



February 2021 40p

The Orwell Group of Parishes

www.beneficeorwell.co.uk

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You would be made most welcome at any of the services in our group of parishes. If you would like more information, please contact the relevant Church Warden or Minister

If you would like to subscribe to this monthly newsletter, please contact Dawn Wilson by email dawn@richardhatton.co.uk

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE 5pm Saturday 20th February 2021

From the Rectory...

Well what can I say... increasing numbers of deaths and serious illness due to Covid on one hand and increasing numbers of people being vaccinated on the other. Hope and fear sitting hand in hand...

I hope many of you have had your jab by now... and others will soon... We *will* get past the awfulness of this virus but it isn't going to be instant, however much we would like it to be.

We have decided that it was necessary to stop in church services, but we will keep this under review and as soon as it is safe to do so we will have services in church again. In the meantime we do have services every Sunday. On 24th Jan we had a United Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity via Zoom... and afterwards we had a bit of a discussion about whether to use Zoom more often. As a result I think we are going to try to alternate YouTube and Zoom services, we will record the Zoom so that it can be made available afterwards for those who do not do Zoom or are not available at 10am.

As well we are now able to offer cds or dvds of the service to those people who have no access to the internet. If you know people who may appreciate this please do let me know.

We are all responding to the needs we encounter as we go along... it is noticeable (to me) that people are finding this third lockdown much harder to deal with. The cold, miserable weather, the shorter, dark days, the financial bite or just the seeming never-endingness of it all... whatever the cause we seem to be struggling more. If you are struggling please do ask for help, or just ring someone for a chat, I am (nearly) always available and am very happy to have a chat - neither the dog or cat are very good conversationalists!

Take care and stay safe

God bless

The Revd Felicity Couch

ARRINGTON NOTES

January 2021/February 2021

Normally at this time of the year we are starting to plan for Lent and Easter. Christmas is now a long way behind us. One thing we should not miss though is the wedding at the church in early December. Weddings are infrequent to say the least at St Nicholas these days so it made it all the more special to have Jody Wing and Laura get married on Saturday the 5th. Jody doesn't live in the village but his mother was brought up here, went to Sunday school here and I think also sang in the choir here before she got married. Heather is Peggy Mundy's daughter. Its also amazing how innovative people can be at a time of crisis, the speeches after the ceremony were done in the car park using mobile phones rather than paper and the wedding party itself was less than it could have been due to the bubble that could get into one car and the distances that had to be travelled.

The wedding was just in time though before we went into another one of those tiers and of course before we all went in to quarantine over Christmas and are still there, although judging by the number of visitors cars especially in Clifden Close and Church Lane you wouldn't think so. In fact one vehicle arrived, from where I do not know, covered in snow and at the time we had not had snow in the village.

Anyway hopefully that will soon be history as the double yellow lining has now moved a further stage forward. The floods in Arrington were pretty spectacular in early January although not too nice for those who had houses flooded and the drains are still blocked by the silt that got carried down the road; but at least we were not having to give people piggy backs as they did in a photograph I saw from 1939.

It is not all gloom and doom though - most people in the most vulnerable groups should have all been vaccinated by now, although restrictions on leaving the village will probably have to stay for some time yet. There is certainly hope out there but perhaps we have to look for it a little more closely, after all snowdrops are nearly out, daffodils are now all well up, and winter aconites are now flowering, The rooks are gathering and starting to collect nesting materials and the days are definitely getting longer. MB

Lent

Ash Weds is on Weds 17th Feb and we will then enter Lent.

The details have yet to be finalised but there will be Lent packs/bags for you to collect (or let me know if you need one delivering). These will contain elements to help you keep both Ash Weds and Lent, including ashes if you wish to mark your foreheads either during the service we will hold that evening or at a time convenient for you. We will also include information and supplies for the Lent course which will be offered virtually but also in a form which you can do privately if that works better for you.

Watch out for more details.

The Children's Society

As a benefice we managed to raise £1,125 for the Children's Society. They are delighted and we should be extremely pleased with ourselves. They contacted Bishop Stephen and the Archdeacon and the Archdeacon has been in touch with me commending our efforts too.

Thank you to all who helped with putting the bags together, collecting oranges (& sweets), and delivering the bags.

Stations of the Nativity

Thank you to everyone who created a Station for this event. It was very popular and I have received many positive comments about it... maybe we'll do it again next year...!

All Saints, Barrington – February 2021

"With every good wish for this New and hopefully less challenging Year". Last month I optimistically wrote this but now in lock down again, it's not the start we had hoped for is it?

We were very blessed to have a happy Christmas Day with our daughter and family and I hope that everyone was able to enjoy their day, even though it may have been rather strange and unhappily perhaps, on your own.

I know, it must have felt sad if you had made plans to be with family living farther away but I do so hope that friends and neighbours have looked after anyone who was by themselves. As anticipated our plans to be in Devon were cancelled. My Grandson had been planning our visit for weeks but with regulations saying 'only for one day', it was impossible. We were so very lucky that we were wanted by both our families but because of Boris, we didn't have to make a choice!!!

What a lot was going on in our villages to keep people occupied. Many YouTube services which we continue to enjoy thanks to Tim for the technical bit, Felicity for the spiritual part and Mary Stapleton for her 'playing of the merry organ and sweet singing as a choir'! Also the readers.

The Nativity scenes throughout the Benefice must have taken ages to plan and organise – we have the shepherds hut close to us, together with 'our' flock of sheep which is still with us, munching their way through the meadow. We were also fortunate to have a 'car park' service behind the village hall, thanks to Julie Norris. I think she must have been frozen, but very much appreciated by those who attended – quite a good number. It was excellent and so well planned and thought through.

The live carol service was lovely. Are we not so very fortunate to have such talented, thoughtful and considerate people in our community? So much thought, time and effort has been put into making our lives just that bit more pleasurable. The Christingles were very welcome and our candles were lit. Now all is put away and I wonder what we will be doing next Christmas. I do not want to think about it; but our gifted Christmas decoration was hung in our window – ours was “Faith” - and it will remain there.

Messy Church continues thanks to Felicity. This must take a lot of time and effort but so worthwhile – up to 30 bags are produced and collected.

I feel so sorry for the teachers, parents and children, with the schools closed again. The older children, my grandson amongst them, will not have ‘A’ level exams at the end of the academic year, all hoping for good grades; so disappointing! Universities are not functioning normally either with students missing this special experience.

The knock on effect of shops without customers will cause so much heartache and will lead to many closures I fear. It is as if aliens have landed on our planet – an unseen enemy!! There is so much sadness too with the thousands who are dying. We must pray for their families and keep them in our hearts.

People still walk down the lane, but often their heads are down. There is not the feeling of ‘hey-ho, let’s get on with it’ that there was initially. People are I think more despondent and weary.

However, we are having the vaccines; many more are on the way - hopefully these will help to bring an end to this nightmare. But meanwhile we must have optimism. I have snowdrops in my garden – Spring *is* on the way. Stay safe. jcb

NEWS FROM WIMPOLE

This time last year none of us could have imagined that Christmas would see hardly any of us mixing with our families, likewise for New Year. Thankfully, we were able to have our Christmas Day service which was taken by The Rev'd Dr Megan Daffern, she is the Diocesan Director of Ordinands and Vocations at Ely. Megan's husband is the Vicar of Great St Mary's, she said that they had 4 Carol Services and still they couldn't accommodate everyone! Twenty attended at Wimpole on Christmas Day, quite a difference! It was a lovely service with David playing the organ before and after the service. The church was decorated with a Christmas tree, holly, greenery, candles and flowers and looked very festive. Now, no more services for the foreseeable future.

Felicity has continued with the help of Tom Granger to produce a YouTube service each week, which must be very time consuming. Many people watch and listen and gain great comfort from these services, thank you.

Christingle was a great success with many Wimpole residents coming out with their beautifully assembled Christingles, creating fellowship and friendship with the candlelight spreading down the road.

The Stations of the Nativity were a brilliant idea, Wimpole had two stations, a marvellous one made by Jeannie and Nick Everington, with help from Graham Damant of the 'just married' Mary and Joseph, flood lit in the Martin's front garden on the A603 along with the village Christmas tree.

Joseph's dream was outside the church, Olga Damant made the angel, Bernadette and Mike Tarbit with Diana Smith's granddaughter constructed and painted the Dream, Mother Goose made the donkey and Martha Lansley created Joseph who was sleeping with lights showing his beating heart, all in all a marvellous Installation.

We have two new families who have recently moved in along the main road, we can't knock on their doors, but they are very welcome.

Candlemas is on 2nd February, Felicity is hoping that many of us will light a candle at 6pm and put it on your doorstep or drive for others to see, then leave it in the window. There will be a short Zoom service at 6.15pm. JPW

Pictures taken from around Wimpole



Church magazine

We aren't able to deliver our magazine during lockdown...but we have moved on from first lockdown and there will be a virtual magazine on the benefice website, beneficeorwell.co.uk

Once we can do so safely we will once again produce a printed copy.

This past year has obviously disrupted the production and although we would normally be looking for subs of £4 at this time of year, that doesn't seem very fair!

We also want to try to find a different way of collecting subs too as everyone hates collecting money!

Like many others, our churches have been affected financially over the year, so whilst we would love to be able to make the magazine free to everyone we simply can't do this. So we are asking you to make a donation of whatever feels fair, those of you who are happy to make online payments can do so either by clicking [here](#) or the details are;

Benefice of Orwell Group of Parishes
Sort code: 09-01-50 Account number: 04196597

If you would rather pay by cash then please just put an envelope through my door.

Thank you

Revd Felicity

Candlemas or the Feast of the Presentation

This festival marks the end of the Christmas season on 2nd February, and we will remove the cribs from our churches. After the success of the Christingle lighting, this year we are suggesting that people might like to light a candle (any shape or size will do) on their doorsteps/driveways at 6pm, with a prayer, before leaving them in your windows if you can do so safely. We will then have a short service at 6.15pm on Zoom, please contact me for the link.

You may like to use the following prayer as you light your candle.

Lord Jesus Christ,
light of the nations and glory of Israel:
make your home among us,
and present us pure and holy to your heavenly Father,
your God, and our God.
Amen.

Compline

I am continuing to pray Compline each evening at 9pm to pray for all those affected by Covid, and give thanks for all that so many people are doing to help. If you would like to join me for this 15 minute service you are very welcome, contact me for the link.

Felicity

Diary for February

We may be able to hold services in church sometime soon. But whatever happens we will continue to hold online services as below. If we can add in church services too we will!

Tues 2nd	6pm	Candle lighting on your doorstep
<i>Candlemas</i>	6.15pm	Zoom Service
Weds 3rd	8am	Zoom Morning Prayer
Fri 5th	2pm	Ministry Team meeting
Sun 7th	10am	Zoom Service
<i>2 before Lent</i>		
Weds 10th	8am	Zoom Morning Prayer
	7.30pm	Croydon PCC
Sunday 14th	10am	YouTube Service
<i>Sunday before</i>	10.45am	Zoom Coffee time
<i>Lent</i>	11.30am	Zoom All Age Service
Tues 16th	7.30pm	Orwell PCC
Weds 17th	8am	Zoom Morning Prayer
	7.30pm	Zoom Service
Sat 20th	<i>Messy Church in a Bag available in Barrington Church porch and outside The Rectory in Orwell</i>	
Sun 21st	10am	Zoom Service
<i>Lent One</i>		
Weds 24th	8am	Zoom Morning Prayer
Sun 28th	10am	YouTube Service
	10.45am	Zoom Coffee time
	11.30am	Zoom Messy Church

Compline will happen on Zoom every evening at 9pm, contact me for the link.

ORWELL NOTES

I hope it is not too late to wish everyone a Happy New Year. At least the worst of the darkness is now over and the spring seems a bit nearer. Although the snow can cause problems it does look lovely with the sun shining on it (from the window!)

It seems strange to be writing the notes when there are no events to record or coming activities to publicise, but at least we can record our thanks to Felicity and the Ministry Team, who have kept services and messages going throughout this difficult time. Although I find zoom impossible to access and other things on the computer beyond me, I have made good use of the printed version of Compline, and read it in bed every night before I go to sleep. I find that prayer provides an outlet for thoughts, and things seem easier in the morning.

In December we held a cake stall and raffle in the Village Hall and a Refreshment Stall in Paddy and Sue Ward's front garden. I am pleased to record that a total of £415 was raised for St Andrew's Church, which enables the parish to keep going. Thank you to everyone who worked hard, and to those who came and supported us.

Already we are beginning to think about Lent. Felicity needs very small screw-top jam jars in which ash could be carried to people in time for Ash Wednesday, which is on February 17th. Please contact her if you have jars to spare, but keep them small !!!!

As more of us are receiving vaccination, let us hope that before too long we can resume some of the activities we miss most, but also let us enjoy what we can of the beauty and amazing vitality of the natural world which at present seems much more accessible than usual. The birds in particular I find are making personal relationships at what they consider the most convenient feeding time for them, if not for me.

If you are looking for somewhere to walk that is not too difficult or noisy, may I recommend St Andrew's Churchyard, and the Burial Ground, both of which are peaceful and have some wonderful plants and flowers to study. From the top of the Burial Ground you can access the Glebe Field which has wonderful views over the landscape and a very convenient seat on which to catch your breath, before coming down the long steps at the side of the churchyard EJS

Croydon News

Now that Christmas is behind us and we are into February may we wish everyone a belated Happy, Healthy and Safe New Year. The evenings are getting lighter, bulbs are shooting up and you can see the new growth on plants and trees which is a wonderful sign that Spring is not that far away.

Church Services: For the time being no services will be held in Croydon church. As celebrants and congregations are not to travel to other church services in the Benefice and we do not have a resident celebrant in Croydon who could take a service we must continue with the YouTube services which are still very popular and have certainly been an excellent way of reaching out to those who are shielding or unable to get out.

All Saints' church continues to be open during the day for private prayer, reflection and the Food Box is still available for those who are in need. Please do make use of it.

Stations of the Nativity: These fourteen displays/tableaux of the Nativity Stations spread around the five parishes proved to be an amazing trail telling the story of the Nativity starting with Gabriel appearing to Mary and ending with the arrival of the Magi at Barrington School. Some very interesting creations and different ideas materialised so well done to everyone who took part.

Messy Church: Messy Church which takes place on Zoom continues to be very popular with the youngsters. 'Messy Church in a Bag' bags are available in Barrington Church porch and outside the Rectory door in Orwell. Please do take a bag and join in the fun on the Zoom meetings. Look out for the date of when the bags are available and the Zoom meetings in the middle pages of the church magazine.

Christmas Sheep! Any hidden sheep which have been found in the village will be taken to Orwell Rectory. If you have any that need to be returned to the fold then please bring them to Bedlam and we will deliver them to the Rectory. Thank you.

Parish Giving Scheme: We have had reasonably good success with invitations sent to every household to support All Saints' through the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) though a few more joiners would be very welcome! Please contact Malcolm on 07801434603 if you would like a PGS pack.

We can follow this up with some more success with grants from various grant bodies for repair works to the church notably to four at-risk windows (some already propped) and to the Downing vault beneath the Chancel floor.

Farrer's Farm Shop: A selection of fruit, eggs, vegetables, bottles and plants are on sale and can be very useful to top up your shopping if you've forgotten anything! Do support them if you can.

The Community WhatsApp Group: This group continues to be a well used method for residents asking for help in emergencies, swapping items, giving items away, needing tradesmen, help with lost animals, checking out power cuts etc, etc. If you would like to join this group then please contact either Keith (at Pantiles) on 07711788490 or Malcolm (at Bedlam) on 07801434603 and they will add you onto the group.

Prayers: As always please remember in your prayers all those who are shielding, sick, lonely and struggling with life in these very difficult times. Also in your prayers please remember Fred Lee who is in hospital again and we send him our best wishes. Also we pray for some local residents who have had operations or were due to go in for an operation in January.

Thank You: Joan Jakes and her family would like to thank all those who sent their condolences, prayers and thoughts on the death of her sister Jean Chamberlain. They were greatly appreciated.

SGR



Petersfield Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Happy New Year! We hope this finds you safe and well and we hold onto our school value – Trust - as we trust in the prospects of an improving local and national picture as 2021 progresses.

Since we last wrote, our KS1 children performed the Christmas performance of 'It's a Baby' and year 6 narrated the Nativity acted out by our youngest children. Whilst we were not able to perform in person, the live performance meant grandparents and family members from near and far could join us – much to the children's delight. The excitement of Christmas seems such a long time ago, but Santa arriving on a horse drawn cart to the children all chanting San-ta, San-ta remains a treasured memory which was much talked about by the children as they left school on the 18th December.

The children's absence from school has obviously been longer than the expected Christmas holiday as we are currently only open to vulnerable children or children of Critical Workers that cannot be safely cared for at home. Despite the lack of notice and the logistical challenge to make this happen within 24 hours, children are engaging in 3 live sessions of teaching each day with additional sessions and 1:1 meetings with class teachers weekly. The additional daily story and Collective Worship are highlights of our day as we come together virtually even though we are physically distanced.

Our grateful thanks to everyone who is involved in making learning so positive in such challenging times. Our school staff are incredible, as the highly positive feedback from pupils and parents demonstrates. Those volunteers who can are still supporting us remotely in a variety of ways. The parent body have admirably risen to the challenge of juggling work whilst supporting learning and our pupils, as ever adaptable and enthusiastic, should be so proud of themselves. We are certainly proud of the entire school community.

Until our next update, our very best wishes for your good health at this time

Mrs Laura Penrose & Mrs Rachel Peachey, Co-Headteachers

Don't forget donations to our Orwell food box when you next order or collect your weekly shopping. We are especially looking for protein-rich canned foods please, tinned fish, meat etc which seems to be very welcome in these challenging times. Of course any form of preserved food is welcome too.

There is a definite need for food in our seemingly prosperous villages and we know that having it available anonymously in the church porch has made it more easily accessible to those who need it.

Please continue to be generous in these difficult times.

Amanda Tuck

FOSAC Zoom Quiz Night

Friday 19th Feb at 8pm.

We had a good time in October when we tried this out. Now we are in the dark and dreary months - and in lockdown too. Why not 'come along'?

For further details contact J.M.Holford@zoho.com



Belonging, Believing; Together Succeeding

As I write this we are in the third week of the school term – although Christmas already feels like a distant memory!! The past few weeks have been very busy in school with adapting the lessons that had been planned to make them suitable for home learning, ensuring that all children have access to the learning resources they need at home, and keeping everyone who is in the school building every day as safe as possible.

This lockdown feels very different to the one in the spring; in March we had between 3 and 13 children of keyworkers in school every day, depending on their parents working patterns, however this time we have 41. The need to keep children in small groups, to minimise the risk of infection, has meant that each class has needed to stay open, whereas in March we had two groups of children to teach. This has made life much more difficult for my lovely class teachers; in the spring they spent half the week teaching the children who were in school and half the week planning, setting and managing the home learning. This time they are teaching a class of 8-11 children full time, while also trying to deliver the same quality of education to those children who are learning at home. Not an easy task.

As a school we are extremely aware how challenging the current situation is for our families who have their children at home. As a mother of three I am very aware that it is far easier to teach other people's children! However home schooling in a lockdown takes time, energy and huge amounts of patience and we are extremely grateful that our parents have been so supportive and appreciative of everything that the teachers are doing to support them and their children.

I would like to take this opportunity to offer my sincere thanks to all my amazing staff who have been flexible to the needs of the children and the school; the teachers have worked hard to create learning opportunities for their classes and manage both school and home learning, and are all working as an incredible team to support each other through these difficult and stressful times.

We are all extremely grateful for the efforts of the local community who have donated nearly £3,000 to the school to buy chromebooks to support home learning. This has enabled us to buy 13 additional chromebooks to add to the school stock that we are lending out to children working at home. Having a chromebook to access our online learning platform makes a huge difference to the experience of the children learning at home. We would like to send a heartfelt thankyou to everyone who contributed to this fund – and an especially big thank you to the thoughtful person whose idea it was to start the chromebook fund.

One of the best pieces of news we have had in school recently is that the Education Authority has come up with an agreement for school staff to be called at short notice for COVID vaccinations at the end of the day to use up any excess vaccine stocks. They are just setting the system up, but are hoping to be able to use this arrangement to make the most of vaccine stocks available and vaccinate school staff and so reduce health risks to staff and staff absence through illness.

I am very aware that I usually have some happy news or funny stories from school to share in these newsletters – but this month I am all out of these! Hopefully we will be back to a more normal situation next month!

Take care and stay safe,

Gill Davies

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