THE LANTERN

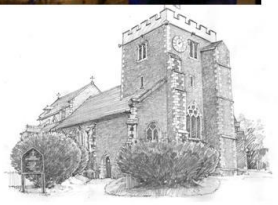
The newsletter of ST MARY'S CHURCH

Number 57 March-April 2020

CALLING NEW BELLRINGERS!

Unbelievably it is almost 10 years since the work to install our ring of six bells began. The largest bell, the tenor, was recast at the Whitechapel bell foundry on 19th November 2010. Meanwhile a group of prospective bell ringers were already training to ring the bells, supported by experienced ringers at Swanscombe church, and several of these original trainees ring the bells each Sunday before the morning service.

We are keen to expand our band of ringers and invite any local residents, who would like to learn this old, traditional skill, to come and join us at our weekly practice on any Thursday evening from 7.30 – 9pm. The only 'qualifications' needed are the ability to climb the tower stairs and to be tall enough to reach the bell ropes.



St Mary the Virgin, Stone

CALENDAR OF SERVICES

Daily

8 am Holy Communion
(if requested in advance)
9 am Mattins
5 pm Evensong

March

1st Sunday (Lent 1)
10 am Holy Communion
8th Sunday (Lent 2)
10 am Family Communion
15th Sunday (Lent 3)
10 am Holy Communion
22nd Mothering Sunday
10 am Holy Communion & Blessing of Flowers for Mum
29th Passion Sunday
10am Holy Communion

April

5th Palm Sunday
10 am Palm Procession to Greenhithe Church for Holy Communion (at 10.30 am)
8th Wednesday
7 pm Service of Prayer & Anointing
9th Maundy Thursday
7 pm Holy Communion of the Lord's Supper & Watch
10th Good Friday
10 am Veneration of the Cross
11th Easter Eve
10 pm Easter Vigil
12th Easter Day
10 am Holy Communion & Renewal of Baptismal Promises
19th Sunday (Easter 2)
10 am Family Communion
26th Sunday (Easter 3)
10 am Holy Communion with Prayers for Healing

Please come and join any or all of these

Dear Friends & Neighbours

The outbreak of coronavirus has reintroduced us to the concept of quarantine, a period or place of separation for people and animals suspected of carrying contagious disease. The quarantine may be voluntary or enforced. The word derives from French, a "quarantaine" being a period of forty days, considered long enough to test whether an infection has passed.

The forty-day period of testing comes straight from the Bible and is relived each Lent. Forty days Noah and the animals were cooped up in the ark, forty days spent Moses on the mountaintop with God, and for forty days and forty nights Jesus fasted in the wild, in a solo re-enactment of the trials of the Israelites on their forty-year trek through the wilderness.

Lent is a completely voluntary exercise, but what if it weren't? What if, like the quaratines being introduced to combat the spread of infection, we had no choice over the matter? What would we learn if, instead of giving up chocolate or alcohol or mobile phones, we gave up the one thing that is dearer to us than all else, our freedom? How would we even do this? And how would we cope then?

Perhaps it is not so futile to imagine this or to test it out practically. None of us are immune to the ageing process and, whilst instinct tells us to postpone for as long as possible the loss of independence that comes with growing older, the test of letting go might be easier if we had some practice at it.

The real purpose of Lent is not self-discipline but submission to the discipline of God, a notion we are as far away from in modern society as we could possibly be. We have a disease of the soul that far surpasses coronavirus in its spread, the infection of self-will. The quarantine of Lent is a deliberate isolation of self with the only power that can help us to recover, that of God.

Your Rector, Kenneth Clark

P.S. *St Mary's Stone Online*

We hope that you enjoy reading our new mini-format newsletter which will come out bi-monthly. You can also find out about St Mary's Stone, including its fascinating history, on our website www.stmarystone.org. Please do follow us on Facebook 'St Marys Church Stone' and on Twitter @stmarystone too.

NEWS & EVENTS

Mary's Child – our local charity.
Caring for local people.
Supporting local people.
Working with local people.

Good News! Mary's Child is now a registered charity. We can have our own bank account and raise money directly in order to offer even more care for our community. Please continue to support our work.

Stone Village Craft Club (SVCC)

SVCC is changing to become a daytime event, meeting on the first Wednesday of the month from 10 am–2 pm, in our church hall on Church Hill (just up the hill from Stone Crossing Station). Everyone is most welcome to come along for all or part of the sessions. Whether complete beginners or experienced crafters anyone can join in with the project we are doing, bring something of their own, or just come for a chat and coffee/tea. We'll also be providing a light snack for those who are staying over lunchtime. Interested? Why not check out our Facebook page to see what we've been doing and message us for any more information. Next meeting date is Wednesday 1st April.

Easter Egg Hunt

Easter Sunday 12th April, after the church service at about 11.30 am we will be holding an Easter Egg Hunt in the church grounds. Bring yourselves along and have fun hunting down the eggs. And if you can't find any eggs, there are some huge chocolate treats in the church to be raffled.

Parish Breakfast

Come to our parish breakfast, coffee and croissants and other refreshments on **Sunday 19th April** at **11.30 am** after church and thereafter every second Sunday of the month.

Annual Meeting

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting for the election of Churchwardens and other lay representatives, and reports on the life of the church takes place on **Sunday 26th April** at **11.30 am**.

Gemstones & Little Gems

If you are of primary school age, activities take pace in church for you each Sunday during the 10 am service. You are very welcome—bring an adult.

Pre-school age children are welcome at our Little Gems toddler church in the church hall on Fridays at 9.30 am.

If you are a teenager or older and thinking about the meaning of life, Christian introduction with or without a view to Baptism and Confirmation begins after Easter. Speak to the Revd Kenneth Clark on (01322) 382076 or via our website www.stmarystone.org

Baptisms *"You must be born from above" St John 3.7*

12th January Nicky John Bennett
Reggie Beau Bennett, *son of Nicky & Rebecca*
16th February Max Thomas James Norman, *son of Jamie & Krista*
23rd February Joshua James John Murrells, *son of Thomas & Gemma*

Weddings *"Those whom God had joined together let no-one put asunder" St Matthew 19.6*

14th February Anthony Mushod & Victoria Pullen

Funerals *"I will raise them up at the last day" St John 6.40*

20th January Dennis Raymond Edwards, *aged 58*
22nd January Stuart Keith Twyford, *aged 79*
27th January David Noel O'Neill, *aged 84*
(service in church)
31st January Cortes Kolawole Ayo Vaughan, *aged 64*
4th February Joanne Whiskin, *aged 49*
5th February Bernard Harold Woods, *aged 88*
(service in church)
11th February Albert George Busmer, *aged 89*
12th February Lawrence John Godley, *aged 73*

CONTACTS

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