

St Mary the Virgin

**OCTOBER**

North Shoebury

**2020**



**WEDNESDAY 16TH OCTOBER WORLD FOOD DAY**

**WEDNESDAY 21ST OCTOBER TRAFALGAR DAY (1805)**

**SUNDAY 25TH OCTOBER BST ENDS**

**SATURDAY 31ST OCTOBER ALL HALLOW'S EVE**

October 2020

***All good gifts around us are sent from heav'n above,  
so thank the Lord, so thank the Lord for all his love.***

*(taken from a well known harvest hymn)*

So the year goes round. Whatever we do or say, one day always follows another. In this process I think we see that there are some things that are inevitable, unchanging.



On a recent walk, my wife and I saw a farmer sowing seeds, well actually he was drilling seed into the ground, no longer ploughing and scattering.

Long gone are the days when a farmer would walk through a field spreading seed by “broadcasting” it on the ground. But whatever the method, the process was the same, ground is prepared and seed is put in the right place for it to grow, to be harvested later.

As we prepare to celebrate harvest and once again give thanks to God for gifts received, I wonder what we ourselves will harvest of ourselves this year.

During this year, were seeds, thoughts or ideas planted in us? How did we nurture our gifts in the year? What are we harvesting from our selves of our experiences during the past year of our lives? Are we in the right place to grow?

But maybe it is time to take a longer view. What if we look at ourselves as seeds planted, in some cases many years ago? Our families and friends have nurtured us, as a farmer nurtures the seed in the fields. So, each year, we grow and develop, but what, I wonder, is our harvest?

In any year, the weather is not always perfect for the seed, sometimes it is too hot, sometimes too cold, sometimes too wet, sometimes too dry. It is rarely perfect. So what about us this year? Has our “weather” been perfect?

Probably not. As years go, this has been a difficult year for so many of us.

There are always good times and bad times, maybe those of us able to read this monthly letter should perhaps give thanks.



So what should we be giving thanks for? If we take luck, good fortune and chance out of the loop, how have we grown as people, as individuals? Are we the same as we were last year? If the answer to that question is yes, then I think we should be sad. For if that is the case, we have shown no growth, we have not developed.

As a teacher, I am still of the view that any day that passes without learning something new is a wasted day. Seeds in the field do not stop developing just because the weather is not right, do they?

Each day as we say Morning Prayer, I say these words:

***“The night has passed, and the day lies open before us;  
let us pray with one heart and mind.***

***As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your  
presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you;  
now and for ever. Amen”***

This year, as never before, these words resonate with me.

This year let us take some time to reflect on what has happened, on what is happening, and ask ourselves if and how we can grow as a consequence, and then, maybe, thank the Lord for all his love.

God bless,

**David**

**\* David Pierce is Lead Minister at St Mary the Virgin**

**If you would like to sponsor a magazine, for a birthday,  
anniversary, in memory or for thanksgiving,  
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The Church garden work party this month will be

on

Saturday

10th October

from 2-4pm



### Mid-week services

Monday 9:00am

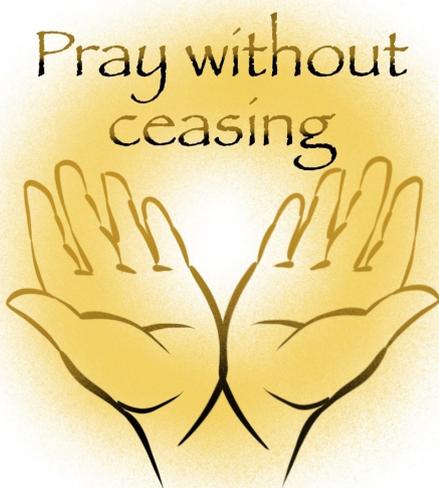
Morning prayer

Thursday 9:00am

Morning prayer

10:00am

Communion



## **A new service at St Mary's starting on**

Sunday 4th October at 6pm

### **Evensong**

said service from the book of common prayer.

**Evensong** is the common name for a Christian church service originating in the Anglican tradition as part of the reformed practice of the Daily office or canonical hours. The service may also be referred to as Evening Prayer but Evensong is the more common name .

It is roughly the equivalent of Vespers in the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran churches, although it was originally formed by combining the monastic offices of Vespers and Compline. Although many churches now take their services from Common Worship.

Services of Evensong are centred around reading from the Bible and the psalms and the canticles Magnificat and Nunc Dimitis. The original liturgy for Evensong is found in the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer*.

**Please support this new service.**



**Many thanks to Sue Arnold  
Who has sponsored the  
publication of this month's  
magazine.**



# St Mary's Church Hall – Regular Hirers/Activities

<b>Monday</b>	<p><b>Strollercise</b> Strolling to 50's music 6-7,000 steps (3 miles) Fun, friendly, all ages, no gym kit required £4 per hour - No need to book 10 -11 am 11.15am -12.15pm Contact: Karen/Tracy 07745 154065</p>	<p><b>Barling &amp; Lt. Waking Women's Institute</b> 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of month, 2 pm Contact Phyl Wickenden 01702 582185</p>	
<b>Tuesday</b>	<p><b>Rachel's Story, Rhymes and Activity Time</b> Toddler Group at 10am except 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday Contact: Rachel 07780 374991</p> <p><b>U3A – Local History</b> 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of month 10.15 am to 12.15 pm Contact: Mick 01702 622356</p>	<p><b>U3A – Crafting</b> 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of month 1.30pm to 3.30pm Contact Janet 07810 879673</p>	<p>Private booking 5.30 – 7.30 pm</p> <p><b>Southend Wado Kai Tengudojo Karate</b> 7.30 – 9pm Contact: Tony 07874 854494</p>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<p><b>U3A Ukelele Improvers</b> 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of month 10 am to 12 noon Contact: Roni 07584 660096</p>	<p><b>U3A Knit &amp; Natter</b> 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of month 2 – 4pm Contact Pat 07476 078570</p>	
<b>Thursday</b>	<p><b>St Mary's Community Coffee Morning</b> 10.30 am to 12 noon All welcome</p>	<p><b>U3A Floristry</b> 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of month 1pm – 3.30pm Contact Jane 07743507511</p> <p><b>Sweaty Mama</b> Female Bootcamp 7.30 – 8.30pm Contact: Kellie 07847 249618</p>	<p>Private booking 5.45 – 6.45 pm</p>
<b>Friday</b>	<p><b>Diddi Dance</b> 9.15 – 10.15 am Funky pre-school dance class for boys and girls. Contact Jennifer Ripton 07756 407162</p>	<p><b>Marriott's Tai Chi</b> 11am – 12.00 pm Contact Tracey Cain 01702 290461</p>	

**CHURCH HALL CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

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## Beware what lurks in the church vestry...

The Rectory

St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren



I am unsurprised that the cleaning lady took exception to you dismantling your motorbike in the church vestry. Clergy vestries are the final repositories of rotting hymn books, ancient cassocks with a certain aroma, buckets with holes in, which are kept “just in case” and dead animals in various states of decomposition; but they are no place for bike chains, disc brakes and inner tubes.

I will concede that vestries seem to attract all those objects no one quite knows what to do with, but which parishioners can't bear to throw away. Flower arrangers creep into my vestry, looking for space for boxes of twine. Decorators arrive with cribs and Easter gardens they are hoping to store. And even the choirmaster occasionally sidles in, trying to slip some anthems past me. I repel them all with vigour, and a firm broom.

One thing I can't keep out of the vestry are the portraits of all my predecessors, who stare down at me reproachfully. The most recent, in colour, stare smugly, knowing that I am still being compared to them, and falling short. Earlier incumbents, in black and white, look mildly reproachful, reminding me that *they* all held doctorates from Oxford. The hand-drawn portraits from pre-1870 are the worst – they all look as if they drank vinegar for breakfast and argued Pelagianism over lunch, just for fun. I am already rehearsing my own look of pained forgiveness for my leaving photo that will stare down on my own successor, and perpetually irritate him

It also seems to be a tradition that retiring clergy donate their robes for their successors, probably because it spares them a walk to the dustbin. So, a five-foot, 18 stone incumbent will leave a cassock for his six-foot, ten stone successor. There will also be a spare 1960s nylon surplice hanging on the back of the vestry door, to remind you that should you ever forget your own, then this is the horror you will be obliged to wear throughout Evensong.

Notices on the walls will tell you that marriage fees in the 1920s were seven shillings and sixpence, that Communion wine can be obtained from a shop that closed down a generation ago and there will be a copy of the prayer of thanksgiving to be used on the Relief of Mafeking.

My only advice is to remove your bike before it gets bundled up with the Scouts' tents – and lost forever in the churchwarden's shed.

Your loving uncle,  
Eustace

### **Moses revisited**

Nine-year-old Joseph was asked by his mother what he had learned in Sunday school.

“Well, Mum, our teacher told us how God sent Moses behind enemy lines on a rescue mission to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. When he got to the Red Sea, he had his engineers build a pontoon bridge and all the people walked across safely. Then he radioed headquarters for reinforcements. They sent bombers to blow up the bridge and all the Israelites were saved.”

“Now, Joseph, is that really what your teacher taught you?” his mother asked, somewhat alarmed.

“Well, no, Mum. But if I told it the way the teacher did, you'd never believe it!”

100 years ago, on 7<sup>th</sup> Oct 1920 Oxford University allowed women to become full members and study for full degrees for the first time, and the first 100 women were admitted.



## Anthony Ashley-Cooper, 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Shaftesbury - the Poor Man's Earl

Think of Piccadilly Circus, and that small statue of the angel poised with bow and arrow. Most people think it stands for Eros. It does not. It stands for Anteros, his brother, the god of selfless love. It is a memorial to the greatest Christian Victorian philanthropist, politician and social reformer of his generation – Lord Shaftesbury.

Anthony Ashley Cooper, the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Shaftesbury (1801 – 1885) was a devout Christian who spent his life fighting to help ease the plight of lunatics, chimney sweeps, children in factories, women and children in the mines, opium addicts, and children without any education.



His own early life was loveless and bleak – his parents formal and frightening, his early schooldays a ‘horror’ of ‘cruelty and starvation’. The only love came from the family’s housekeeper, Maria Millis. A biographer wrote: ‘She provided for Ashley a model of Christian love that would form the basis for much of his later social activism and philanthropic work.’ The reality and homely practicality of her Christian love were a beacon for the young Ashley. She told him Bible stories, she taught him a prayer.

After Christ Church Oxford, where he proved an outstanding scholar, Ashley turned to politics. In 1826, aged 25, he was elected as Tory MP for Woodstock. He was eager to serve on parliamentary committees that got things done; his great life’s work had begun.

Lunatics: In 1827 lunatics were kept chained naked in straw, forced to sleep in their excrement. They were washed in freezing cold water, with one towel for 160 people and no soap. There was gross over-crowding and inedible food: asylums were places to die in.

Shaftesbury's maiden speech in Parliament was in support of a Bill to improve conditions. He wrote: 'By God's blessing, my first effort has been for the advance of human happiness.'

It took years: from 1827 to 1884 he fought for a succession of Lunacy Acts, writing later of 'the years of toil and care that, under God, I have bestowed on this melancholy and awful question.'

Child Labour and Factory Reform. Again, reform took years. Shaftesbury fighting for the Ten Hours Act from 1833, 1842, 1844, 1846 and 1847 – when it finally got through Parliament. No child under the age of 9 should work in the cotton or woollen industries below the age of 9, and no one under 18 must work more than ten hours a day.

Miners. In 1842 he fought to outlaw the employment of women and children in coal mines.

Climbing boys. Thousands of young boys were dying in terrible pain – scorched, blinded and suffocated by soot, or with cancer of the scrotum. Ashley fought for Bills in 1840, 1851, 1853, 1855, 1864 until finally the Chimney Sweepers Act 1875 closed the practise down.

Education reform: 1844 Ashley became president of the Ragged School Union that promoted education for poor children. He wrote that if it were to fail, 'I should die of a broken heart'.

Religion. Lord Shaftesbury was a devout Christian who became a leading figure in 19<sup>th</sup> century evangelical Anglicanism. He was President of British and Foreign Bible Society for nearly 30 years. He was very sympathetic to the Jews, and advocated their return to the Holy Land.

Lord Shaftesbury's funeral service at Westminster Abbey on the morning of 8<sup>th</sup> October 1885 drew thousands of people. The streets along the route were thronged with the poor: costermongers, flower-girls, boot-blacks, crossing sweepers, factory hands and many more. They waited for hours just to see his coffin go by. He was dearly loved by them as the 'Poor Man's Earl'. One biographer wrote: 'No man has in fact ever done more to lessen the extent of human misery, or to add to the sum total of human happiness.'

The great preacher Charles Spurgeon called him 'the best man of the age'. He 'lived for the oppressed', he was a 'moral anchor in a drifting generation', 'friend of every living thing', 'he had a 'fervent love to God, and hearty love to man.'



## Fruit of the Spirit

*(Gal 5:22,23, Ps 34:8)*

Opportunities  
To ripen your fruit in our lives,  
Lord, give us opportunities.

To grow in your Spirit,  
Know your warmth  
And your light,

Allow the segments of  
Self-control, gentleness,  
Faithfulness, goodness,  
Kindness, patience, peace and joy  
To be lubricated and sweetened  
By love,

Showing the world  
Your nature transforming  
Our natures,  
In the fruit bowl of our lives  
In Jesus.

Lord give opportunities  
For the hungry to taste  
Your ripening fruit in us,  
See that you are good  
And come to you.

*By Daphne Kitching*



## William Tyndale, Bible translator and Reformation martyr

This month is the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation, and so a good time to pay tribute to an outstanding English scholar, translator and martyr of the Reformation.

William Tyndale (c. 1494 - 6<sup>th</sup> October 1536) was born near Gloucester, and studied at Oxford and Cambridge. He could speak seven languages, and was proficient in ancient Hebrew and Greek. As a priest, his abilities would have taken him a long way, but by 1523 Tyndale's only desire was to translate the Bible, so that English men and women could read it for themselves. It became his life's passion.

Tyndale's translation was the first Bible to be published in English, the first to draw directly from Hebrew and Greek texts, and the first English translation to take advantage of the printing press.

It was to cost him his life. For Tyndale's work was seen as a direct challenge to the power of both the Roman Catholic Church and the laws of England in maintaining the Church's position.

When the authorities had tried to stop his translation, Tyndale fled to Hamburg, Wittenberg, Cologne, and finally to the Lutheran city of Worms. It was there, in 1525, his New Testament emerged. It was quickly smuggled into England, and King Henry VIII, Cardinal Wolsey, and others, were furious.

Tyndale moved on to Antwerp, where for nine more years he continued his work. Then in May 1535 he was betrayed, arrested, and jailed in a castle near Brussels. Tied to the stake for strangulation and burning, his dying prayer was that the King of England's eyes would be opened. Sure enough, two years later King Henry authorised the Great Bible for the Church of England, which relied largely on Tyndale's work.

Not only that, but in 1611, the 54 scholars who produced the King James Bible drew very heavily from Tyndale. Even today we honour him: in 2002, Tyndale was placed at number 26 in the BBC's poll of 100 Greatest Britons.



## CONTACT DETAILS

For all enquiries, including weddings, baptisms, blessings etc. please, in the first instance, contact Pat Fitch.

01702 585289

Phone numbers are all area code 01702 unless stated

<b>Lead Minister</b>	<b>Revd. David Pierce</b>	07305 710265 david@revdavidpierce.net
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## Understanding the Bible

As we acknowledge Bible Sunday this month, it's a good opportunity to ask the question: *why should I read the Bible?*

The Bible is the world's best-selling book of all time. However, it isn't one book, but a library of 66 books, composed by some 44 writers over a period of 1500 years in a range of literature including history, poetry, prophecy, letters and apocalyptic (end times). Despite having a number of different writers, the Bible claims one author: God himself!

This is the basis of the unity of its message and authoritative claim to be the primary way by which God speaks to us: *'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work'* (2 Timothy 3:16). The Bible is inspired (*'the word of God in the words of men'*) and presents itself as a *manual for life*, equipping us to live for God in every aspect of our lives. We also have the promise of the Holy Spirit to guide us in applying the words to our lives: *'the Spirit will guide you into all truth'* (John 16:13).

At her coronation the Queen was given a Bible with the words *'the most precious thing this world affords'*. Does this reflect our own attitude to the Bible?

### "Next Step" Study Group

This will take place using Zoom. This means we do not have to go out on dark cold wet evenings. At one church I visited there was a group called "Thursday Thinkers". I like that, so I plan the the Study Group will take place on

**Thursday Evenings at 8:00** and last about one hour. They will start on **Thursday 29th October**, and run for six weeks. We shall be using the Pilgrim Course, Unit 4 - The Beatitudes

**David**





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## Guardian Angels – keeping an eye on us

The teaching of Jesus encourages us to believe in guardian angels. He once said, 'See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.' (Matthew 18:10)

The existence of angels was suggested in various Old Testament texts, Jesus mentioned them explicitly, and the early Christians accepted their existence and work (Acts 12:15).

In England, devotion to the angels, both in Anglo-Saxon times and later, was strong. In modern times, the great American evangelist Billy Graham has written an entire book on the existence and work of angels.

Alcuin described them as intercessors (in the 11th century Leofric Missal); Herbert of Losinga, bishop of Norwich (d 1119) specially praised them, and his contemporary, Reginald of Canterbury, wrote prayers in their honour.

Honorius Augustodunensis (d 1151) clarified the existing belief of the time by asserting that each human soul, when infused into the body, is entrusted to the particular care of a single angel, who protects both body and soul and offers prayers to God.

For many centuries Christendom was satisfied with the feast of St Michael (and all Angels), but the special feast of the Guardian Angels was introduced in Austria, Spain and Portugal in the 15th – 16th centuries. Guardian Angels were then seen as guardians of particular towns or regions, or of each individual. Pope Clement X made the feast day universal in 1607, fixing its date to 2<sup>nd</sup> October.

30 years ago, on 8<sup>th</sup> Oct 1990 East and West Germany  
reunited as the Federal Republic of Germany.





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## St. Mary's Rational Lottery – 'The 100 Club'

Every week millions of people in the UK buy a Lottery Ticket. The odds of winning even £25 are very low and you have no influence on which charities are supported.

At St. Mary's we are proposing to hold a small lottery – our Rational Lottery. We will start with just 100 numbered tickets available and each ticket will cost £12 for a year's subscription. The draw will be held at the beginning of each month and it is proposed that there will be two prizes of £25.

The total prize fund may not be great but the odds of winning are much better (a 30% chance of winning at least one prize during the year) and it's in a good cause – supporting St. Mary's. The viability of the scheme to raise money for the church causes depends greatly on recruiting participants from outside the congregation please take a copy of the advert and enlist family, friends, neighbours and work colleagues.

We would like to hold the first draw in January 2021 and are taking pre-bookings for numbers soon.

**Thank You  
St Mary's Rational Lottery**

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