

St Peter & St Paul West Mersea Newsletter – July 2020



Change! Change! **Change!**

Message from Brian Snelling

Constant change is here to stay

In recent months we have all had to live with many changes. It's been much harder for some than for others. Things will eventually settle down, but as some of us were thinking on Pentecost Sunday, it won't be a return to normal. There will be a new normal. So many lessons hopefully will have been learned, not least about the importance of living in a caring society. Our understanding about who are the most important members of a caring community should have changed.

For the Christian change should hold no fear. Indeed, change is essential this side of heaven. None of us is perfect and until we are, we need to change. As we allow the Holy Spirit to mould us more and more into the likeness of Jesus, using St Paul's phrase, we will be "changed from one degree of glory to another". Perhaps we can, in a small way, help to show our community how to change as we are led by God's Holy Spirit. Then we really will be abiding in heavenly love.

**A queue is a queue whether long or short,
it is something we are having to get used to now.**



short



Long



Even longer

In our garden, change is happening all the time, maybe its good when we can harvest veggies, not so good when the weeds grow, definitely not so good when it doesn't rain!



There is always something outdoors to enjoy

How are your sunflowers growing?

Please send us some photos for next month!

Have you ever tried to save the beautiful perfume of the Rose Petals?



A rose by any other name



As a child, I remember gathering up fallen rose petals and putting them in water to make 'scent'. But after a few days, the 'scent' had deteriorated, and ended up on the compost heap.

I can still remember the subtle flavour and aroma of Rose Petal Jam, bought in Bulgaria. Is it still made I wonder?

In the past few years I have been drying off rose petals when they are just about ready to drop.

To begin with, I intended to make potpourri with them, but decided I already had enough bowls full of dead things gathering dust so wondered what to do with them.

Then I met Roxy and discovered a new outlet.

I asked if she could tell us how she uses petals and here is her response;-

My name is Roxanne Angelique Cawdron, I'm a Civil Celebrant who helps families honour and celebrate the important moments in life. Dried flower petals have become increasingly popular in these moments to ritualise certain elements that are important to people, all while being gentle and kind to the earth.

For weddings, they are used as eco-confetti or to creatively line aisles or used in decoration. But in funerals dried petals are a beautiful and meaningful addition to the end of a burial service, to be used as an alternative to soil. This allows families to participate in their own special way; they each grab a handful of petals, offer a warm blessing or a private moment of contemplation and then sprinkle the petals into the grave once the person who has died has been laid to rest. It's gentle, natural, and epitomises the phrase 'Actions speak louder than words.'

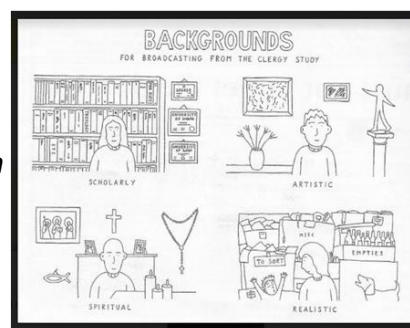
During the month of May this year, the sun has been constantly hot and doing a grand job drying rose petal leaves.

To start them off they lay on newspaper in a very sunny position in my conservatory where they change from beautiful soft, velvety, colourful perfume banks. Then as they lose moisture they become crisp, while still holding some of that perfume and colour. A feast for the senses. Then I transfer them to my airing cupboard which completes the drying process, and then passed onto Roxy.

I have been very fortunate that other people have been bringing petals as well, and the process continues....

If you join us on Zoom on Sunday mornings a lot of preparation goes in to set up

Have you noticed the background when you watch services on TV, it can be quite interesting



Several people have said how difficult it is to set up their laptops/ i-pads/phones for Zoom services in a way that others can see their faces, without looking up their nose or seeing only the top of their head! Below is Liz Willey's description;

Everyone has his or her own method, but after much experimentation, this is the complicated arrangement we have ended up with – Laptop for Zoom service, balanced on child's chair on coffee table to bring camera as near as possible to shoulder height. (I need three cushions on my chair!) Next to this, our I-pad displays the service words on a music stand. Ideally, light needs to come from opposite or the side. If there is a window behind you, the image is very dark.

A thought from Alan Brook:

When Sue and I were sailing and living on our boat, we visited a church in Mallorca, the Church is under a café in a small shopping mall, just to prove its not the building that counts. Here is an excerpt from the minister, Philip North's message on Trinity Sunday:



'I can't breathe.'

Unspoken, spoken then hashtagged, this is becoming the cry of all who feel constricted and suffocated by poverty or injustice.

'I can't breathe.'

Those are not recorded amongst the last words spoken by Jesus from the cross, but they might have been, for crucifixion, like COVID, works by forcing the air out of a person's lungs. Every breath becomes such unspeakable agony that eventually the body has to give up trying. On the cross, Jesus identifies himself with all who cry out, 'I can't breathe.'

Yet his breathlessness has purpose, 'It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you,' Jesus says at the table of the Last Supper (John 16, 7). By undergoing breathlessness, Jesus unleashes for us the irresistible, life-giving breath of the Spirit who renews all creation.

The Spirit's breath, released at Pentecost, is the gift that Jesus gives to his Church. So in a post-COVID world Christians must be utterly single-minded in breathing that breath over a world that cries out, 'I can't breathe.' Nothing else will matter.

First, over the breathless, we must breathe out the Spirit's breath of life. During crisis, through generous service and imaginative use of the online environment, we have made contact with a new fringe. What we need now is a new evangelism in which we live and speak the Gospel with joy, an evangelism motivated not by institutional survival but by the passionate desire that people might breathe.

And this new evangelism must begin amongst the poor, because that is the place from where renewal always springs. Dioceses are going to have difficult decisions to make about deployment and pastoral organisation in the years ahead, but such decisions must honour our commitment to inner city, outer estate and post-industrial communities. If now becomes the time when we disproportionately withdraw people or buildings from places of poverty, then God is dishonoured and the Gospel is fatally undermined.

The lesson of history is clear and consistent. An evangelism that prioritises the powerful does not work and cannot last. Instead we need to hear the voice of the breathless. We need to speak good news to the poor. Our best leaders, our richest resources, our finest theologians, our most engaging preachers must be offered to the places where life is hardest. Only then we will re-engage a nation with the person of Jesus.

In Our Community



Sea Sunday will be on 12th July and that there will be an online service at:- missiontoseafarers.org/sea-sunday
This for any who wish to link into MtS
More information can be had on:- seasunday@missiontoseafarers.org

John Talbot continues to collect knitted hats for seafarers, here is a photo taken in his back garden

Keep Knitting!

Weddings & Birthdays

Many will remember Maurice & Gisella getting married at our church in January 2019. They moved to Scotland last autumn and have kept in touch. They send greetings to everyone and are enjoying their garden. Its been a good spring up there



June Hammond celebrated her 93rd birthday at Mersea Court with a coffee and cake party, with everyone socially distancing of course. Her family came along to join in on a beautiful sunny Sunday

Terry Walkers Challenge

Between the June 1st – 30th Terry be joining others to “**Walk the World**” raise funds for Amor Europe. A Christian Charity, check out their web site Amor Europe.

The work they are engaged in is divided into three main areas

1. Youth and children’s worker training
2. House building trips
3. Clean water projects

To www.give.net/TerryWalk2020 and give to support “**Walk the World**”

Porch Pantry

A while ago Mersea Museum very kindly donated some children's toys which they had been unable to sell at the Museum. Lily asked if she could set up a table on our driveway and sell the items. We designed a poster and she went out each morning to set it up and indeed put it back in the garage each evening. This she did for 3-4 weeks and her commitment saw a fabulous £36 raised for then Porch Pantry.

We still have a lot of coin purses left so do let me know if you would like one!

It would be wonderful if anyone could help with the shopping for the Pantry. I am struggling a little with juggling everything. Both Lily and Rupert will not be returning to school this academic year and as such they invariably have to come to Lidl with me to do what is quite a mammoth shop! Do let me know if you are able to help. I could look at allocating certain food groups to different people, for instance, you would only shop for one of the following:

- cereals
- tins of fruit/puddings
- tins of meat
- spreads
- biscuits
- toiletries

and so on.

Costs would be reimbursed the same day from me or Roland vis BACS direct into your bank account.

It would certainly, quite literally share the load! The funds are there, it's just a question of keeping up with the demand. Please let Val, Alan or Lucy know if you can help and they will provide you with my contact details.

Treasurer's Notes

A big thank you to all our congregation who decided to make their donations using the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS), Standing Orders and by those who have continued to make contributions by offertory envelopes, I have received a few through my letterbox at home.

This has greatly helped our finances.

We at St Peter & St Paul’s have been able to continue paying our Parish Share during this lockdown. I feel this will be greatly appreciated by the Chelmsford Diocese during this difficult time. Our 2019 accounts were audited and ready for the April Annual Parish Meeting which had to unfortunately be postponed. At least they will be ready for when we are able to hold the APGM, the difficult bit will be my remembering what happened in 2019 which now seems a long time ago.

Financially 2019 was a successful year.

Reopening of our Churches

East Mersea

Sunday 5th July 09:30

There will be a Service of Holy Communion.

We are opening on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday from 10am to 4pm. This is on a trial basis, if cleaning becomes an issue then we will reduce it. There will be a one way system in place, books and service sheets are not available and the whole of the north side of the Church has been roped off.

West Mersea

The Sunday Morning Zoom Services of United Worship & Spiritual Communion will continue for the foreseeable future.

Sunday 5th July 8am (each Sunday thereafter)

We shall start our 8am service. This will be a book of common prayer communion service. Only the bread will be offered to all, there will be strict social distancing in place and the priest will wear a mask when offering the bread.

Wednesday 8th July 10am (each Wednesday thereafter)

The Church will be open for prayer on Wednesday mornings from 09:30-12:00, and we shall start a short prayer service at 10am to replace our midweek communion.

It is up to individuals to decide if they feel it is safe for them to attend these services, wearing a face covering is optional.

If you have any questions, please speak to Val

If you have any news and/or photos for our August Newsletter, please send them to Val Bocking on bocking@keme.co.uk or phone 01206 386750

Stay Safe, Keep Praying and thank God for all the positives

Val Bocking - Churchwarden

Great Wigborough

St. Stephen's will remain closed due to ongoing refurbishments and concerns regarding safety for private prayer.