

The Downlander.

The Parish Newsletter for St. Laurence Church Telscombe Village.



June and July 2024

Priest in Charge:

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Friday day off

Church Administrator: Tuesday and Thursday mornings at
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**Production
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Churchwarden

Margaret Wooll (as above)

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Church Services
Every Sunday 11.00 am
Holy Communion - with hymns

Celebrants and Lectionary Readings for June and July – Year B

Date	Day	Preacher	Page	Readings
Sunday 2 nd June	Trinity 1 Proper 4	Phillipp Hamilton	403	1 st Deuteronomy 5.12-15 2 nd 2 Corinthians 4.5-12 Gospel: Mark 2.23-3.6
Sunday 9 th June	Trinity 2 Proper 5	Jez Lowries	407	1 st Genesis 3.8-15 2 nd Ephesians 4.17-52 Gospel: Mark 3.20-35
Sunday 16 th June	Trinity 3 Proper 6	Malcolm Elwis	412	1 st Psalm 92. 1-4, 11-14 2 nd 2 Corinthians 5.6-10, 14-17 Gospel: Mark 4.26-34
Sunday 23 rd June	Trinity 4 Proper 7	Judith Egar	418	1 st Job 38.1-11 2 nd 2 Corinthians 6.1-13 Gospel: Mark 4.35-41
Sunday 30 th June	Trinity 5 Feast of St. Peter	Phillipp Hamilton	786	1 st Acts 12.1-11 2 nd 1 Peter 2.19-25 Gospel: Matthew 16.13-19

Date	Day	Preacher	Page	Readings
Sunday 7 th July	Trinity 6 Proper 9	Phillipp Hamilton	427	1 st Ezekiel 2.1-5 2 nd Psalm 123 Gospel: Mark 6.1-13
Sunday 14 th July	Trinity 7 Proper 10	Jez Lowries	431	1 st Proverbs 1.8-30 2 nd Ephesians 1.3-14 Gospel: Mark 6.14-29
Sunday 21 st July	Trinity 8 Proper 11	Phillipp Hamilton	436	1 st Psalm 23 2 nd Jeremiah 23.1-6 Gospel: Mark 6.30-34, 53- 56
Sunday 28 th July	Trinity 9 Proper 12	Malcolm Elwis	440	1 st 2 Kings 4. 42-44 2 nd Ephesians 3.14-21 Gospel: John 6.1-21



Our Parish Statement.

“St Laurence is a traditional Anglican Parish.
We are Spirit led, reaching out to all.
We proclaim the Gospel of God's love in Christ,
and reverently administer the Sacraments.
A warm welcome awaits you here.”

St Laurence Parish Prayer

Heavenly Father,
Whose love, like the Downs, surrounds us on every side.
Bless our Parish Church and all who worship here.
Give us a VISION of all you call us to be,
COURAGE to reach out to those around us,
and the spirit of LOVE to unite all our efforts.
We ask this in the name of your Son, our Lord and Saviour,
Jesus Christ. Amen.

Dear Readers

Here we are half way through the year and still waiting for the sun to shine in the hope that by the end of June we will have a heatwave!! In anticipation of good weather we are planning a “Bring and Share” lunch on the 30th June which we will hold outside after the morning service. A donation of £5 would be appreciated and all money collected will go to Sight Savers which is our charity during these two months. We will, as always put a jar at the back of the church for extra donations.

A donation of £118 has been sent to Water Aid, which was the charity we recently supported.

We are holding a PCC meeting on 3rd June at the vicarage in Ambleside Avenue. This will be the first one after the APCM. We would also ask you to pray for Rev. Judith Egar who is poorly and needs our prayers.

The Peachaven Quiltine Ladies have been busy. No heads have rolled off the block but word has spread to Chester. Jean is from Chester, she is the sister in law of Judith's neighbour Christine who also knits scarves for the shoeboxes. Jean sent a parcel down with 6 pairs of gloves, 7 pairs of mittens and 19 hats. Thank you to all our Peachaven/Chester knitting ladies for their continued support.

If anyone is going on holiday this summer and gets any of those little soaps and shampoos etc that hotels sometimes leave for new guests, could they bring home unused ones which could fill a small corner in a shoe box.

Annual Church Meetings 2024

The church held its annual meetings on Sunday 14th April.

At the Annual Meeting of the Parishioners Margaret Wooll was re-elected as churchwarden.

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) Malcolm Dick, Stephanie Allan and Nikki Hussey were elected as PCC members.

A copy of the Trustees' Annual Report and Annual Financial Report for 2023 and a copy of the churchwarden's report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the church are displayed on the noticeboard at the back of the church.

Nikki (PCC Secretary)

Dear Friends

In Ephesians 1:18-20, Paul prays:

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms...

Paul wants these Ephesian Christians to know that their eternal future is certain because of Jesus and they are not alone in facing whatever they are facing in the present. Knowing and trusting in Jesus gives them a certain hope of eternal life after they die, and all the time, Jesus is acting in power for them. He is holding back the power of evil, leading them not into temptation and delivering them from the evil one.

This is true 2000 years later for us as well. So I echo Paul's prayer and ask that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened today so that you may know the hope to which he has called you and the power he is exerting on your behalf. Jesus is with you by the Holy Spirit.

Jez

Ask, and it will be given you, seek, and you will find. Mt 7:7

Preaching recently at St Laurence Church, I quoted the text from St John 12:21, in which some Greeks approached the Apostle Philip, saying, "Sir, we would see Jesus." Thus giving Philip the opportunity to bring them to Jesus both physically, and spiritually.

For me, this has been an important text throughout my life and ministry. I was first made aware of it as a 17 year old in the mid 60s when I attended a Youth Rally organised by a group of local churches in Harrow. The Rally lasted about five days, with visiting Evangelists speaking on various texts and aspects of Christian Discipleship. One evening we were divided into groups of 4 or 5, and were given a Gospel text to discuss and to later share with the wider group. We were encouraged to say what we had found helpful about this text and how it might deepen our faith and discipleship.

On one level the idea of talking about my faith to strangers was somewhat alarming to a timid, Anglo-Catholic. At that age, I rarely spoke to people, unless I was spoken to first. However, the text my group was given, was the John passage, "Sir, we would see Jesus." And as Philip is my namesake, I felt a special ownership of it, as if it was a text for me personally. We each spoke of the text as a call to share our faith and as an incentive to mission. One of the boys from the local Baptist Church reminded us that Philip had, in another act of witness, also brought Nathaniel to Jesus. The Baptist youth at that Rally seemed to know the Bible better than others, and unlike my Anglican friends, were quicker and more confident to speak up. But then, we were of course,

Church of England, and didn't bare our faith or feelings so freely. After that encounter with this text, I carried it in my heart as an inspirational text for my own life, discipleship and future ministry. Many years later, when Rector of Lewes, it came to my aid as an answer to prayer.

At that time I had two curates and several retired clergy with whom I shared my pulpit. I enjoyed the variety of styles they brought, confident that their words would be sound and orthodox. The exception was a particular part time curate I had named John. He was a very likeable man, whose main occupation was in Higher Education. He was an articulate preacher, but had a habit of deviating from the scriptures, to commenting on various articles he had recently read in The Guardian. My own Training Vicar often said, that the aim of any sermon was to "Proclaim, Explain and Apply the Gospel" which, over the years, I had tried to pass on to my own curates.

Alas, despite remonstrating with him, John just couldn't stop himself from falling back into his old ways. After two or three minutes of sound teaching he would inevitably drift into something he had recently read, making that, and not the Gospel, the focus of his sermon. Then, one morning at Mattins, we heard again the text from John. Looking over to his stall, I said, "I think God intends this text for you today." We laughed, but it had inspired me with an idea. Later that day I typed the text in large print on a card. "Sir, we would see Jesus." and sellotaped it to the pulpit light, where he, but not the congregation might see it, reminding John, and all who used the pulpit, of why we were there, and what was expected of us, myself included.

Over the years I have often thought of those Greeks who sought Philip out. Philip had been faithful to his calling and had brought them, as well as Nathaniel to Jesus. But sadly we do not hear what happened to them. What were they expecting of Jesus and what were their experiences of him? Did his words find a home in their hearts or were their hearts closed to him? Throughout the Gospel, this is a recurring theme of those who hear and welcome the word of God and those who reject it. It is the parable of the sower in action. The Word of God, like some of the seed falls onto good soil, where it grows to bear a rich yield. Some sadly falls on to stony ground or amid thorns. As the Greeks were anxious to meet Jesus, I believe that his words found a home in their hearts and bore a rich harvest.

Like the Greeks in this Gospel passage, we too need to ask ourselves these same questions of Jesus. What were our expectations of Jesus, and what has

been our experience of him? This reflective questioning is seen clearly in the story of the final days of John the Baptist, whose Feast Day we celebrate on June 24th. Having spent his life and ministry proclaiming the Advent of the Kingdom of God, John finds himself in prison, cold, alone and afraid. There he finds himself questioning his own expectations and experiences of Jesus. And so he sends word to Jesus, asking, “Are you he who is to come, or shall we seek another?” To which Jesus, not justifying himself biblically or theologically, simply asks John to reflect upon his own experiences in the light of Scripture. Quoting the Prophet Isaiah, he allows John to reflect upon what his expectations of the promised Messiah were, but more importantly, what had been his experience of him. Thus, affirming for himself, that Jesus was indeed the long awaited Messiah, the fulfilment of the Scriptures.

The question for us therefore, is how do we see Jesus? What have been our expectations and our experiences of him? Personally, if I am troubled or in need of guidance, I find it helpful to simply read one of the gospels, and prayerfully reflect upon one of the many images of Jesus to be found there. Images which may reflect my concerns at that time. There are so many. We meet Jesus the teacher, instructing the people with knowledge of the things of God, that even the Teachers of the Law questioned where he had acquired such knowledge. Likewise we meet Jesus the healer as he reaches out in compassion to the leper, the lame and the blind, healing them not just physically, but often spiritually. A good example is the young paralytic man in Mark 2:11, where Jesus could see that sin was the root cause of this man’s problems. One image beloved by many, is that of Jesus the Good Shepherd reaching out in love and compassion, seeking out the lonely, the outcast, the lost. These are images that help us to see who Jesus is, to draw close to him, and if open to them, will lead us to faith in him.

As disciples of Christ, we like Philip are likewise called to share our faith with those we meet, those who in the turmoil of this present age are seeking answers, to the great questions of life. “Why am I here, does my life have meaning, is the Gospel true, does God really love me.” But above all, “who is Jesus for me?” If we can follow Philip’s example and share our faith with those around us, we will have fulfilled our calling as his disciples, so that they too may “See Jesus” and come to know him, as their loving Friend, Teacher, Lord and Saviour.

Fr Phillipp

Peacehaven Horticultural Society

The Garden Club (PHS) meet on the third Monday of each month in the Anzac room in the Community House, Meridian Centre, 7.00 pm for a 7.30 pm start. New members are always welcome. There is a speaker each meeting followed by questions and answers. Tea and coffee is available half way through the meeting. The next meeting is on Monday 17th June and the speaker, Graham Bowring is talking about "The secret life of the Hedgehog". The meeting in July is on the 15th

The Garden Club are holding a coffee morning at the Meridian Centre 9am-12 noon on the fourth Friday each month. The mini market will be open in the main hall. Please come and support us. For more information call Alison on 01273589502.

CHARITY CONCERT

You've heard of the Three Tenors, well here are The Three Sopranos in the form of the Melody Magpies, who are giving a concert at the Ascension Church, Bramber Avenu, Peacehaven on 15th June 2-4pm in aid of The Josiah Povey School Charity. Tickets £7 (£5 OAP, U18) from rgwordsandmusic@gmail.com, the church or at the door on the day.

The Reverend Josiah Povey's School Charity was founded by will in 1727. Josiah Povey was the rector of St Laurence church in Telscombe village back then and his will made provision for the education of the children of the parish.

The charity now is dedicated to providing 'special benefits not normally provided by the local education authority'. In recent years the Charity has made grants to Telscombe Cliffs Primary School for music lessons with various instruments and most recently for a Singing and Rhythm Programme which has been shown to improve children's engagement and progress with phonics. It also improves children's listening and language skills. Music enhances lives, offering enjoyment and solace and it is never too early to start listening. It is also valuable in Early Learning and for children with Special Needs.

Melody Magpies are 3 experienced sopranos and a wonderful pianist who regularly give concerts in Sussex. They perform music, solos and

ensembles, from a wide range of time by a variety of composers. As their name implies, they love a good tune; so if you come to the concert on 15th June you will hear some favourites as well as lesser known songs, guaranteed to be beautiful melodies.

To Boldly Go

Today (probably a month or so ago by the time you, dear readers, peruse this hallowed tome), whilst dawdling over my first pot of tea (I usually need at least two pots to function normally) and contemplating a smear of Marmite (other spreads are available) on the freshly laundered table-cloth, my attention was seized in a vice-like grip by an item of news on BBCRadio3. I confess I tend only to alight on news items connected with music so BBCRadio3 is about the only news output to cater for my niche interests. I also tend to perk up if my favourite news reader is presiding.

After this prolonged digression I expect some of you may have forgotten the *raison d'être* for this literary piece. It was, of course, the random news item that caught my attention. Said item was a snippet about a space probe (none of the news items on BBCRadio3 are more than a snippet as the entire service with accompanying weather predictions only lasts for three to four minutes). I have no idea of its name nor its destination but I assume its mission was, like a famous fore runner, a five year one and was designed to boldly split infinitives as it went on its ungrammatical way transporting a polyglot of races and aliens (all of whom amazingly had strong American accents). Anyway back to the news item. It was stated that this probe was now the furthest mankind “thing” in the universe. Again I assumed from its long journey time and the fact that it was “man-made” that it had been launched when women still wore crinolines and had to be shielded from naked piano legs.

Time for a *bijou* digression. What you cry you must be joking. This whole piece has been one big fat (can you still say “fat”?) digression! Hard luck here comes the digression. How do they know it was the furthest? Suppose the Romans had launched a space ship or the Egyptians a probe. Would we necessarily know if it was out there and just how far it had travelled? It is no good relying on a transmission. It might have (a) stopped transmitting, (b) never been designed to transmit in the first place, (c) was transmitting in hieroglyphs or (d) was too far away for us to hear it.

Anyway back to the news item. Apparently the probe in question, and not one from an ancient civilisation, was supposed to transmit data back to earth but, over the last few weeks or possibly months (I missed that bit wondering if a Roman Emperor had decided on a probe to give a bit of glamour to his quest for deification), said probe had only been transmitting gibberish. Well what did the male inventors expect? You send a probe into deep and silent space, of course it will fry its little grey cells. Add to that the lack of female inventors to provide a sympathetic shoulder on which the poor thing can cry and you have a mental and mechanical meltdown on your hands. Undeterred by thoughts of the abuse they might be causing, the man inventors tinkered with the poor thing's malfunctioning chips to rectify matters. What did they do? Sprinkle said malfunctioning chips with salt and vinegar or send out for an accompanying portion of fish to be "Deliveroo'd" on board (other couriers are available). Whatever they did, the news item was to announce that the probe had responded to treatment and was now transmitting back sensible data, that is, not gibberish.

Over a second pot of tea, I pondered the arrogance of this announcement which had been released by NASA. Immediately I became suspicious. If the announcement had been released, it had obviously been locked up before, possibly for some nefarious deed and, as such, should surely be viewed as of a shifty disposition and probably not to be trusted. Did you follow that meandering? If not, don't worry. I'm not sure it made sense anyway!

Back to news item. I then wondered who had decided that the intervening transmissions were gibberish. Just because the clever little man inventors could not understand the data it didn't mean it was rubbish which was the implication in the aforesaid announcement. Actually the Oxford Dictionary defines gibberish as "unintelligible speech". Had no one thought it might be an alien language? After all Captain Kirk and Mr Spock's five year mission was to seek out new life and new civilisations before they mutilated the English language. Surely those new life forms and new civilisations would have their own languages. I did rethink this premise because, when I thought about it, whenever the crew of the Enterprise did hit up against said new etc etc, the alien representatives also spoke with pronounced American accents. Suppose said gibberish was, in fact, an alien message, a fraternal hand shake across the galaxy. Did any of the male inventors think of that? Probably not!

Of course, said gibberish did not even have to be alien (note a gloriously unsplit infinitive). It could have been a niche terrestrial language say Cornish, Breton, Gaelic, Basque or Welsh. I doubt whether NASA would recognise those languages either! I still smart whenever I think of an American student on sabbatical to my college who, on hearing I was from Wales, asked where in England Wales was.

Finally (oh thank goodness I hear you cry) what makes the data the probe normally transmitted so important? I asked a friend of a scientific and masculine bent what the NASA bods wanted to learn. He raked his fingers through his hair so he looked like Einstein and shuffled his feet which is, as we all know, the universal language for a man caught with a tricky question. Well, he mused, it might be data about black holes. For Heaven's sake how much data does one need about black holes? They're black and they are holey. Just like a fortune to build said probe, another to launch it and a third to monitor it speaking gibberish or not! And that leads to a second bijou news item from it says on the tin. And, because of their general murkiness and holey tendencies, it is probably sensible to avoid them. A two year old could have told NASA that without the need for a probe. Good gracious I said at the end of his exposition. He looked suitably gratified. I suddenly realised that our Victorian grandmothers, despite an illogical fear of naked piano legs and a distressing tendency to encase themselves in huge metal cages, certainly knew how to massage the masculine ego and I fluttered appropriately. He wandered off looking delighted whilst I rolled my eyes.

It struck me that it must have cost the same hallowed news engine (why do they insist on calling facilities that offer a service an engine?). A two year study has concluded that people, suffering from ill health, who are on long NHS waiting lists, have a tendency to deteriorate! I wonder how much that startling piece of information cost to discover.

On a happier note, Peacehaven was catapulted to fame on the same news when it was one of the places whose temperature was mentioned in the weather slot. On April 24th it was officially 11 degrees Celsius in Peacehaven. They did add that Peacehaven was in East Sussex. How kind!

Joanna Wilkins

A Flowery Quiz

With the approach of summer I thought it might be fun to test the little grey cells with some well known flowers for you to find in the clues. Good Luck!

1. Mittens for a nocturnal hunter
2. Recline by a French water feature
3. Got up
4. Sweetly fed the baby
5. A modest girl
6. Gnaw facial feature
7. Well dressed big cat
8. Seasonal evergreen pawns goods?
9. Bovine mishap
10. Heavy Metal child?
11. Avalanche
12. Wader's beak
13. Crowds of birds
14. Musical instrument
15. Biblical king's signature?
16. Save money
17. Domestic disaster?
18. Decorative cut?
19. Musical instrument for bad temper?
20. Not dancing?

SWT Article May - Hawthorn

You could set your calendar by it. Around the first day of May, our ancestors would step outside to find foamy white clouds erupting across the Sussex countryside; the Hawthorn was blooming, spring was turning to summer. The sight was so visually stunning and so linked with the arrival of May that Hawthorn became the only British plant to be named after the month in which it blooms. Well, the name Hawthorn is derived from the Anglo-Saxon hagathorn (haga meaning hedge). I'm referring to that other name for Hawthorn: May.

Unlike the impetuous Blackthorn, which flowers in March before it's even bothered to grow leaves, the Hawthorn is more dignified. It waits until it has clothed itself in undergarments of lobed leaves before it dons a resplendent gown of exquisite white flowers. This stunning costume and perfect timing meant Hawthorn took centre stage at May Day celebrations and it partied with Green Men, Morris Dancers, Maypoles and May Queens. 'Gathering nuts in May' actually refers to 'gathering knots of May' to make May Day garlands and decorations.

Then, in the middle of the eighteenth century, tragedy struck. I don't know about you, but I get thrown into disarray twice a year when the clocks change. My life would have gone into meltdown in 1752 as our whole calendar changed from Julian to Gregorian, and we lost an entire 11 days. In this new timeline, Hawthorn now found itself late for the party, blooming around May 12th.



Photo taken by Derek Middleton

It wasn't the first time Hawthorn had been cast aside. Superstitions dictated that bringing Hawthorn indoors led to misfortune – even death. This could stem from the fact that Hawthorn blooms release trimethylamine, which gives the flowers that unpleasant smell of cat's wee and attracts pollinating insects. It's also a chemical formed in decaying tissue and reminded people of the smell of Black Death – and nobody wanted to be reminded of that.

I remember at primary school being taught 'Ne're cast a clout 'til May is out'. I translated this gibberish into the fact that you should keep your

warm clothes on until the end of May. I've only just discovered that 'May is out' refers to Hawthorn blooming. My clouts could have been cast weeks earlier.

But the world has changed since I was a nipper – we're warming up. For a temperature-sensitive plant like Hawthorn, the blooming times are changing again. Hawthorn is responding to climate change by flowering up to two weeks earlier than it was thirty years ago. It has crept back to bloom around May Day and is now more commonly seen flowering at the end of April. So this May Day, cast your clouts, get out into the great outdoors, and welcome the return of the real May Queen.

SWT Article for June - Swifts

These are uncertain times. Who knows where this planet is heading? But since the start of May I've been looking to the sky for a sign of reassurance: the return of the Sussex Swifts from Africa. Ted Hughes expressed it perfectly: "They've made it again / Which means the globe's still working, the Creation's / Still waking refreshed, our summer's / Still all to come."



Swifts may not look like much - they're basically two wings and a mouth - but it's hard to explain their abilities without making them sound supernatural. Swifts are all about flying. They feed, scream, and mate in the air and bathe in the rainclouds. At

night they switch off half their brain, switch on cruise control and fall asleep amongst the stars. If they had their way they would never come down. But there's one little flaw in their plan: eggs don't float. So, for just a few weeks of the year, they begrudgingly swap the open skies for a cramped nest under the eaves where they raise their young.

The problem is in recent years most of these little gaps have been lost to renovations and modern architecture. The destruction of their homes is one of the reasons why Swift numbers have fallen. They are refugees on the wind.



They cruised into Sussex in May after a non-stop, long-haul flight from Africa; not that this trip bothered them. Swifts are all about flying. For me, the Swift is the only bird that takes pure, unadulterated pleasure in flying. Other birds fly out of necessity, but Swifts seem to fly for the joy of it, screaming with delight at the top of their little Swift lungs, a shrill cry that is forever associated with English summers.

By the time you read this, a new generation of Sussex Swifts, born in a roof cavity, have crawled to the nest entrance, and bravely launched themselves on their first flights. And what a first flight - they may not land again for two or three years! For these 'teenage' Swifts, the skies of Europe and Africa will be their playground. Nothing will tame them. Well, not until they meet a partner and decide to settle down in a roof of their own somewhere. But don't let this comfortable image of domestic bliss fool you - there's no taming these Wild Ones.

by Michael Blencowe for Sussex Wildlife Trust

Answers to the Flowery Quiz

1. Foxglove
2. Lilac
3. Rose
4. Honeysuckle
5. Primrose
6. Tulip
7. Dandelion
8. Hollyhock
9. Cowslip
10. Orchid
11. Snowdrop
12. Cranesbill
13. Phlox
14. Viola
15. Solomon's seal
16. Thrift
17. House Leek
18. Pink
19. Saxifrage
20. Wallflower