

THE CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION, HANGER HILL WITH ST MARY'S, WEST TWYFORD

# PARISH NEWS

**February 2021**



Hanger Hill Park, 24th January 2021

[www.ascensionealing.org](http://www.ascensionealing.org)

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# CONTENTS

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Letter from Simon .....	2
Parish News .....	5
Ascension News .....	8
Calendar, Diary & Registers .....	10
Sudoku Challenge.....	12
Beaufort Players Drama Group.....	13
Points To Ponder .....	13
Poem – Another Month, Another Year.....	14
Science, Faith And Hope .....	15
Miscellaneous Musings Of Modern Life .....	16
Sudoku Solution .....	17
Mothers Is Always Right .....	17
Prayer Section .....	18
Supporting Mission .....	19
And Finally.....	20

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# LETTER FROM SIMON

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## February letter:

When I arrived here in 1996 I was up for a challenge. I'd been told that the Ascension needed re-energising, but the big challenge was St Mary's, where the building itself had been declared redundant the previous year. I was advised that I could close the church congregation completely if that seemed best, but once I'd met the people that was out of the question. They weren't ready to give up, and I was pretty sure God wasn't either. West Twyford needs its own church and so we worked and prayed and worked and prayed until in 2010 a restored St Mary's church and Community Hall was reopened.

Much as I try, I can't be in two places at once, and so since 1999 I've had four successive part-time and self-supporting clergy assistants, of whom Pete Harris has been the longest serving by a distance. We also had a paid Community minister for three years, followed by two hard working volunteers. The last of these, Rae White, has stayed on in the Parish and will soon become a Commissioned Minister like Liz Williams.

Pete and I have been talking for some time about the next step. A full time paid minister at St Mary's would be wonderful but could only happen if we could cover their costs, something far beyond our means. Although London is

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## LETTER FROM SIMON

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probably the wealthiest diocese in the Church of England, financial pressures are growing everywhere, and there is a pattern for more and more clergy to be self-supporting. We therefore concluded that our best plan was to seek a new self-supporting minister to take things forward at St Mary's. The diocese had also been exploring new ministry in the Park Royal area and we wondered if this could be linked to that.

To go ahead we needed to be able to continue to use 48 Brentmead Gardens, the St Mary's house, and at the turn of the year the Bishop and Archdeacon informed us that this would not be possible. Plans for Park Royal seem to have been shelved, and with the financial losses all churches have experienced, they want to rent the house out to generate some income. (Some of you may ask whether that money will come to us. It won't because we do not manage to cover all our Parish costs and therefore already need help from central funds).

I am not totally surprised by this decision, but nor am I discouraged by it. Over the last year we have faced new and unexpected challenges as a Parish and risen to them magnificently. When I came to St Mary's we faced setback after setback in getting the church reopened but with God's help we overcame them all. Put simply I don't believe that God has given up on St Mary's.

Whenever restrictions relax enough to reopen St Mary's properly we will be in a very different place than when we

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## LETTER FROM SIMON

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closed. The online services have caused our two churches to grow much closer together – people at both end of the Parish have said this often. We know each other better and want to share as much as possible, and help each other out. We've learned a great deal about what we can do with technology, achieved great things, and we don't intend to stop. If only one preacher is available we can share on video much better than ever before. If we lack a musician we have a growing library of our own recorded songs and hymns to help us worship. That opens up new possibilities we did not have before.

I don't know yet what the new shape of worship at St Mary's and Ascension will look like, but we have possibilities and that's always a good place to start. We also have time because we are not coming out of lockdown quickly. I want to use that time to think and pray and explore what we can do. (We're already looking at how we can hold church services which are both live in a building and live-streamed for online worshippers.) I want to have lots of conversations with members of both churches both about what we'd like to see and what we can do. I don't want just to get back to where we were before. I believe we can do better than that and we have the means to do so.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'Simon', written in a cursive style.

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## PARISH NEWS

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### **New Evening Worship**

We used to have monthly Evening worship at the Ascension and less frequent evening services like Redemption at St Mary's. A few of you are missing Sunday evenings so from February 7th we're going to try something new.

"The Sunday Word" is a 6pm online service lasting about an hour with music and prayer but centred around a creative way of reading and learning from the Bible. Instead of a talk followed by a discussion, we're simply going to read a book of the Bible together. We'll start at the beginning and everyone who is comfortable reading aloud will take it in turns to read until they're ready to stop, and then the next person takes over. As they do that, however, anyone can chip in with a question\* or a comment so that we make sure we understand what we're reading and start to see how it might relate to us. Having done this with different groups it's a very lively and engaging way to read the Bible. There's no rush and wherever we stop we pick up next time.

This is an extra rather than an alternative to our main Sunday morning service but do come and give it a try.

- *Simon*

\* If I don't know the answer I have a library of books next to me!

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## PARISH NEWS

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### **Ash Wednesday**

In response to the need to minimise social contacts we will not have any physical church services on Ash Wednesday. Instead we will have an online service at 8pm.

### **Lent**

Easter is early this year so barely are we out of Christmas and Epiphany than we're into Lent. In past years we have run some special Lent groups and activities often involving prayer and learning together.

As whatever we do this year will have to be online, keep in touch with the website to find out what's happening as we announce it.

### **Thank You From Scotland!**

I'd like to take this time to thank you, Simon, and the congregations of the Church of the Ascension and St. Mary's for the zoom services held since March last year. The services have been an encouragement in strange times - the music from Lee, Rae, yourself and others has been of such a high standard. I've been happily singing along at home as the music helped so much with the worship. The teaching is always good to hear too, it's been a big blessing. The congregation down south has been so welcoming and inclusive. I never felt like a stranger or incomer and getting to know folk better has been a lot of fun, especially with some of the banter. Some folk are now Facebook friends so we will keep in touch.

I may come and join in the services from time to time. But we now have a new minister for our Parish Church here and he is starting online services on Sundays with a coffee break on Zoom

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## PARISH NEWS

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afterwards. It's time for me to reconnect with friends in the congregation, some of whom we've not seen for nearly a year.

Once restrictions finally lift and some of you may feel the pull to travel north, please do not rush past the lovely Borders area. Come and explore and let me know you are here and maybe have a coffee and cake in our fantastic cafes. If you are determined to enjoy the craziness of Edinburgh then I am happy to visit there too (I avoid Glasgow usually).

Thank you again for your company and may the Lord richly bless you all as we go into brighter days in the Spring.

- Heather Martin (Scottish Borders)

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# ASCENSION NEWS

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## The Ascension Friends

Here we are, still in lockdown and I can hardly believe that it's a year since we last met. Little did any of us know back then what a devastating effect Coronavirus would have on all our lives. However, we must be thankful that we have all stayed safe and well and I'm hoping that in the next few months things will have improved so much that we will be able to meet again. Spencer was due to give us a talk last April on The Mansion House, home of the Lord Mayor of London. I'm sure he can be persuaded to come along whenever we are able to meet again – particularly if there's coffee cake!



Apart from keeping in touch with you all I've kept myself busy in all sorts of ways, learning new skills and perfecting old ones and baking is always near the top of the list. I thought you might like to see this photo of the cake I made for my granddaughter's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. She loved it. Sadly we weren't able to celebrate with her, so it was just a quick, distanced, doorstep delivery.

I do hope that we'll meet again soon. Meanwhile stay safe and keep well.

- Liz Williams (020 8997 5578, [williams13qr@gmail.com](mailto:williams13qr@gmail.com))

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# CALENDAR, DIARY & REGISTERS

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## Calendar

## February

## Intercessions

Our regular service times can be found on the back cover. On Sundays the intercessions (which are being used in an alphabetical sequence) are for the people who live or work in the various roads and schools of our Parish.

*Weekly acts of worship and Daily Prayer can be accessed via the website. Now, more than ever, please do use the prompts here to pray for the residents of the different streets in our Parish.*

### Wednesday February 3rd

8pm – Monthly Parish Prayer Gathering on Zoom

### Week beginning February 7th (2nd Sunday before Lent)

*Boileau Road & Bodiam Way*

Sunday 10.30am – Live All Age Worship on Zoom

6pm – The Sunday Word: Evening Worship on Zoom

### Week beginning February 14th (Sunday before Lent)

*Brentmead Gardens & Chatsworth Rise*

Sunday 10.30am – Live Worship on Zoom

4.30pm – Youth Group on Zoom

### Wednesday February 17th - **ASH WEDNESDAY**

8pm - Holy Communion on Zoom

### Week beginning February 21st (1st Sunday of Lent)

*Chatsworth Road & Cherry Wood Way*

Sunday 10.30am – Live Worship on Zoom

Thursday 8pm – Leadership Course on Zoom

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## CALENDAR, DIARY & REGISTERS

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Week beginning February 28th (2nd Sunday of Lent)

*Cleveley Crescent & Churchill Court*

Sunday 10.30am – Live Worship on Zoom

4.30pm – Youth Group on Zoom

All live services on Zoom are recorded and posted as videos on the Parish website where they can be accessed for the next week.

### PARISH REGISTERS

No entries this month

### **Other Dates For 2021**

- Apr 2nd – Good Friday
- Apr 4th – Easter Sunday
- Apr 25th – Annual Parochial Church Meeting

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# SUDOKU CHALLENGE

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## SUDOKU CHALLENGE

How to play : place a number from 1-9 in each empty cell so that each row, each column & each 3x3 block contains all the numbers from 1-9.

(N.B. No number can appear twice in any row, column or 3 x 3 box)

				4				
	8		9					
2	3	6			1			
		5				2		
	9		5					6
4	1			2			7	
					5	8		
1			2	8		7	3	
3	2		7			6		

Solution page 17

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## ARTICLES

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### **Beaufort Players Drama Group** **[www.beaufortplayers.org.uk](http://www.beaufortplayers.org.uk)**

It's hard to believe that it's now over a year since we last staged a play in the Ascension Hall - 'Handbagged' in November 2019.

All we can do is hope that this year will be different to last, and that we can once again get back to doing what we most enjoy – presenting live entertainment to our loyal supporters.

Meanwhile, for those who would like a reminder of just who we are and what we have done in the past, why not visit the 'Productions' tab on our website at the address above to see photos and reviews from over 55 years of Beaufort Players productions.



### **Points To Ponder**

"Great faith is the product of great fights. Great testimonies are the outcome of great tests. Great triumphs can only come out of great trials." – *Smith Wigglesworth, preacher*

Prayer is not an argument with God to persuade Him to move things our way, but an exercise by which we are enabled by His spirit to move things His way. – *Anon*

The Bible that is falling apart usually belongs to someone who isn't. – *Vance Havner*

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## ARTICLES

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### **Poem: Another Month, Another Year**

Another month another year  
Another step in our pilgrimage to you  
Lord, help me keep to the path you have chosen for me  
Especially for me, with you Lord in view.

Lord, hear my prayer in the relentless struggle  
A struggle in this broken world  
Help me through life's ups and downs  
So I can keep to your path as it is unfurled.

May I always remember  
That your Spirit is always with me  
May I always shine with happiness  
As I aim to be a true child for thee.

Lord, you are my refuge and my shelter  
I cling to you in times of disaster and trouble  
In this difficult time of deadly virus and disease  
Lord, please keep us safe and may our trust not wobble.

Let us jump for joy and sing our songs  
Let us pray and give thanks as well  
To a God who knows each and every one of us  
And all our worries and fears he will quell.

© Diana Dishley, January 2021

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## ARTICLES

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### **Science, Faith And Hope**

*Dr Ruth M Bancewicz, Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.*

I find that watching buds swelling on trees and plants during the winter months gives me a tremendous sense of hope. We may all need some extra hope for 2021, after the events of 2020. By the time you read this a number of us may have been fortunate enough to receive a COVID vaccine, but all of us will probably still be under various kinds of restrictions. After creation's winter shut-down, the sight of tiny flowers poking out of brown earth may be more important than ever.

Getting outdoors during daylight hours, enjoying green spaces and getting some fresh air and exercise are great ways to keep ourselves healthy at any time of year. A psychologist colleague wrote, "Attending to the details of nature can also inspire awe, which has been linked to positive mood and increased life satisfaction." I expect it is this sense of awe that makes it easier for many of us to connect with God outdoors.

Helping ourselves and others to thrive is a good start to 2021, but it is also vital to have hope for the future. The COVID-19 pandemic was caused by an animal virus jumping into the human population. Diseases like this are not 'natural disasters', but are almost certainly caused by environmental destruction and poor farming practices - either from greed or the desperation born of poverty. Part of the answer to the current

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## ARTICLES

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crisis is for us to care for all of Creation, both human and everything else, with God's help.

Our ultimate hope is in God's promise that He will bring about a new heavens and new earth. We can look forward to the day when Creation will be fully redeemed and liberated from evil. The Greek word used to describe the new creation is the same as that used to describe someone who becomes a Christian, whose humanity is restored and renewed. There will be continuity between the old and new earth as it is cleansed and purified, surpassing and perfecting what has gone before. There will also be some discontinuity, as there will be no more suffering or death.

So, one source of hope for 2021 is that we can enjoy both caring for and meeting God in Creation. But the parts of Creation that we find most beautiful, giving us a sense of awe and helping us to worship, are also a reminder that there is something much better to come.

- [www.parishpump.org.uk](http://www.parishpump.org.uk)

### **Miscellaneous Musings Of Modern Life . . . .**

In filling out an application, where it says, 'In case of emergency, notify:' I put 'DOCTOR.'

Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine.

God isn't looking for perfect people. He is looking to perfect people. —*John Hileman*

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# SUDOKU SOLUTION

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9	7	1	3	4	2	5	6	8
5	8	4	9	6	7	3	1	2
2	3	6	8	5	1	4	9	7
7	6	5	4	1	9	2	8	3
8	9	2	5	7	3	1	4	6
4	1	3	6	2	8	9	7	5
6	4	7	1	3	5	8	2	9
1	5	9	2	8	6	7	3	4
3	2	8	7	9	4	6	5	1

## Mother Is Always Right

When I was young, my Mother often used to say "If you don't stop, it'll end in tears!" .

And sure enough, years later, it has all ended in TIERS!

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## SUPPORTING PRAYER

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*We'd love to hear from you about prayer. Have you got a story about answered prayer? An insight which has helped you to pray better? An inspiring quotation about prayer? A prayer someone has written which you find useful? A question about prayer you'd like answered?*

Last month one of our Sunday services explored prayer for healing. After the talk we had an online time of prayer in which anyone who wanted to be prayed for waved into their camera(!) and everyone else joined in a prayer for them, trusting that God knew what they needed.

Afterwards five different people messaged Simon to say that God had met with them in significant ways during the service. Two of them indicated that they had come to the service feeling unwell physically or in another way, and both reported that after prayer their discomfort had gone.

This is why we pray.

Our regular monthly Parish Prayer Gatherings continue online on **Wednesday February 3rd**. Keep in touch with the website, Facebook page and WhatsApp group for prayer information.



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## SUPPORTING MISSION

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### **Supporting Mission A Rocha (“The Rock”) – Christians in Conservation**

Every month we profile one of the agencies the Parish supports through our external giving.

*Based locally in Southall, A Rocha UK has for a number of years been in the forefront of helping the church in Britain to become aware of and respond practically to the environmental challenges we all face.*

*A Rocha have produced a wide range of worship resources for use in churches (including our own) as well as educational materials for primary and secondary schools. They are also partners in the “Floating Classroom” on the Grand Union Canal. Former UK Director Revd Dave Bookless is the author of a number of widely read books for Christians.*

*In 2001 A Rocha began a project with the local authority and other landowners to turn 90 acres of derelict land into the Minet Country Park, a dedicated nature conservation area. A similar project is currently being developed at Wolf Fields in Southall.*

*The Eco Church programme, which enables churches and congregations to reduce their carbo footprint and tread more lightly in other ways, is run by A Rocha..*

*A Rocha define themselves by five commitments. Foundationally they are Christian, their work is Conservation, they are committed to building Community in a way which is Cross-Cultural and achieved by Co-operation.*

*To find out more visit [www.arocha.org](http://www.arocha.org).*

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## .... AND FINALLY

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### Roman Numerals

- I struggle with Roman numerals until I get to 159, then it CLIX.
- I used to be really good at Roman numerals, but I've forgotten how to write 1, 1000, 51, 6, 500. IM LIVID.
- I, for one, quite like Roman Numerals.
- X Factor - the original Roman sun cream.
- I excel at saying 39 in Roman numerals.
- Roman numerals. What are they good IV?
- I heard a rumour that they were going to ban Roman numerals. Not on my watch!
- Why is there so much hate around Roman numeral jokes? I, for one, like Roman numerals.
- A pirate captain says to his three crewmates, "Let's learn Roman numerals!" The first one says, "Aye." The second one adds, "Aye aye." The third one says, "Aye aye aye."
- You may be surprised to know that Roman numerals are actually very easy to do algebra with: X is always equal to 10.

A Roman centurion walks into a bar and points to a bottle.

The barman says, "Martini?"

The centurion replies, "No, I only want one."

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# PERSONNEL

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SACRISTAN (A):	Denise Avanesian	Tel: 020 8810 7140
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC:	Lee Dewsnap	Tel: 07702 126971
CHILDREN'S CLUB (A)	Amanda Butcher	Tel: 020 8992 4790
JUNIOR CHURCH (M)	Colin McKenzie – address above	Tel: 020 8838 4531
HALL BOOKINGS:	Liz Williams (A), 13 Queen's Road, W5 2SA	Tel: 020 8997 5578
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MAGAZINE	Eija O'Gorman (A)	Tel: 020 8992 0061

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## THE CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION, HANGER HILL

Beaufort Road, London W5 3EB

Wheel chair access at front entrance

- Sundays**      0900 HOLY COMMUNION (currently suspended)  
                  1030 ZOOM ONLINE MORNING SERVICE (with Holy Communion)  
                                  *including Children's Group*  
                                  *All Age Service - 1st Sunday of the month*

The Church is normally open for DAILY PRAYER 9.00-9.30am and 5.30-6pm weekdays

### Other Activities (currently suspended)

- Ascension Friends retired people's club
- Actions Songs & Rhymes Toddler Group
- Community Choir

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## ST MARY'S, WEST TWYFORD

Brentmead Gardens, London NW10 7ED

- Sundays**      1030 ZOOM ONLINE MORNING SERVICE (with Holy Communion)  
                                  *including Children's Group*  
                                  *All Age Service - 1st Sunday of the month*

**Thursdays**    1200 HOLY COMMUNION (3rd Thur of month) (currently suspended)

### Other Activities

- Beans & Leaves Café (currently suspended)
- (currently suspended) - Stay and Play Toddler Group
- Coffee Morning
- Jazz Club

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## HOME GROUPS, COURSES, AND YOUTH GROUP

Meetings currently online

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Please check the website [www.ascensionealing.org](http://www.ascensionealing.org) to keep in touch with what we are doing online and to gain access to Zoom events.

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Copy for next issue must be received by *Simon*  
by end of **Monday 15th February 2021**.

