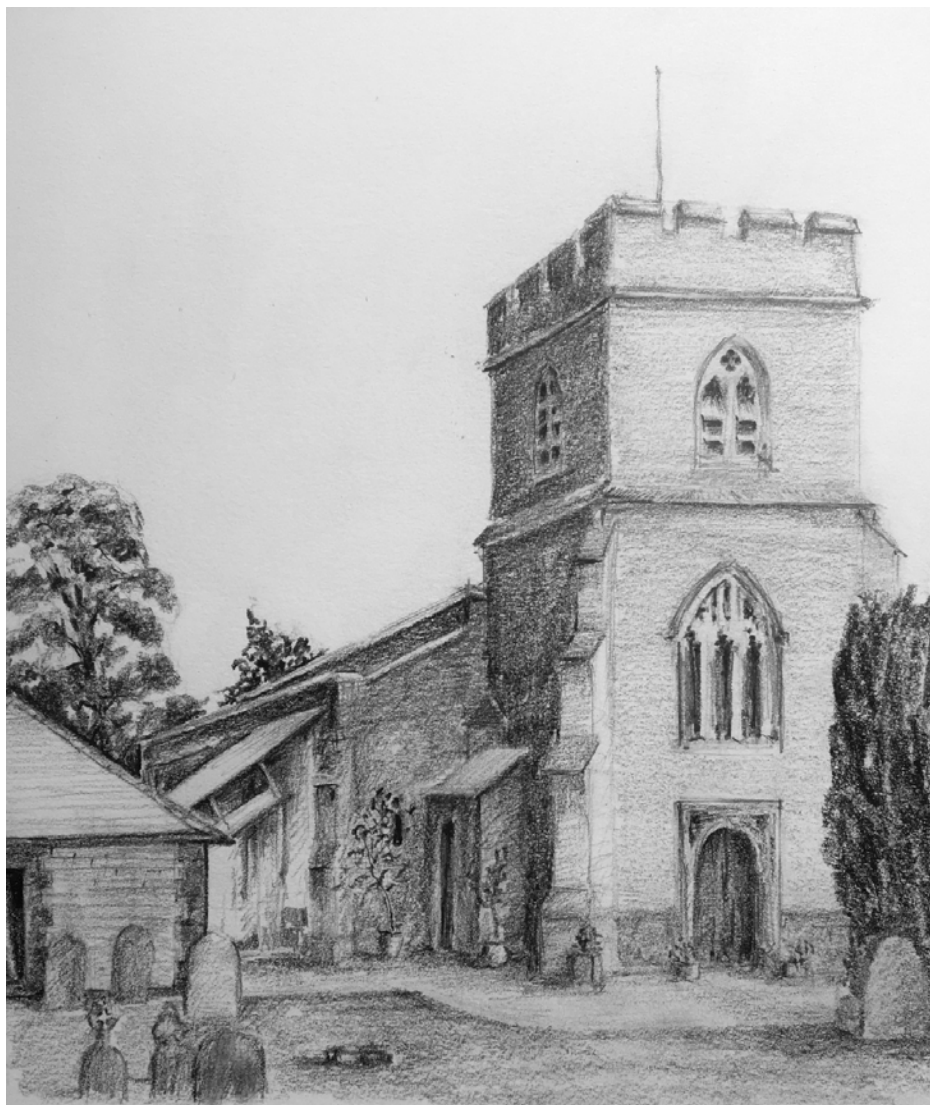


# Parish News

St Peter and St Paul, Little Gaddesden

£1.00

July / August 2023



## **St Peter and St Paul, Little Gaddesden HP4 1NZ**

### **Berkhamsted Team**

#### **Revd John Russell, Team Rector**

St John's Vicarage, Pipers Hill, Great Gaddesden, HP1 3BY

Tel: 01442 214898, 07950 105802

**vicar@littlegaddesdenchurch.org.uk**

**www.littlegaddesdenchurch.org.uk**

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.

***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

ASSOCIATE PRIEST: Miranda Seldon 877975  
CHURCHWARDENS: Terri Adams 842746  
Jane Dickson 07795 348938  
READERS: Anthony Archer 842397  
Heather Tisbury 01582 842807  
PCC OFFICERS: Treasurer: Allan Webster 843157  
Secretary: Barbara Sheard 843591  
SAFEGUARDING OFFICER: Heather Tisbury 01582 842807  
PARISH ADMINISTRATOR: Helene Hockings on a\_dmin-church@outlook.com or 01442 842493  
SUNDAY SERVICES: 9.00am Eucharist Service or Café Church (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday)  
6.00pm Evensong at Nettleden on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday  
of the month  
6.00pm Occasional Iona or Taizé services  
5<sup>th</sup> Sunday – Joint Eucharist at one of our three churches

### **Please do check the website for up-to-date details**

THOMAS FIELD HALL: email: tfh.bookings@littlegaddesdenchurch.org.uk  
WEEKDAY SERVICE: Thursday 10am Said Eucharist  
BELL RINGING: Sunday 8.30am Practice: Tuesday 8.00pm  
Tower Captain – Virginia Westmacott 842428  
CHOIR PRACTICE: Friday 7.00pm – John Leonhardt 843550  
LG 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: Helene Hockings, Nick Murray, Mike Walsham.  
See inside back page for contact details.  
PITSTOP CAFÉ: Gayle Storey 01582 662132  
WEEKLY UPDATES: PEW SHEET distributed each Sunday. Items for inclusion should be sent to Helene Hockings, a\_dmin-church@outlook.com by 9am on Thursday

Vol 46 No.07

Dear Friends,

I'm delighted to say we have welcomed The Revd Miranda Seldon as our new Associate Priest, as she joins our ministerial team for our three parishes.

This season is often referred to in the church as Ordinary Time, but as Bishop Jane, Bishop of Hertford, reminded us at the Licensing of Miranda Seldon a few weeks ago, it's far from ordinary, if we mean mundane or dull and boring.

In the church there are many things to celebrate at this time of year; early July is known as Petertide, after Jesus' closest disciple. St Peter is acknowledged as the first Pope and Bishop of Rome, the city where he met his death. It is the time when many of those who are preparing for ordination as Deacon or Priest are Ordained, and so begin their new ministries.

In our three churches, it so happens that this is the time of year when our Patronal Festivals fall. The first being St John the Baptist at Great Gaddesden (25<sup>th</sup> June), followed a week later by St Peter and St Paul celebrated in Little Gaddesden (2<sup>nd</sup> July), and in August (13<sup>th</sup>), Nettleden celebrates its Patronal Festival around the Feast of St Lawrence.

All churches are dedicated to God but by the 4<sup>th</sup> century it was common practice to dedicate a Christian place of worship to one or more patron saints.

Once the Church was established in England, the church's patron saint was set during the act of consecration by the diocesan bishop, and in fact the Eucharist could not be held in a building until the consecration act had taken place. At that time, most churches were dedicated to St Peter or to St Mary.

Reformation of the 16th century swept away centuries of church tradition; including the whitewashing of sacred images from church walls and there was a backlash against saints associated with the church. The Book of Common Prayer of 1662, contained no text for a dedication

service, and with newly constructed churches becoming rarer, the practice became less well known.

By the 18th century many churches had even forgotten their dedication entirely.

It was the Victorian era, the first great English church-building era for centuries, that finally revived the interest in patron saints. The original dedication of a particular church was often rediscovered, whilst others changed the dedication to a new patron saint for any number of reasons. Other dedications started to appear; such as "St Michael and All Angels", "All Hallows", or "The Blessed Virgin Mary".

In the 20th century, the dedication of churches continued, churches being commonly referred to as (e.g.), "St Peter and St Paul's" as opposed to "Little Gaddesden Parish Church" or St John's, rather than Great Gaddesden Church.

There was no single set of rules that governed the choice of patron saint for a church, the most popular saints in terms of numbers of dedications demonstrate the influence of Rome on the history of English Christianity, as well as being major characters in Biblical studies, with the most popular being St Mary, St Peter, St Michael, St Andrew, and St Paul.

One of the clearest reasons for the choice of many dedications was that the church was founded on or near the site of a saint's activity, something that was particularly common in the dedications of the churches of Cornwall.

The professions of particular saints, has also influenced choices, for example, most English coastal towns have a church dedicated to St Nicholas, who is patron saint of sailors and fisherman, and other churches dedicated to St Giles, the patron saint of beggars and the disabled, are often found near the medieval gates of fortified towns. The choice of St Catherine was favoured by many institutions, as she is also the patron saint of educators and philosophers.

A number of churches seem to have selected their patron according to the feast day on which the church was dedicated. Though these are often hard to discern, but include several churches dedicated to the Ascension, (Bedmond), or the Assumption for example.

Whatever the reason for a particular dedication, it is the perfect opportunity to give thanks to God for the wonderful buildings which aid our worship and our community life and at our Patronal Festivals we try to reflect just that.

I wish you a wonderful summer.

I am yours Christ,

John.

**St Margaret's Pilgrimage Walk  
July 20th at 6pm  
starting from Little Gaddesden Church**

On the evening of the feast day of St Margaret of Antioch, Thursday July 20th at 6pm, there will be a 6km Pilgrimage walk from Little Gaddesden Church to the historic site of St Margaret's in Boscoe, the Ivinghoe Benedictine Priory at St Margaret's, Great Gaddesden. There will be opportunities on the way to pause for reflection and a short act of worship will be held at the site.

Come along and learn more about St Margaret of Antioch and the Priory where Benedictine Nuns lived and worshipped for almost 400 years. Please join us if you can for the walk or meet us at St Margaret's. Dogs are welcome on leads. For more details contact Heather Tisbury, [Heather@greatgaddesdenchurch.com](mailto:Heather@greatgaddesdenchurch.com)

**Please join our Editorial Team!**

We are looking for someone to join our Editorial team. As you know, there are only three Editors now (tribute to David Nowell-Withers on page 8) and I may well be moving from the village in the not too distant future. I put the magazine together on the computer and send it to the printers. Do you have computer skills and would like to contribute? Please contact any one of the Editors to hear what the job entails. It's not onerous and we do have fun putting it all together.

Helene Hockings

## **LITTLE GADDESSEN SWIFTS UPDATE**

Permission for Swift nest boxes has now been obtained from the Diocese and a multiple nest box has been installed on the south window of the church belfry. It is made up of four nesting compartments, each with its own oval entry hole. The nest box is not easy to see but if you look up at the tower on the south side, from the path around the church and at the right angle, you can make out the two pairs of entrances, one above the other. They are on the right side of the belfry window and under the top louvre.

We will shortly install apparatus, currently under construction by Michael Carver, for playing Swift calls from the box for about three hours in the mornings and again in the evenings during the all too brief Swift season (they're all gone by the end of August). The calls attract the birds' attention and increase the chances of them using the boxes when they reach breeding age.

There are normally three waves of Swift arrivals:

The first wave is of mature birds, returning to their traditional nesting sites. They normally arrive in the last week of April or early May and aren't interested in a new box unless something has happened to their previous home.

The second wave is the prime target group for Swift calls. These are two-year old birds arriving from the middle of May and looking for their first nest site and a mate. They will investigate possible sites and Swift call sounds. If they select one they will spend the rest of their UK stay building a nest ready for breeding next year.

The third wave is yearling birds returning for the first time, typically in the middle of July. These are interested in joining a colony and will explore those in the local area to find one they favour. They too are attracted by calls but won't start building a nest until the following year.

So we don't expect any to nest in our boxes here for at least two years, but we live in hope and they're quite long-lived birds: if they can make it through the first two or three years, many will survive and breed until they're ten and rarely to twenty. Should we attract Swifts here, then more boxes can easily be installed as Swifts are keen on nesting in company.

Please, could anyone who sees Swifts flying near the church or investigating the boxes let me know on [nicholas.murray@doctors.org.uk](mailto:nicholas.murray@doctors.org.uk) or 07796 174771. It would also be helpful if you could tell me about Swifts seen, and particularly nesting, elsewhere in the village – at present I'm not aware of any colonies other than at Ashridge Cottages.

Nick Murray

## **Revd Miranda Seldon – welcome!**

The Revd Miranda Seldon was Licensed in Little Gaddesden on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> June at a joint Parish Communion conducted by Bishop Jane. She introduces herself below:

‘I am delighted to be joining the Gaddesdens and Nettleden and I look forward to being with you more often. I have lived in the area for over 40 years, on and off, and enjoy the walks around Great Gaddesden and Nettleden.

I am married to Rupert and we have two sons in their late teens/early twenties, who some of you may recognise from the Historic Churches Bike’n’Hike each September.

Like John, I trained at Ripon College Cuddesdon, so you may spot some Cuddesdon influences.

As a Self-Supporting Priest (like a “voluntary vicar”) my ministry is somewhat peripatetic, taking services in neighbouring parishes when there is a need. My parish days will usually be two days a week, plus Sundays, enabling me to continue my other ministry in the chaplaincy team at the Hospice of St Francis, alongside my paid employment as an exams invigilator at Ashlyns.

I love BCP, Baptisms, Argentine Tango, and ancient ruins.’



## **DAVID NOWELL-WITHERS**

### **6<sup>th</sup> August 1933 – 14<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

David Nowell-Withers, who died suddenly while on holiday in his beloved La Gomera, was the kindest and gentlest of men. I first met him shortly after we moved to Little Gaddesden in 2010 and we were immediately taken with his and Margaret's hospitality to newcomers. A couple of years later I joined David as an editor of the Parish News – David's contributions to our meetings were always both thoughtful and fun. We all miss him badly.

David was born and brought up in Blackpool; as Mark Thursz, the son of his great friend since childhood, has noted, though David had some early ambitions to be a journalist on the local paper, banking genes took over and he became an accountant. After National Service in UK and Germany and completion of accountancy finals he entered, and indeed travelled, the corporate world, particularly with pharmaceutical companies. He was initially with ICI (England, Mexico, Japan and Scotland), then Merck (long attachments in Mexico and Belgium), Wellcome, where as well as another stint in Japan he set up a global internal audit function. This was no easy task but one for which he was ideally suited, being both diplomatic and firm. He later fulfilled a similar role for Securicor.

Michael Stevens, another close friend and work colleague, says that David was best described as 'an international pharmaceutical accountant but a totally failed retiree'. He was certainly well known for upholding the highest of world class standards in his field, and when David did 'retire' in 1998, he continued to contribute to numerous corporate governance projects at the Institute of Directors and the Institute of Internal Audit.

Mark Thursz made the point in his funeral eulogy that while David's career was clearly highly successful, the ultimate success was marrying Margaret, a Lytham girl (David was Lancastrian through and through), in 1965 after a lengthy courtship interrupted by periods of overseas work. Later Margaret and their two children, Nigel and Stephanie were able to accompany David on his travels. He died on the day before their 58<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.

Outside work David was a man with many friends and many interests. He and Margaret loved rugby and were both very knowledgeable about the mysteries of forward play and where the selectors had erred. David played



as hooker for Fylde, mostly for their B team (of several) for years until overseas duties made this impossible, and was a club member for decades after that. Later he was an active member and supporter of Harlequins, good for tickets for the Stoop and sometimes Twickenham. David was possibly even more obsessed with cricket, which he played and watched around the world. He was a proud member of the MCC, perhaps even prouder when he was chair of the MCCC (the Mexico City Cricket Club, obv.). Rod Hoare, who was David's friend and gardener for thirty-seven years (with particular expertise in bowling the inswinger) believes that with David's passing England has lost one of the finest Test team selectors they never had.

Other important interests included sailing, dogs (especially his beloved and irreplaceable Heidi), books of all sorts but particularly Sherlock Holmes (he was an active and well-informed member of the Sherlock Holmes Society), Shirley Bassey (he had all her records and saw her many times in concert), and of course travel, pretty much everywhere.

David and Margaret moved to Little Gaddesden around 1990 and he was a committed member of the community and the church, as a sidesman, Parish News editor and strong supporter of the Evensong service David was a dedicated, loving and loyal family man, a man of great integrity in his work and a man of strong and steady faith in God.

Nick Murray

## **Ethics Forum**

### **AI: How worried should we be?**

**with The Revd Canon Dr Tim Bull FRSA**

Artificial Intelligence is increasingly affecting our lives. Chatbots write poetry, computers create art and AI diagnoses disease. But how does AI intersect with the Christian faith? In this timely discussion, we will consider how these new developments raise important questions about ethics, belief, technology, and the place of humanity in the world. It will be a valuable opportunity to engage with one of the most pressing issues of our time.

**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**7.30pm for 8.00pm start**

**Refreshments available**

## THE KING'S EVIL

I was leafing through our church's oldest register of births, marriages and deaths in search of William Jarman, whose ghost is alleged to haunt the Manor House (the large Elizabethan chimney stack on its roof is known as "Jarman's Coffin"). Having extracted some information because the man, as opposed to the ghost, really did exist and was a churchwarden around 1700, I was about to close the book when I saw this, written on a fly leaf in rather elegant handwriting.

"A Certificate given to Anne Eames, aged about fifty years to be touched for the disorder called The Kings' Evil, May 1<sup>st</sup> 1687."

Underneath was a similar entry.

"A Certificate of the like nature given to Mary Seagrave, aged about 17 years, Nov 7 1687".

What was the King's Evil, who would do the touching, and what was the result?

As it happened, I was about to read an historical thriller with the title of the King's Evil, written by Andrew Taylor (set in the Restoration period, it is the third book in his James Marwood and Cat Lovett series – highly recommended).

The "King's Evil" was also known as scrofula. The term used today is "cervical tuberculous lymphadenitis". Cervical refers to the neck. Lymphadenitis refers to inflammation in the lymph nodes, which are part of the body's immune system. The sufferer may experience mild fevers, not feel like eating, or lose weight. Sometimes the neck could be covered by open sores.

In the Middle Ages, some Western Europeans believed that royal touch, the touch of the sovereign of England or France, could cure diseases owing to the divine right of sovereigns.

The custom of touching was first adopted in England by Edward the Confessor. Henry 6<sup>th</sup> of England is alleged to have cured a girl with it and, from 1633, the Book of Common Prayer of the Anglican Church contained a ceremony for this.

It was traditional for the king or queen to present to the touched person a coin – usually an angel, a gold coin, the value of which varied from about 6 shillings to 10 shillings. King Charles 2<sup>nd</sup> is said to have touched more than 90,000 victims between 1660-1682. King Henry 4<sup>th</sup> of France is reported as touching as many as 1,500 individuals at a time. Queen Anne touched the infant Samuel Johnson, the great lexicographer, in 1712, but her successor, King George 1<sup>st</sup> put an end to the practice as being “too Catholic”.

If Anne Eames and Mary Seagrave were touched by a king it would have been James 2<sup>nd</sup>, who succeeded his brother Charles in 1685 and was deposed in the “Glorious Revolution” of December 1688. We don’t know if the touching was successful, and in our sceptical age we would assume it could not have been. In which case, why did the belief and practice last for so long?

I assume because, in many cases, after a year or so, the disease often went away or relented, and the external marks disappeared. The practice also made money for the Royal coffers as there was a charge which considerably exceeded the value of an angel. Always follow the money!

What happened to Anne and Mary? They both came from prominent local families. The Eames were in Little Gaddesden from at least the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, and at one stage owned the Manor House. An Eames was buried in the churchyard as late as 1980. History is silent on whether the two women were ‘cured’, but a Joanna Eames died in Little Gaddesden on August 2<sup>nd</sup> 1690. Was this Anne?

There is a sad postscript to this story. Whereas the two women were looked after by the churchwardens, probably because of their status, a young girl of 10 was not.

On the same fly leaf, under the entries for Anne Eames and Mary Seagrave, is written this.

“Adie Hughes aged 10 years, whipt and sent with a pass (?) to Chipping Norton in Oxfordshire (where she said she was born) Jan 25<sup>th</sup> 1687.

ROGER BOLTON

## **SOME FAVOURITE WEEDS \***

**Please note: meant in an ironic way**

Weeds are the new rock n roll, or at any rate, being rehabilitated by the RHS by asking gardeners to be more tolerant, particularly in doing more to provide for our wildlife. Weeds are (now, more) often referred to as 'wild flowers in the wrong place: 'however, (through gritted teeth) there are, as we know, weeds and weeds. Me, I love to see daisies, bugloss and birdsfoot trefoil enhancing a lawn. Win, win, win. Pretty, don't take over, and beloved of bees and butterflies. Let us look at some 'misplaced' flowers, one of which is currently taking over down at the Dagnall allotments, in my small front garden and along the section of the Chiltern Footpath which runs behind Bede Court and next to the Pub garden. To mention, I suspect, just a few venues.

I write of a weed of many names, officially known as CLEAVERS, or clivers. Some alternative names are: my preference, goosegrass but also known as sticky bob, sticky willie, sticky molly, catchweed, hitch-hiker and bobby buttons.

They have been utilised in the past as a stuffing for mattresses, as a poultice to relieve poisonous bites and stings, (presumably also non-poisonous?) used also as a tea/infusion and as a substitute for coffee. It has been eaten and does have some nutrition, but do cook it first, otherwise you might not get it off the fork. If anyone would like some, do feel free to help yourself from my allotment (or the overgrown one adjacent).

Another ubiquitous and extremely persistent uninvited guest if I may put it politely is SOW THISTLE, a deep-rooted member of the thistle family but with a smoother large leaf which is a perennial and seeds prolifically, spreading from allotments unattended by absent would be allotmenters. They are awful things, hard to get out, but guess what! It has uses. Also known as hares thistle, rabbits and hares scoff it, and pigs are partial, but as they are partial to most things, no surprise there.

I was interested (possibly peeved) to learn that it is also known as milk thistle. Yes, that one! The herbal supplement for those wishing to alleviate symptoms of over enthusiastic imbibing. It also has been used as a coffee substitute and a cure for opium addicts, but I just can't bear to think of

the great Samuel Taylor Coleridge resorting to sow thistle infusion to get The Ancient Mariner sorted.

It, like many weeds has been eaten as green vegetables. Historically, if you were poor farm labouring country dwellers, you ate whatever you could get hold of, which, of course, kept the weeds down.. I count myself fortunate to have been taken up into friends' small farm in the mountains of Crete where land has long been farmed and there introduced to 'Horta', wild greens mainly, in what we know as the dandelion family. We picked about five different types and they are cooked as greens to make delicious Hortopitta, tasty small pies, mostly in early spring, around Easter time. It's not too difficult to realise where horticulture comes from, also brassica, Greek for the colour green.

I still dig up sow thistle though. I'm thinking that this is a subject I shall return to, might even end up as a weed hugger. Perhaps they could be re-defined, maybe that's what the RHS is getting at? But weren't the Chelsea weed featuring garden displays a bit OTT?

Josie Jeffrey

### ***From the Registers:***

30 <sup>th</sup> May	Memorial Service	Timothy Cooper
4 <sup>th</sup> June	Licensing of Revd Miranda Seldon by Bishop Jane Holy Baptism	Sebastian Lovatt
10 <sup>th</sup> June	Holy Matrimony	Matthew Worsfold and Louisa Woods

## **U3A Visit**

Many people visit our church of St Peter & St Paul throughout the year and all who write an entry in the visitors' book have much to say: its peacefulness, the interesting memorials, its unique and isolated position etc.

Sometime in April, a friend of mine phoned me to ask if she could bring some people from the Greater Thame University of the Third Age (U3A) to visit our church. I was made aware of the Pit Stop Club's regular meetings on Thursday afternoons. I was assured by the organisers, Heather and Gayle, however, that as they used the Thomas Field Hall and the U3A people the church, there wouldn't be a problem.

The U3A group duly arrived on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May at 2pm and Roger Bolton had kindly agreed to talk to them on the church's history, the memorials, Ashridge House etc.

The discussions continued while everyone enjoyed tea and cake with them leaving at about 3:45pm.

The response I have received from the U3A people is that it was very obvious to them that Roger was a professional presenter which made the whole visit of greater interest and very much more enjoyable. In my introduction, I mentioned that Roger's voice might be familiar to those who listened to BBC Radio 4's Feedback program. Before leaving, one of the U3A people gave me an envelope containing >£100 towards church funds, a testament to the group's thanks for a very worthwhile afternoon.

Lastly, I have been asked by the U3A leader to pass on thanks to Roger for his extremely interesting presentation and to Heather and Gayle for their help with the tea. They felt their visit to our church was one of the best they had ever had.

Thanks to everyone concerned from me too:

Mike Walsham

# CHILDREN'S PAGE

Everyone knows the first story in the Bible about the Creation of the World. The next is about Adam and Eve and the apple and that is where we find God's people already disobeying him. The story after that is even worse.

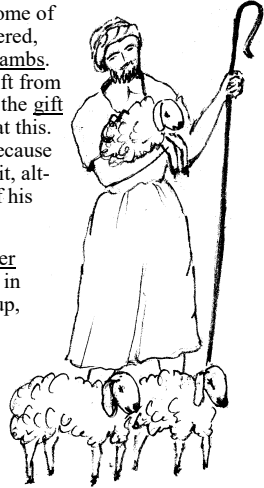
It is about two brothers. They were the sons of Adam and Eve and their names were ECLAZION \_\_\_\_\_ and PARBUERL \_\_\_\_\_  
(take every second letter to spell out their names).

The elder brother was a RELLIT FO EHT DNAL \_\_\_\_\_,  
and the younger brother was a REPEEK FO PEEHS \_\_\_\_\_  
(mirror writing).



One day Cain brought as a gift to God some of the fruit which he had grown and gathered, while Abel brought some nice fat little lambs. But God was not very pleased with the gift from Cain; however, he was very pleased with the gift from Abel. Now Cain was very angry at this. God told him that He was not pleased because he had not given Him the best of the fruit, although Abel had given Him the best of his lambs.

But Cain's resentment against his brother grew until one day, as they both worked in the field, his anger burst out. He stood up, went to Abel, and killed him.



## WORDSEARCH (find the underlined words)

K	L	R	E	H	T	O	R	B	L
O	U	T	L	A	W	I	Y	D	A
T	N	I	A	C	Y	X	E	S	I
Y	K	U	W	D	S	L	R	K	C
R	H	R	F	G	L	N	E	M	E
G	I	F	T	I	T	L	P	B	P
N	S	C	K	N	A	E	E	V	S
A	H	W	Z	M	N	B	E	S	T
H	A	L	B	R	P	A	K	V	O
D	E	S	A	E	L	P	T	R	C

Then God asked Cain where his brother was, and Cain said "I don't know; am I my brother's keeper?"

God was so angry at what Cain had done that he told him he would be an outlaw in the country. Cain implored God to spare him as he knew he would be killed if he had no home to go to. God relented and put a special mark on Cain so that no-one should harm him, but He sent him away into a far distant land where he was a stranger.

Throughout the Old Testament there are stories of people who have done wrong—even Kings. God lets us make the choice, but if you get it wrong God is always there. You have to know what you have done wrong, be very sorry and ask God for forgiveness.

## **CITY CHURCHES Part 7, 2023: Queen Victoria Street to Fleet Street**

For parts 1 to 5 see Parish News 2018 Oct-Nov; 2019 Oct-Nov;  
2021 Oct-Nov; 2022 Nov; 2023 Feb; 2023 June

After visiting St Andrew by the Wardrobe, we left Queen Victoria Street and walked up St Andrews Hill and Creed Lane into Ludgate Hill, very close to St Paul's cathedral. A short distance to the left, on the far side of the street, was **St Martin-within-Ludgate**. Only just "within" as it turned out, as part of the old London wall is part of the west wall of the church. The Lud Gate itself used to be right against the church. The fire of 1666 destroyed the church but the gate survived, though, like all the other gates, was eventually taken down to relieve traffic congestion. Christopher Wren made a complete reconstruction of the church, which, like so many others we saw today, was on a sloping site, on the north side of the street this time. The south wall of the church is a frontage directly on to the street and flush with the adjoining buildings, and includes the tower and the only entrance. It is a well-preserved typical Wren layout, unaffected by the bombs of World War II. The nave is made square by screening off the south vestibule with a filled-in arcade. This has the effect of a double wall shutting out traffic noise.

As soon as you enter you notice how dark it is. This is mainly caused by the very dark furnishing throughout, and not helped by the stained glass in the windows. Those on the north are fairly tall but those on the south only form a clerestory above the gallery formed by the south vestibule. The seating is in pews. The altar reredos is one of the conventional kind seen in many Wren churches, dominated by the texts of the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments and the Apostles' Creed. This is all in dark oak with arched panels and pilasters. To the left of the reredos is a painting of the Ascension, and to the right is a triptych of St Mary, St Gregory and St Martin. There are no east windows. The altar rails are also carved in dark oak. There are some choir stalls in the chancel area and, in the sanctuary, a very rare raised double seat for the churchwardens. There is no chancel screen.

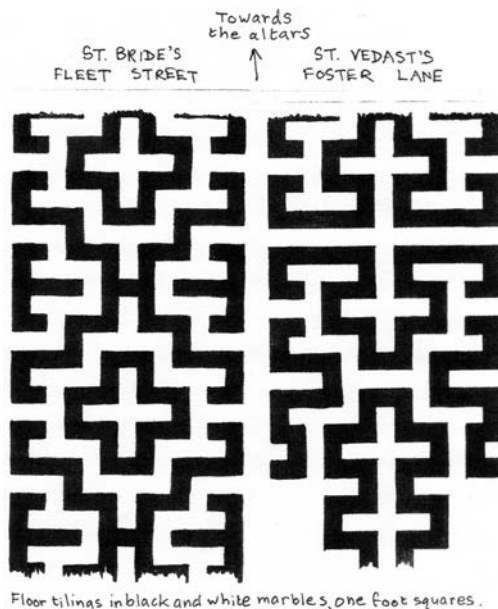
At the front of the nave is a fine carved pulpit on the left, and to the right is a modern painted wooden statue of the Virgin and Child. This, I thought,



was very sensitively done, with realistic calm faces. Back to the west end there is an organ gallery with the organ reached by stairs opening directly into the nave, displaying twisted balusters supporting the hand rail. The organ, gallery and stairs are all in the same very dark oak. The other dark furnishings include wall panelling, doors, and panels around the bases of the pillars. Most of all this is from the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

After leaving Alice to make her way elsewhere I continued to my fifth and last church. This was **St Bride's Fleet Street**, which is a continuation of Ludgate Hill. Mostly screened by other buildings except for its tower, St Bride's is down a short alley on the south. The steeple is famous as the "wedding cake" because of its tiers of diminishing size in vivid white. Wren designed similar steeples for many of his churches, but no two are the same. This may be the tallest.

Inside, the lightness is a relief if you have just come from the darkness of St Martin's Ludgate. It is a beautifully proportioned symmetrical design with similarities to St Vedast's Foster Lane: (see Parish News November 2022). It has the same pew arrangement with all the congregation facing inwards as in many college chapels. In the centre it has the same pure black and white square marble tiles laid out in a pattern to produce white crosses along the mid-line, though the pattern is not identical. The tiles are one foot square.



A difference from St Vedast's here is that on each side, behind the front two rows of pews there is a carved arcade with an accessible aisle beyond. (In St Vedast's there is no aisle on the north, and the one on the south is concealed by an almost continuous screen and laid out as a side chapel.) All the woodwork in St Bride's is of a warm mid-brown. The pillars of the arcades are of wood and quite slender, square in section. The spaces between them are filled in with wooden balustrades with top and bottom rails creating an open carved screen.

The altar reredos is of the same wood with a double pilaster on each side. In the centre is an oval stained-glass window (I think, though I can't quite make out my notes), below which is a painting of the crucifixion. There are two other east windows. All the side windows are clear glass: tall arched ones and a clerestory of circular ones.

As you enter the nave you pass between two pillars forming a gap in a west screen. Each pillar is surmounted by a wooden statue: Saint Bride on the south and St Paul on the north, each facing towards the altar.

In the crypt are the remains of a Roman wall, some Roman paving and an exhibition of the church's long history. The location may be the earliest to have had a church in London. Replacement occurred in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, a fire in 1135, another replacement in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, destruction in the 1666 fire (followed by Christopher Wren's re-design), interior burnt out in 1940 but restored largely as Wren made it, but the seating was turned inward as you see it now, and galleries removed.

A Quiet Hour is held each evening before the church is closed. You can sit or move about but not talk. At other times various talks and services are held.

*John Leonhardt*



## THE RURAL DEANERY MAGAZINE

As the editors of this magazine undoubtedly know, the choice of material to include is not great, and I wonder if it ever has been. I was intrigued therefore, when rummaging around various nooks and crannies in the church for past copies of the magazine, to come across a bound volume containing copies of the Rural Deanery Magazine, a publication of which I, and I suspect much of the world, had not heard, and which speaks of a very different time. It begins as follows.

“At a Meeting of the Clergy held at Aldbury Rectory, on May 21<sup>st</sup>” (I assume that was in 1902) “it was suggested that a Magazine for the parishes of the Rural Deanery might be of some value in helping to remove the feeling of isolation which has such a depressing effect upon the work and energy of those who live in country parishes, far remote from each other.”

(This was a time, of course, before radio, television, telephones, or the widespread availability of motor transport.)

“The parishes of the Rural Deanery of Great Berkhamsted are very scattered...and it is quite clear that, speaking generally, there cannot be any very close intercourse between them. It is felt that the mere fact of seeing from month to month what is being done by our neighbours will tend to lessen the feeling of loneliness, will be of value in suggesting new or more effective methods of improving the religious, moral and social conditions of country life, and will, by bringing us closer together, facilitate united action when it is needed.”

The Rural Dean, H.T.Wood, was a little apprehensive, however, about the volume of material available for inclusion in the new magazine.

“It would be difficult to find sufficient matter of general interest in the Parishes of the Rural Deanery alone, and therefore, with the purely local news will be incorporated the ‘Dawn of Day’ published by SPCK, and ‘The Church Abroad’, the new leaflet published by the SPG”, (The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel) “which, to judge by the first number, seems likely to be quite admirable”.

I should not pass judgement on those two publications but the Rural Dean’s fears of insufficient matters of local interest were, at least partly, justified.

As Little Gaddesden had its own magazine, its entries into the Rural Deanery one are not extensive, but neither is any other parish's contribution.

For the local historian there is much of interest, not least the advertisements, and if anyone would like to read the book please do let me know. Meanwhile, here are a couple of entries about our parish that I hope will be of interest.

(1903) "The Register-General informs us that we are not so populous a place as we had supposed. By some error a part of Nettleden parish was included in Little Gaddesden at the last census.

The figures now are :- Little Gaddesden, 326; Ringshall 189; total, 515. Strictly speaking, Ringshall, though for all practical purposes a part of Little Gaddesden, cannot be included in it, since there has been no Order in Council transferring it from Ivinghoe to Little Gaddesden for ecclesiastical purposes. Ringshall people still have, therefore, the right of being married at St Mary's Ivinghoe, if they wish, and participate in the Ivinghoe Charities".

This anomaly was soon after rectified.

#### "THE CHURCH PATHS

A great improvement has been effected by the lighting of the two Church paths on Sunday evenings. There really was a certain amount of risk in that long walk across the meadows on dark nights, and we shall also find the lamps useful for our weekday evening Services in Lent. Mr Wright's arrangement of sockets, so that posts can be removed when not in use, is very ingenious".

Elsewhere you can read of soup kitchens operating in Kensworth, and lead being stolen from church roofs. Suddenly, the past seems closer than one might think.

ROGER BOLTON

## **Christian Aid Week**

Thank you to everyone who supported Christian Aid Week in May by attending the Strawberry Cream Tea in the Thomas Field Hall, buying raffle tickets, donating prizes, entering the 'guess the number of peas in the jar' competition and donating through church collections or our online e-envelope.

We raised just over £1,000, even more than last year.

Congratulations to Paulette Read who won the 'number of peas in the jar' competition. The total was 8,837 and Paulette guessed 8,500!

Annabelle Grassini

## **WEEDS! THE NEW BEDDING PLANTS**

If the Royal Horticultural Society take weeds close to their heart,  
Which would they most likely choose to make the boldest start?

What about bindweed, dock and hairy bittercress?

Then ragwort and would any ground elder cause distress?

Take fat hen, couch grass, sun spurge and mighty mallow,  
No need to weed and nurture, just leave the garden fallow.  
But if creeping thistle and goose grass bring on depression,  
I just might cave in and have a grand old Weedol session.

But I'll leave the evening primrose and pretty small blue  
speedwell.

And what would spring be like without the fragrant bluebell?  
Then I'd hang on to the poppies, ladies bedstraw and yellow rattle,  
Mention scarlet pimpernel and rock rose, well, i'd just give up the  
battle.

Josie Jeffrey

## **PRAYER PAGE**

Gracious God,  
surround us and all who mourn this day  
with your continuing compassion.  
Do not let grief overwhelm your children,  
or turn them against you.  
When grief seems never-ending,  
take them one step at a time along your road of  
death and resurrection  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Eternal God,  
from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed:  
kindle, we pray, in the hearts of all, the true love of peace  
and guide with your pure and peaceable wisdom  
those who take counsel for the nations of the earth  
that in tranquility your kingdom may go forward,  
until the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Heavenly Father,  
we thank you for the holidays  
and for all times of rest and relaxation.  
Give refreshment of body and spirit  
to our friends who are, or will be, shortly on holiday,  
that they may return to work and to our fellowship  
with new strength and a new vision of your love;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

### **Parish News Editors:**

**Helene Hockings, Nick Murray, Mike Walsham**  
**editor-pn@littlegaddesdenchurch.org.uk**

**Deadline Date: Friday 18<sup>th</sup> August**

## CHURCH SERVICES – JULY and AUGUST 2023

I 2 <sup>nd</sup> July – Trinity 4 / Festival of St Peter & St Paul		
9am	Patronal Service	Little Gaddesden
11am	Parish Communion	Great Gaddesden
6pm	Evensong	Nettleden
6pm	Taizé service	Little Gaddesden
II 9 <sup>th</sup> July – Trinity 5		
9am	Morning Prayer welcoming the Boutcher School	Nettleden
9am	Café Church	Little Gaddesden
11am	Café Church	Great Gaddesden
III 16 <sup>th</sup> July – Trinity 6		
9am	Parish Communion	Little Gaddesden
11am	Parish Communion	Great Gaddesden
6pm	Evensong	Nettleden
IV 23 <sup>rd</sup> July – Trinity 7		
9am	Morning Prayer	Nettleden
9am	Parish Communion	Little Gaddesden
11am	Parish Communion	Great Gaddesden
V 30 <sup>th</sup> July – Trinity 8		
9am	Joint Parish Communion	Little Gaddesden
I 6 <sup>th</sup> August – Trinity 9		
9am	Parish Communion	Little Gaddesden
11am	Parish Communion	Great Gaddesden
6pm	Evensong	Nettleden
II 13 <sup>th</sup> August – Trinity 10 / Festival of St Laurence		
9am	Morning Prayer – Patronal Festival	Nettleden
9am	Café Church	Little Gaddesden
11am	Café Church	Great Gaddesden
III 20 <sup>th</sup> August – Trinity 11		
9am	Parish Communion	Little Gaddesden
11am	Parish Communion	Great Gaddesden
6pm	Evensong	Nettleden
IV 27 <sup>th</sup> August – Trinity 12		
9am	Morning Prayer	Nettleden
9am	Parish Communion	Little Gaddesden
11am	Parish Communion	Great Gaddesden
I 3 <sup>rd</sup> September – Trinity 13		
9am	Parish Communion	Little Gaddesden
11am	Parish Communion	Great Gaddesden
6pm	Evensong	Nettleden
Mid-Week Services		
Tuesday	9am Holy Communion	Great Gaddesden
Thursday	10am Holy Communion	Little Gaddesden