

PARISH NEWS

APRIL 2021

From the Parsonage

Everyone has been living with absences in different ways during Covid. Familiar landmarks in one's days and weeks have gone, contact and conversations with people that tell us where we belong in the world have diminished. When it comes to drawing mental maps of the time that lies ahead, it is as if the pencil and paper have been taken away from us. Whilst none of these compare with the death of a loved one, they're still a kind of loss.

Whilst everyone grieves in their own unique way a number of emotions often accompany the experience of loss. These include shock and denial, pain and guilt, introversion and depression, anger and bargaining. Of course, there are other reasons why people may be feeling any of these emotions, but when you recognise some of these in others, or in yourself, you might be able to discern when some of the losses of Covid lie behind them. Some get stuck in one of these emotional states or keep falling into them. However, these can be different stages that are passed through leading to two final stages: 'reconstruction and working through', and 'acceptance and hope'. It is the love and support of others and their willingness just to accompany us that often help us reach these.

The death of Jesus on Good Friday focuses thoughts and emotions on the human experience of loss and the central part it plays in every human life. It highlights the fact that of all the losses that we experience none have as great an impact as the absence of love. Through Christ embracing all suffering on the cross he brings to the various human experiences of loss the healing power of God as love.

Wishing you Easter joy and love.

Peter Blee

Church Services and Morning Prayer

Please visit the benefice websites to check on services: www.sussexdownlandchurches.org.uk or www.berwickchurch.org.uk or subscribe to the benefice's 'Sunday Link' by emailing benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk / telephone 01323 811136.

Maundy Thursday 1 April

7.00 pm Alciston — Holy Communion
Commemoration of The Last Supper
8.00 pm Arlington Lady Chapel — Silent Vigil
Garden of Gethsemane

Good Friday 2 April

3.00 pm Selmeston — Good Friday Devotion
Time permitting, Peter Blee will also produce a YouTube video for Good Friday.

Easter Sunday 4 April

8.00 am Alciston — Holy Communion
(Book of Common Prayer)
9.00 am Morning Prayer (Zoom meeting*)
9.30 am Arlington — Holy Communion/Morning Prayer (tbc)
9.30 am Selmeston — Easter Family service
11.00 am Berwick — Holy Communion
11.00 am Wilmington — Holy Communion/Morning Prayer (tbc)

Wednesdays

9.30 am Morning Prayer (Zoom meeting*)

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

Sunday 11 April

9.00 am Morning Prayer (Zoom meeting*)
9.30 am Selmeston
10.00 am Wilmington
11.00 am Berwick

Sunday 18 April

9.00 am Morning Prayer (Zoom meeting*)
9.30 am Alciston
10.00 am Arlington — Holy Communion
11.00 am Berwick — Holy Communion

Sunday 25 April

9.00 am Morning Prayer (Zoom meeting*)
9.30 am Selmeston — Holy Communion
10.00 am Wilmington
11.00 am Berwick — Holy Communion

Sunday 2 May Rogation Sunday

10.00 am Alciston

Lambing Season

The lambing season has now begun so please could all dog walkers put their dogs on a lead when they walk through the local farmland. And please can all walkers with or without dogs keep to the designated footpaths. Thank you.

Victoria Burrough

Protecting Our Green Spaces

I am a passionate campaigner for protecting our green spaces, and in my time as your Member of Parliament I have worked alongside many of our local communities to oppose developments on greenfield sites.

We have heard repeatedly from some of the District Councillors that the government is imposing 785 new homes in Lewes. Having requested an urgent meeting with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on the matter, I have since discovered that these assertions are simply not true. Any plans to increase housing numbers were dropped in December last year, but we do face the possibility of more houses being built in Lewes should the council not renew the current Local Plan.

Lewes District's current Local Plan is now five years old and will require updating by May of this year. MHCLG wrote to the council back in January and then to the leader in early February, offering support in renewing the plan from the Government Chief Planner. Should the Local Plan not be updated by the council, then the housing target will revert to this figure of 785. If we are to avoid this, the council needs to take action, but so far, no response to the government's letter has been received. It is disappointing to say the least that there has been no communication from the council at such a critical time.

I have been meeting regularly with the team at Lewes District Council to resolve this matter and have made it clear that MHCLG will look at an application urgently to ensure that it is approved in time. The council must act now to update the Local Plan, thereby protecting our green spaces and preventing the overdevelopment of our towns and villages here in Lewes. I would encourage all residents in the district to get in contact with their local councillors and make it clear that action is required as a matter of urgency. I will continue to do all I can, working alongside the council, to get this issue resolved as soon as possible.

This issue will impact on the Wealden side of the constituency too, where there is also no local plan in place, and we are seeing speculative developers taking advantage of this in places such as Polegate with the Hindsland development. We need housing but we need our green spaces too and I will do all I can to protect them.

Maria Caulfield, MP

April Gardener's Diary

Now the clocks have changed and hopefully the weather's getting warmer, we can start sowing some seeds. Carrots, Beetroot, Peas, Turnips, Radish and Leeks can go in, but only if the soil is workable.

First early potatoes should be planted by now and second earlies 'chitting', ready for the middle of the month. Main crop can be planted at the end of the month.

Get your Onion sets in, when the soil is dry and if not already in, plant your shallots.

If you have Broad Beans in pots, plant them out when they start to flower, pinching out the tops to help stop blackfly.

If you have an area which is too wet to work with, cover it with black sheets and it will keep the weeds from growing, until it dries out.

A little tip for lawns with lots of moss is to get some sulphate of iron and spread over the lawn. This will kill the moss and strengthen the grasses.

Keith Winter

News from King's Academy, Ringmer

Students and staff have now settled back into classroom learning once again. To be honest, the students had adapted incredibly well to online learning as we were one of the few schools that conducted all six lessons a day live during the first lockdown! But there is nothing like the real thing and, as a small school, we genuinely missed them all as we know them so well.

It's not been all bad over the last year with remote learning, year group 'bubbles' and social distancing. It has forced change and some changes have been for the better. All the students now have access to Chromebook laptops and have mastered their navigation. The split break and lunchtimes have stayed, as smaller groups are more easily managed in the canteens and playgrounds. But the best change/improvement of all is the way the students have grown in confidence when it comes to managing their workloads. Although they had live lessons and staff were at hand to help when stuck or answer queries, a huge percentage of students have stepped up, worked things out for themselves and have started to make decisions on their own, whereas before they

would be constantly seeking reassurance about every piece of work. These new independent learning skills will be invaluable in the future.

We are delighted that we have our maximum intake numbers this year for our new September starters. We haven't had 150 start in year 7 for several years now, so this is a true testament of how far the school has come. Hopefully, we will be able to visit them and they, in turn, can come to us for a whole day in the summer as many have been unable to visit us at all.

Jamie Peacock, Transition and Marketing Manager, King's Academy Ringmer

Family Support Work (FSW) – Update

I write this as schools are reopening to all pupils for the first time since last year. It is fair to say that our families have found this latest period of lockdown and home-schooling very challenging, but overall they have been incredibly resilient and managed to get through it, thanks to the fantastic support offered by our practitioners. As we make tentative steps back into some sort of normality, we are very proud that our families have coped so well over the last year.

We are interviewing candidates this week for the new practitioner roles that were mentioned in my last update and hope to have some good news regarding appointments shortly, which we will of course share with you as soon as we can.

After some hugely generous donations to our foodbank over Christmas which kept us well stocked throughout January and February, we are now running low on many items. If anybody is in a position to arrange a food collection, we are in need of nearly everything with the exception of pasta and tinned tomatoes, of which we have plenty. Tinned meats and fish, tinned vegetables and fruit, soup, tea/coffee and table sauces would be particularly welcome. We are able to collect if you have a large quantity of donations – please contact Spencer in the office on 01273 832963 or by email spencer@familysupportwork.org.uk if this is the case.

With the Government's road map giving us some of idea when we may be able to resume our face-to-face activities, we are planning how to do this both safely and successfully, and I hope to be able to share news with you in the next update of our plans for the rest of the year. In the meantime, thank you all for continuing to share our news and support us in prayer during the last month.

February's work in numbers:

- ◆ 311 individual visits and 163 support calls with families supporting 33 grandparents, 354 parents and 296 children.
- ◆ 18 supported meetings with other agencies carried out remotely.
- ◆ 24 online group sessions held, including half-term activities.
- ◆ 396 food deliveries made.

Prayer points:

- ◆ Pray for wisdom for our interview panel in selecting the right candidates for the new practitioner roles.
- ◆ Give thanks for recent funding successes that will provide some stability in the coming months.
- ◆ Pray that our staff remain healthy both physically and mentally after an incredibly tough few weeks.

Nikki Kerr, FSW Director of Fundraising and Marketing

Berwick Station Improvements

I wanted to get in touch to let you know about some improvements starting at Berwick station over the coming weeks:

- ◆ Landscaping
- ◆ Additional seating
- ◆ Cycle security

The improvements are part of the 'Improving Your Stations' programme through the Passenger Benefit Fund. The fund is supporting a range of work across the network including waiting shelters, refurbished toilets, more seats, information screens, automatic doors, more cycle parking, refurbished waiting rooms, station planters and LED lighting.

We've put together an area on our website to detail these projects station by station, you can download the list here - <https://www.southernrailway.com/improvingyourstations>. We're also reporting progress on these schemes on Twitter using the hashtag #ImprovingYourStations.

If you would like to know more about the schemes, arrange a visit or highlight the new facilities through your communications then please feel free to get in touch with me.

Rob Whitehead

Community Engagement Officer (Southern and GX) | Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR)

My Back Pages



I love old natural history books. It's not just the information they contain. I love the smell; I love the binding. For the past twelve months I've avoided Covid anxieties by burying my head in old books, scientific papers and traveller's journals. I've been researching a book of my own, an account of my travels in search of what remains of the world's iconic extinct animals. A journey which took me from the dark forests of New Zealand to the ferries of Finland and finally to an inflatable crocodile floating on Widewater Lagoon in Shoreham.

After spending long lockdown nights writing at my computer it was somewhat surreal to receive an advance copy of my book in the post this morning and to run my hands over its embossed cover. I finally filed it on my bookcase where it rubbed shoulders, and

spines, with *On The Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin and *Animal Magic* by Johnny Morris.

My bookshelves sag with old natural history books. Just holding these tomes transports me to another time. Tucked away inside my battered (but beloved) copy of *The Butterflies of Eastbourne* (1928) by Robert Adkin is a map, which I always unfold eagerly as if I've discovered the concealed directions to some long-lost buried treasure. Indeed, in the book Adkin describes bounteous butterfly riches which could be found in the woodlands and downland coombes between Lewes and Eastbourne. You can almost hear Rudyard Kipling whisper of "something lost behind the Ranges. Lost and waiting for you. Go!" At the time, many young explorers answered the call and Adkin claimed that "almost daily during the summer, one meets small armies of schoolboys each armed with a butterfly net."

Perhaps Adkin's eager Eastbourne entomologist army had been inspired by another of my favourite books. *The Outdoor World* (1900) by William Furneaux aimed to distract children from "victimising their schoolmates" and give them "a taste for something better." Back in 1900, it seems pinning butterflies and collecting birds' eggs fell into the "something better" category. Furneaux encouraged young naturalists to make "killing bottles" in which they could dispatch butterflies, and instructed children to ask the local chemist for some cyanide. The chemist will, Furneaux assures you, sell you cyanide if "he is satisfied with your intentions." Although it all sounds rather macabre now, this popular book went on to inspire a generation of young naturalists (and probably one or two aspiring Dr Crippens). Back on my bookshelf, I look at my book and wonder if — in 100 years from now — my own story will seem as distant and ridiculous as a world where schoolboys wielded butterfly nets and 10-year-olds could pop to the chemist to buy deadly poison.

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 – Ruth Nares Tel: 01323 811186
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. 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.

We are very grateful for a donation last month from Mrs Newton.