

PARISH NEWS

NOVEMBER 2020

From the Vicarage

Many years ago, between the two World Wars, there was one parish magazine for all the villages in this area. From Firle to Folkington, Chalvington to West Dean. Quite an impressive publication, but necessarily limited in the amount of news from each parish. Today in our benefice we have the luxury of three parish magazines every month, put together by our dedicated editors and their teams. Each one providing extensive local news, church events and advertising for local traders and craftsmen.

Each magazine does a wonderful job in bringing their community together, along with other small dedicated teams organising social, fund-raising and sports events. Over many years of parish ministry I have generally found that 90% of the work to organise events and meetings is done by 10% of the local population. The Gospel describes them as 'a small amount of yeast which can transform a large amount of dough'. With the advent of local breweries, we could perhaps adapt this slightly to 'putting yeast into the beer' - bringing a bit of fizz into what is otherwise drab and tasteless.

As a parish priest I have always been extremely grateful to these wonderful local teams of folk, the yeast who make good things happen. In fact it was a major reason I came back to working in the parishes after my first retirement. Sadly, after five years in the benefice, it is now time for me to retire again. I suppose that most of us in our mid-seventies find a workload which was comparatively easy ten years ago becomes increasingly difficult. Trying to keep all the clubs in the air at one time results in more being dropped than caught, and eventually it's time to hand things over.

Needless to say, I have enjoyed my time here enormously. The support of our church congregations and community teams has been wonderful and often heart-warming; not to mention working alongside our Rector Peter - the benefice has received so much from his total dedication and spiritual inspiration - and I, for one, think myself extremely lucky to have been guided to work here.

I wish you all every blessing for the future; and strength in these continuing difficult circumstances to continue to bring our communities together, support our churches, and care for those in trouble.

With my deep gratitude for all your love and support.

Frank Fox-Wilson

Goodbye to Revd Frank Fox-Wilson

As Revd Frank Fox-Wilson retires this month after over 5 years' service to the local community, particularly Arlington and Wilmington, I would like to acknowledge and thank him for the great contribution he has made to ministry in our five villages.

Over and above the services and pastoral work, which have drawn on his accumulated ministerial experience and have been appreciated by so many, Frank has contributed many other gifts to the churches. He initiated the formation of 'Friends of St Pancras Arlington' (FoSPA) with the help of Jackie Appleton and Irene Flynn, to help tackle the cost of maintaining the magnificent church. In the past Frank put together his own prayer book and this has been used at Evening Prayer at Wilmington and gathers together a rich variety of prayers, psalms and canticles in thematic groups.

Frank has held exhibitions of his amazing wood carvings at Wilmington vicarage. Self-taught, he has shared his skill with others around the world through the publication of a book. At Arlington and Wilmington he leaves behind two meticulously and beautifully created Nativity Scenes. Another of his passions is playing drums and his improvised jazz accompaniment at concerts he organised at Arlington has delighted audiences. He has also provided a knife sharpening service and raised funds through that.

Of all the services that Frank has been a part of the most memorable must be his marriage to Jane St George. In the long history of our churches this was the first time that a parish priest has married a local farmer and what a happy occasion it was! I hope that the years that lie ahead as they begin a new chapter in their lives in Alfriston will be filled with happiness.

Thank you, Frank, for all that you have done for our churches.

Peter Blee

Church Services and Morning/Evening Prayer

1st November

9.00 am Morning Prayer (Zoom meeting*)
10.00 am Arlington – Morning Prayer
10.30 am Selmeston – Holy Communion
3.00 pm Alciston – Commemoration of the Departed

8th November

9.00 am Morning Prayer (Zoom meeting*)
9.30 am Arlington – Morning Prayer
and farewell to Revd F. Fox-Wilson
10.50 am Wilmington – Act of Remembrance
and farewell to Revd F. Fox-Wilson
10.50 am Act of Remembrance at Selmeston War Memorial
10.50 am Act of Remembrance at Berwick War Memorial

15th November

9.00 am Morning Prayer (Zoom meeting*)
10.00 am Arlington – Morning Prayer
10.30 am Berwick – Morning Prayer

22nd November

9.00 am Morning Prayer (Zoom meeting*)
10.00 am Wilmington – Morning Prayer
10.30 am Selmeston – Morning Prayer

29th November

9.00 am Morning Prayer (Zoom meeting*)
10.00 am Arlington – Morning Prayer
10.30 am Berwick – Morning Prayer

6th December – Advent 1

8.00 am Alciston – Holy Communion
9.00 am Morning Prayer (Zoom meeting*)
10.00 am Wilmington – Morning Prayer
10.30 am Berwick – Holy Communion

* Please request a link from the Benefice Administrator
benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk

Evening Prayer: 5.00 pm at Alciston every Wednesday.

Covid-19

With the winter months looming, we still have the Covid crisis affecting us all. The Government has a difficult balance in terms of re-opening the economy while ensuring that as few people as possible catch the virus so that our NHS is not overwhelmed with admissions. Since March efforts have been made to support those adversely affected by some of the measures introduced to protect us all. In the Lewes constituency, which includes towns such as Seaford, Newhaven, Polegate and Lewes itself, over 11,000 people were furloughed. Local businesses applied for £43 million of Bounce Back Loans and £13 million was paid out to support the self-employed just in this constituency alone.

Thankfully, we have low rates of the virus across Sussex and as a local MP I am working hard with all communities to help them re open as safely as possible as we now move towards a degree of normality. Even those previously shielding can now return to normal if social distancing guidance is followed. While local lockdowns are in place in other parts of the country there are no plans for another national lock-down. The current measures are subject to change but currently you can still go to work, school, hospital, church and university. You can still meet with your family and friends in groups of six and go shopping, to the pub and to restaurants.

Hospitals are also starting to return to offering routine treatments and when I now do shifts at my old hospital, I am giving chemotherapy instead of looking after Covid patients. I am also helping constituents who are patients with their Covid tests, which they need to have before being admitted for their routine procedures. The NHS is open, and it is returning to business as usual. While it is likely that we will need to continue with social distancing measures for the next few months until a vaccine is available, I believe that we need to live with this virus and not be dominated by it. The Government will open up other parts of the economy as soon as it is safe to do so and will avoid a second national lockdown at all costs.

Maria Caulfield, MP

Craft Show

The 44th Annual Pre-Christmas Exhibition and Sale by six Sussex artists and craftsmen, all members of the Sussex Guild, will take place from 10.00 am to 5.00 pm on Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th November in Alciston and Selmeston Village Hall.

Jonathan Chiswell Jones and Kerry Bosworth show lustreware and porcelain. They are joined by quiltmaker Louise Bell, Sue Lowday (leather bags, wallet and belts), Fleur Grenier who works with modern pewter, Liz Welsh (glass) and Wendy Dolan (stitched textiles). Work may be taken at time of purchase. All are very welcome.

Jonathan Chiswell-Jones

Pilates

Face to face Pilates classes have resumed in Alciston and Selmeston village hall on Thursday mornings. Both online and face to face Physiotherapy / Pilates assessment and treatment sessions.

Please contact Emily for more information – Email: emily@sussexphysiotherapy.com, Tel. 07791 864384.

November Gardener's Diary

What we can do this month in the vegetable garden is clear any rubbish off the soil to prepare for manure or compost. The best way is to cover the ground with compost and leaves, leaving it until next year to dig in, allowing the worms to work it into the soil.

Don't forget you can plant Garlic and Broad Beans this month, so they will have a great start in the spring.

Rake up all the leaves you can for the compost heap, if you have a rotary mower try running over them to break them up and you will find they will compost down quicker.

Check the onions to see if any are rotten. If they are, throw them away, the same with potatoes.

Don't forget to raise your mower up for the last cut of the year.

Keith Winter

Family Support Work - Christmas 2020

Benefice of Arlington, Berwick, Selmeston with Alciston and Wilmington

FSW support families and children through difficult times in their lives. Many are on low income, suffering from poverty or have other challenges. The need this year is as great as ever and if you feel able to give, your donation will make a real difference to them this Christmas. Giving will be in the form of financial contributions only as it is not possible to collect and distribute gifts safely, due to the current climate. FSW will then purchase suitable items on your behalf. Please donate using one of the following options:

Via the online donation page at www.familysupportwork.org/single-donation

For electronic donations to the FSW bank account (which is actually the most effective way as FSW don't have to pay any fees) please use:

Account name: Chichester Diocesan Association for Family Support Work (CDAFSW)

Sort code: 20-12-75

Account number: 40257133

Cheques should be made payable to Family Support Work or CDAFSW (either is fine) and sent to Garton House, 22 Stanford Avenue, Brighton BN1 6AA.

People in the benefice have been very generous in the past and we thank you again for supporting this charity. If you could donate by 4th December (so that gifts can arrive in time for Christmas), this would be extremely helpful.

Thank you

Tim Berrett/Jane Anderson/Christine Skinner

Family Support Work (FSW) – Update

I write this just after the Harvest festival for many churches. We have been humbled by the generosity of many parishes who have continued to collect for us (both food and monetary donations). As we enter further into autumn these contributions will be put to very good use with our families.

It has been a challenging month with the return to school bringing positives and negatives for our families. There is relief that children can restart their education and socialise again, but the effect of lockdown has meant that some families are struggling hugely with their mental health and their finances. We are also getting new referrals regularly as teachers and other professionals recognise a need for support that has developed over the last six months.

We are trying hard to replace lost income and have several virtual events happening between now and Christmas. We would love to see as many people as possible join in – all the information can be found on the Events page of our website:

www.familysupportwork.org. The recent abseil at Peacehaven Cliffs was a great success with over £13,000 being raised, so thank you to everybody who supported that event.

We would normally be in a busy period of meetings, talks and events in parishes throughout Sussex. In the absence of these we are still very conscious of all the prayer, practical and financial support being given so although we are not able to see you all in person, please know that we are extremely grateful to you all for your continued support of our work.

September's work in numbers

- ◆ 242 (socially distanced) visits to families and 134 phone calls supporting 49 grandparents, 318 parents and 305 children.
- ◆ 28 supported meetings (virtually via Zoom/Skype etc.) with other agencies.
- ◆ 265 deliveries of food and other items (such as children's activities) made.

Prayer points

- ◆ Thanks for the successful outcome of a large grant application last week.
- ◆ Pray for two young people in families we support who start undergraduate degrees at Oxbridge this month after overcoming significant challenges at home.
- ◆ Wisdom and strength for our trustees and senior management team in important decisions over the coming weeks.

Nikki Kerr, FSW Director of Fundraising and Marketing

News from King's Academy, Ringmer

The school has now been open for several weeks and we are pleased to report that, despite all the current Covid 19 restrictions, our students have settled back into learning in a very positive way. Because we were able to provide high quality teaching throughout lockdown, we have been able to continue their learning with the minimum of disruption. For those students who require extra assistance we are now offering individual tuition. We are incredibly grateful for the support given by parents and carers and, of course, to our hardworking staff.

By this time in the school year we would have held our Open Evening for Year 6 students who are considering their choice of school for next year. Due to Covid 19 this has not been possible, but we have held a virtual event that was watched by over 250 people. We are very aware how challenging this situation is for parents and students and we will do whatever we can to assist them and their children in making the right decision for their future. You can see a virtual tour of the school, hear from staff and students, and get a feel of the great atmosphere here by visiting our website. Parents can also visit us in person. If there is anything you need to know, please contact our Reception staff: ringmer.reception@kingsacademies.uk, who will ensure you get the answers to any questions you might have. Choosing a child's next school is an enormous decision and we genuinely want to help parents make the right choice.

The construction of the new 3G pitch by Ringmer Football Club on our field has been a great resource both for us and the local community. The pitch is now in use most evenings by various local clubs and organisations. When things eventually get back to normality the school and clubhouse will offer a selection of facilities to suit almost every occasion and ensure that the school is able to support the village community once again. I hope that with my next update we will be facing a brighter future and can put this year to bed. It has been a tough one for everyone, whether you got the virus, lost a loved one from it, lost your job or struggled to get through periods of isolation. This virus won't be with us forever and we need to support each other in the next few months until this crisis is finally over.

Stephen W. Green, Environmental Coordinator, King's Academy Ringmer

PS

We recently received a message from an elderly resident in Ringmer.

She called to express her appreciation of how every KAR student she has come across when walking around the village has moved politely out of her way, even if they were on phones. She wanted to make sure we knew how much this was appreciated and how well it reflected on the school.

A little piece of positive news at a time when young people are receiving a lot of criticism.

Mole

...and I Live in a Hole

If your lawn is full of nectar-rich flowers for butterflies and bees, with a patch of long grass for grasshoppers and hedgehogs, then Mother Nature will thank you. But if you're one of those particular people who demands that their lawn is a perfectly manicured carpet, slathered in chemicals and shamelessly shaved each summer Sunday, then Mother Nature will not be happy and she'll send in her best hit man. So while we remember, remember Guy Fawkes in November, I'm here to celebrate Britain's other infamous tunnelling terrorist – the mole.

It's hard to bond with the mole. Like 99.9% of us, I've never seen one and probably never will. They're almost a supernatural entity – the Bigfoot of the back garden. Their invisibility means my mental image of the mole has been painted by The Wind in the Willows and children's cartoons instead of real-life encounters. I'm always surprised when I see an actual photo of one and it's not wearing glasses.

Moles aren't blind. Admittedly, they'll be struggling by the second line of an eye test but there isn't much call for perfect eyesight when you spend all your life in total darkness. Instead, their pink nose is covered with 5,000 sensory organs which register touch and vibration, allowing the mole to 'see' with its snout; a super-sense that makes them efficient hunters. Their tunnel network spreads out like an underground web and when a wiggling worm drops into it the mole's super-senses tingle, sending them scrambling through their pitch-black passageways. Worms are captured, cleaned, beheaded and stored, still wriggling, in a larder for future consumption.

The mole's front paws are like a pair of giant pink snow-shovels and come equipped with an extra thumb; a characteristic they share with the giant panda. These wide shovel-hands can move an incredible 540 times their own weight of soil in a day. That's like me moving 55.46 tonnes of mud (and before you go scrambling for your calculators, yes, I could do with losing a few pounds).

The molehills that erupt on our lawns are spoil heaps created by the construction work below. OK –they're unsightly but gardeners should be welcoming moles. When potted, molehill soil makes an excellent growing medium for seeds and seedlings, so if you're blessed with molehills - grab a trowel. Once the tunnels are completed the molehills will stop appearing and, in the long run, mole burrowing bestows untold benefits to soil aeration and quality. But for me, it's a pleasure just knowing that such an amazing animal is living, unseen, a few inches below my feet. Some people will still complain but I guess some folk will always make a mountain out of a, well, y'know.

Michael Blencowe of the Sussex Wildlife Trust

Benefice Priest

Revd Peter Blee
Rector of Berwick and Vicar of Selmeston with Alciston
The Parsonage, Berwick, Polegate, BN26 6SR
Tel: 01323 870512 Email: peter.blee@berwickchurch.org.uk
Peter's day off is Saturday.

Churchwardens

Alciston - Michèle Boys Tel: 01323 870623
Berwick – Vacant
Selmeston - Jan Matthews Tel: 01323 811380

Benefice Administrator

Stephanie Lewis-Grey Tel: 01323 811136 Email: benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk

Parish News Advertising and Distribution

This is coordinated by Jeremy and Valerie Shaw. Tel: 01323 811567.

Parish News

This "digital issue" is also available on the benefice church's website www.sussexdownlandchurches.org.uk and Berwick Parish Council's website www.berwickparishcouncil.org.uk. We are anticipating that future issues will be distributed in this way until things return to normal.

As the "digital issues" do not include advertising, we intend to include the advertisements in the printed issues until they have appeared in a full 12 month's issues.

The production team is Jane Anderson and Martin Chilvers.

Contributions (other than advertising requests) should be sent to Martin Chilvers by the 12th of the month.

Email: empty.sea@outlook.com; Post: 66 Parkfield Avenue, Eastbourne, BN22 9SF.

You should receive confirmation of receipt by the 15th of the month, but if not, please call him on 01323 507655.

Contributions can also be passed on to one of the coordinators:

Jane Anderson at Old Postman's Cottage, Alciston Tel: 01323 870075.

Valerie Shaw at Selmeston House, Selmeston Tel: 01323 811567.

Laurie Tinsley, Wynsford, Berwick Tel: 01323 870895.

Donations

Financial donations to the Parish News are gratefully received. Cheques payable to "Parish News" can be passed to the Treasurer, Valerie Shaw, Selmeston House, Selmeston, Polegate, BN26 6UD.

Alternatively, electronic donations can be made to Barclays Bank - Account No. 70650625; Sort code 20-49-76.