

St Peter & St Paul West Mersea

Newsletter – May 2020



Welcome to our first newsletter. Many of our church family are unable to join us on Sundays for our Zoom service, so this is our way of keeping in touch with you and sharing our news.

New Zealand Experience

Alan & I recently returned from an 'extended' holiday in beautiful New Zealand. We spent four weeks exploring Singapore and then the North & South Islands and made loads of memories!

Due to the worsening world-wide situation with Covid-19 we were advised to leave two days earlier than planned. Having presented ourselves at Christchurch airport it soon became clear our flight via Singapore was cancelled! (*Singapore had just closed its borders*). After an initial panic, we found a Motel room with minimal cooking facilities and where we spent 3 weeks in 'lock-down' trying to find another route home. Some people we spoke to had spent several thousand pounds only to have their flights cancelled on them so we were a bit wary! Eventually we found a route back via Los Angeles and were very happy to arrive in Mersea after a 40 hour journey and three different flights.

During our exile many Christians were praying on our behalf so prayer was indeed answered! Also whilst away we were blessed by the 'Zoom' Services from our Church allowing us to share with our Church Family.

So many memories! One which stood out was the still ruined Christchurch Cathedral (following the 2011 earthquake) and the Transitional "Cardboard" Cathedral built as a temporary replacement

Alan & Sue Hammond



Christchurch Cathedral after the earthquake



Temporary Cardboard Cathedral

Question: "What is the squeaky noise we can hear when Terry is talking to the screen?"

The offending / Whistling Parrot



Charlie has been in the family for about 7 years, Lex was only looking after him when our daughter Tracy went on holiday but seemingly Parrots bond with certain individuals and Charlie bonded with Lex so that's how Charlie ended up with us. He has been known to draw blood if you're not quick enough and even the dogs move out of the way for him and yes he does have a Scottish accent.

Terry Walker

Porch Pantry Report – Emma Cornwell

It is clear that the Porch Pantry is in huge demand. Fortunately we have received some incredible donations from The Guardian Angels and The Rotary Club.

Also, a huge thank you to 11 year old Hannah Metcalfe who spent hours making origami cardboard nests and filling them with Easter treats. These she sold on her driveway and together with baking for her family she raised an incredible £50 for the Porch Pantry!



Further to this, Paul Button, Operations Manager of Mersea Outdoors hosts a hugely entertaining quiz on Facebook every Sunday evening at 8pm. I only discovered a couple of weeks ago that during this, he is raising awareness for the Pantry. Paul puts the Just Giving link on the page enabling quick donations; he suggests instead of paying for pint down at the Pub Quiz-donate instead! In just 2 weeks this had generated over £300 in donations!

If anyone on Facebook would like to join in, then do message me via Emj Cornwell on fb and I'll tag you in. 5 rounds of general knowledge and just a bit of fun.

Last Friday I submitted an application to Essex County Council for emergency food bank funding. We were able to apply for up to a £1000 so I requested £1000! This week I received a phone call from ECC explaining that they had had so many requests, would £500 be okay? Absolutely, yes please I replied!! This is going to be a massive boost to our Pantry funds at this very unstable time.

For anyone wishing to donate the Just Giving link is:

<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/merseaislandporchpantry>

If you or anyone you know is struggling at the moment, I am able to drop food to doorsteps. Or telephone the Pastoral number on: 07593 429114 or the Mersea Council Coronavirus Helpline: 01206 489240 and they will forward any requests to me.

Emma Cornwell



Lily & Rupert helping with a Porch Pantry shop!

News of Tearfund from Pat Kirby

TEARFUND Following Jesus where the need is greatest.

In September 2019 we sent **£300** for the airlifting of relief to the Bahamas Storm Fund. This was all through donations from the congregation.

Later in the Autumn, Tearfund ran a national BIG QUIZ night. The Church and Community Together Group, organised a very enjoyable quiz evening here, and **£570** was sent to Tearfund.

As well as enjoying ourselves, we knew that we were part of something much bigger – A recent quote from Tearfund stated this .- *Last year's Big Quiz Night was a roaring success. More than 600 churches joined in, with 26,384 people taking part. In total, an outstanding £210,000 was raised to help people living in poverty!*

Thanks to all who took part in any way. We hope that there will be another one later this year.

Many people used the Tearfund Advent & Lenten resources online.

Thanks to all Tearfund supporters

TEARFUND Mean Bean Challenge Report April 2020

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/pat-kirby1>

Way back in February, I signed up to take part in the Tearfund **Mean Bean Challenge** and started to persuade many of you to sponsor me for doing this. (5 days living on just porridge oats, rice & beans)

I also set up a **Just Giving Page**, and some people gave me money in advance. Rebekkah May (Duncan Dormer's daughter) also joined the team challenge

Just two days before it was due to start on 18th March, I received this message.

Dear Pat,

We have sought medical advice, and are sorry to say that we are postponing the Mean Bean Challenge until the Autumn due to the Coronavirus (also known as COVID-19).

The main reason for this is that the medical advice we received cautioned against any changes to diet at this time. In addition, a healthy, balanced diet helps keep your immune system working well, and we wouldn't want any of our fundraisers to put their health at risk by taking on a hunger challenge in the current circumstances.

If you have already started the challenge, please hold off on the rice and beans and go back to your usual patterns of eating and drinking.

We know you've been busy fundraising and preparing for the challenge – we've been blown away by the commitment and passion of our mean beaners, and are really disappointed to postpone the event.

Your support is needed more than ever to help people like Ruth who experience hunger every day, so please do stick with the Mean Bean Challenge and take part in the Autumn. We'll be in touch with more information, including new dates for the challenge, as soon as we can.

In the meantime, thank you for your understanding and for your continued support. And please join us in prayer for a swift end to the Coronavirus outbreak, and for all those affected in the UK and around the world. God bless,

I contacted many people who had already parted with their cash, explaining the situation and offering their money back. No one responded. In fact others gave cash even knowing the challenge had been cancelled. After all, the money was not for me, but for Tearfund to send out to people in need, probably in Africa.

So now I will be sending that money to Tearfund before the end of April.

To begin with, I set a target of £300. The just-giving page raised 86% of the target **£260** from 14 sponsors So far I have been given **£300** in cash, so that is a total of **£560**, well over my target figure.

Very many thanks to all of you who helped in any way, and if you still want to support Tearfund, you can still do so using the Just Giving Page indicated after the Mean Bean Challenge heading above,

Or I can pass on your gift in addition to what has already been sent.

Pat Kirby

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Churchwardens Jottings

Whilst any of you are out and about in the village, perhaps getting your daily exercise, you could help us in our duty of care for the fabric and buildings of our church, by keeping an eye open on the church buildings and churchyard. If you see anything strange, or different that looks out of place, please just let either Alan or Val know ASAP.



Good News— finally! We have been granted our faculty petition, to install a replacement audio system! The proposed high quality installation, as specified by the team led by Ian Jewitt, Pete Easy and Peter Banks, working with their preferred specialist contractor, has been approved to go ahead. This we will now do, just as soon as we can.

In practise, this will only be possible after the lockdown ceases, and after we have been able to post the requisite official notices, advising the General Public of our intentions. There is a set period of a couple of weeks that has to pass before we can actually order the goods and get running. However, without doubt, this is basically wonderful news for us and for all those who gave so much of their time and skills in our Mersea Music Marathon fundraiser!

Meanwhile, our online services of United Worship continue to grow and serve a large number of friends and neighbouring churchgoers. We have been averaging a little over 100 people every Sunday so far, with some 50 or 60 staying on for the Act of Spiritual Communion afterwards, which is just wonderful! We are also trying to reach out to invite people from our other, neighbouring benefices to join us if they are currently missing any kind of religious service in their own local parishes.

If you know of anybody out there who is unable to get online, or use a computer to join us, please do let us know so we can get them a copy of this newsletter. Also, do not forget that, sometimes, a simple phone call can be the best tonic and act of kindness for somebody who is all alone and feeling very isolated.

Alan Brook - ChurchWarden

We would like you to know that the Church of England has opened a free telephone line for the lonely and vulnerable where they can listen to messages of hope and select whether they want to hear hymns, a service, prayers or reflections as well as advice on Covid-19. Callers will hear a special greeting from the Archbishop of Canterbury. Please do pass this on to anyone you think might be interested.

Telephone Number - 0800 804 8044

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

Any Questions?? We will answer them if we can

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

Val Bocking - Churchwarden