

St Mary the Virgin—North Shoebury

JULY 2021

‘You are the light of the world A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.’

Matthew 5: verses 14 & 16



SUNDAY 4TH JULY— INDEPENDENCE DAY USA

MONDAY 12TH JULY—ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BOYNE

THURSDAY 15TH JULY— ST SWITHUN’S DAY

THURSDAY 22ND JULY— ST MARY MAGDALENE



The Church garden work party this month will be

on

Saturday

10TH JULY

from 2-4pm



If you would like to sponsor a magazine, for a birthday, anniversary, in memory or for thanksgiving, please contact Francine.

£25 b&w, £35 colour gift aided or not, would cover the professional printing of a monthly magazine.

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“Vicar’s” Letter July 2021

“I wish I knew how it would feel to be free.”

Dear All

For a while now, this song has been buzzing round my head. It was sung by Nina Simone and was the theme tune for Barry Norman’s Film review programme which ran for many years on BBC.

But as well as the tune being a real “ear worm”, the words are both very powerful and relevant as we consider the extension of lockdown announced earlier this week.

There were basically two responses to the news of the extension.

The first was about keeping people safe, preventing the spread of this pandemic, and bringing it under control. I understand this very well, and it appears that the scientific advisors are of this opinion.

We are still being very cautious here at St. Mary’s, but numbers are growing fast and each week it is a struggle to fit everyone in church. It is not convenient, but the safety and well-being of those I know is important to me, and I hope to all of us. We continue to take care; it is one way in which our Christian love and fellowship is exercised.

But there was another response. I watched on the Parliament Channel which showed the debate on the extension to lockdown. The Prime Minister was unable to be present, so the Health Secretary was answering questions in the debate. It was reported in the Independent on 15th June that Steve Baker, MP for Wycombe, warned Mr Hancock that “alarming numbers of people... believe they are never going to see true freedom again”.

Once again, the song leapt into my head, and for a brief moment I felt real anger. I wondered, just what is freedom?

The lyrics are still copyright, so to read them, please search the Internet for this:

“i wish i knew how it would feel to be free lyrics”

What does freedom feel like to us? “Freedom” is a state of mind and whatever the politicians may try to tell us, **we are free.**

Living in a land which was at that time occupied by a hostile foreign power, Jesus talks about being free. Paul, in his letter to the churches that he set up talks about freedom. Amongst other things, they are talking about freedom from op-

I recall the words of Steve Biko. He said, “The most powerful weapon in the hand of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed”.

We need to think very carefully about this and ask ourselves if we are being oppressed.

We are told we are not free in a world where clearly and obviously we are free.

Why are we told this?

We are sold the concept of scarcity in a world of plenty.

Why? Who stands to gain from this? Clearly, not us.

I think we need to look again at what we understand by the word “free”. Maybe it is time to look at the responsibilities of freedom, as well as the benefits it offers. There is a balance to be found.

Maybe it is our Christian responsibility at this time to search for that balance.

Here is the first verse of the song:

*I wish I knew how it would feel to be free
I wish I could break all the chains holdin' me
I wish I could say all the things that I should say
Say 'em loud, say 'em clear
For the whole round world to hear*

Maybe it is time for us all to “say ‘em loud, say ‘em clear”.

God bless



Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery scheme

Essex County Council's Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery scheme provides funding to install energy efficiency improvements in Essex residents' homes.

The measures available under the scheme include loft insulation, cavity or solid wall insulation or energy efficient heating. The funding covers the entire cost of the improvements, up to £10,000.

Perhaps you, a relative or friend may be able to benefit from the funding to make your homes warmer next winter?

Residents who own their own home, have a household income below £30,000 and an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of E, F or G, may be eligible for up to £10,000 of work to improve their home's energy efficiency.

The funding is only available on a first-come, first-served basis so we are encouraging residents to [find out](#) if they are eligible to take advantage. All improvements must be completed by the end of August this year.

HAVE YOU ANYTHING FOR THIS MAGAZINE?

Thank you to David for his contributions this month. If you have anything which would be of interest, please contact the editor, Craig Hunter early in the month, so that your space can be reserved.

07932503644; chunter2009@hotmail.co.uk

Please send any material for the Magazine by the 17th of the month

100 years ago, on 1st July 1921 that the Chinese Communist Party was founded.





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On why the clergy should avoid computers

The Rectory

St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren



Thank you for the kind offer of your old computer, but I do not want it. I know you find it a fundamental basic of daily life, but I do not, and I intend to keep things that way.

This is despite the fact that our diocesan office now takes it for granted that all of us clergy have a computer. Indeed, the diocesan secretary and I have had several awkward phone calls upon this very subject. He can't believe that I really don't have one, and suspects that I am simply hiding my email address from him so that he cannot send me the daily diocesan briefings, weekly questionnaires, and constant notification of all sorts of meetings and training days. But I remain firm: I have survived in ministry for nearly 50 years without a computer, and I don't intend to change now. When he gets tetchy with me, I take the high moral ground and remind him that St Paul did not have a computer.

Besides, it would not end with just a computer. Next, I would be obliged to get a printer and then ink cartridges and then maybe some sort of virus would attack me. As I have no idea about any of this, I might have to allow someone into the vicarage to sort it out, and even worse, I might even have to *pay* them. My money can be far more usefully spent on good claret.

Being without a computer also saves me much aggravation. From what I can gather, most computer owners spend significant parts of their lives either trying to get their machine to do something that it refuses to do, or else getting help from someone in a remote part of the world who speaks a jargon only distantly related to English, who assures you that whatever you did, it would have been better if you hadn't.

So I have decided that should I ever REALLY need to use a computer for something, I will visit our local primary school and get a six year-old to do the job for me, which they do with effortless efficiency, speed and accuracy.

Your loving uncle, Eustace

Sundays in July.

There will need to be a change in the pattern of services in July to fit in with holidays. The first two Sundays in July, the 4th and the 11th, will be Family Service. There will be Parish Eucharist on Sunday 18th July.

Mid-week Services and Events

During the summer, Morning Prayer will continue to be said on Monday and Thursday morning at 8:30. This is on Zoom. Let me know if you need a link.

Holy Communion on Thursday

This will continue to be held at 10:00. The service lasts about thirty minutes, and numbers are small. If you are nervous about coming to church, this might be the service for you.

Community Coffee Morning

This is open to everyone. It follows the church service, so it starts at about 10:40. Coffee, tea, biscuits and sometimes cake are available for about an hour.

100 years ago, on 10th July 1921 that Belfast's Bloody Sunday took place. Protestant loyalists attacked Catholic enclaves and set fire to homes and businesses, sparking rioting and gun battles. At least 17 people were killed and more than 70 injured. 2,000 people were left homeless.



15th July

St Swithun (or Swithin) - saint for a rainy day

St Swithun is apparently the saint you can blame for rainy summers. It is said that if it rains on his special day, 15th July, it will then rain for 40 days after that. It all began when Swithun was made Bishop of Winchester in 852 by King Ethelwulf of Wessex. It was an important posting: Winchester was the capital of Wessex, and during the 10 years Swithun was there, Wessex became the most important kingdom of England.

During his life, instead of washing out people's summer holidays, and damping down their spirits, Swithun seems to have done a lot of good. He was famous for his charitable gifts and for his energy in getting churches built. When he was dying in 862, he asked that he be buried in the cemetery of the Old Minster, just outside the west door.

If he had been left there in peace, who knows how many rainy summers the English may have been spared over the last 1000 years. But, no, it was decided to move Swithun. By now, the 960s, Winchester had become the first monastic cathedral chapter in England, and the newly installed monks wanted Swithun in the cathedral with them. So finally, on 15 July 971, his bones were dug up and Swithun was translated into the cathedral.

That same day many people claimed to have had miraculous cures. Certainly everyone got wet, for the heavens opened. The unusually heavy rain that day, and on the days following, was attributed to the power of St Swithun. Swithun was moved again in 1093, into the new Winchester cathedral. His shrine was a popular place of pilgrimage throughout the middle ages. The shrine was destroyed during the Reformation and restored in 1962. There are 58 ancient dedications to Swithun in England.



He was brilliant. Clearly a child prodigy... the [pride](#) of Salzburg... a performer *par excellence*.

At age five he wrote an advanced concerto for the harpsichord. Before he turned ten he had composed and published several violin sonatas and was playing from memory the best of Bach and Handel. Soon after his twelfth birthday he composed and conducted his own opera . . . and was awarded an honorary appointment as concertmaster with the Salzburg Symphony Orchestra. Before his brief life ended, he had written numerous operettas, cantatas, hymns, and oratorios, as well as forty-eight symphonies, forty-seven arias, duets, and quartets with orchestral accompaniment, and over a dozen operas. Some 600 works!

His official name was Johannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Amadeus Theophilus Mozart. With a handle like that, he *had* to be famous.

He was only thirty-five when he passed on. He was living in poverty and died in obscurity. His sick widow seemed indifferent at his burial. A few friends went as far as the church for his funeral but were deterred by a storm from going to the gravesite. By the time anyone bothered to inquire, the location of his grave was impossible to identify. The unmarked grave of Mozart—perhaps the most gifted composer of all time—became lost forever. No shrine marks his resting place for music lovers to visit. No granite-engraved etchings for admirers to read. No place for candles to burn, flowers to embellish, tourists to gather. Mozart has joined the immortal, eternal ages—forever absent from sight. He is gone.

100 years ago, on 30th July 1921 that the hormone insulin was discovered by

Frederick Banting and Charles Best at the University of Toronto.



Or is he? Unlike Caesar, the good he did lives after him. The evil is interred with his bones. Only a handful of music buffs could begin to list three or four evils of that Austrian-born artist. Then what good lives on? *His unique contributions*: his style, his eminent innovations, that "Mozart touch." No other sound is like it. It is his, altogether. *A timeless trophy*, created by a genius, captured on the score, bringing warmth and delight to endless generations. In his music, Mozart lives on. Unexcelled..

Several years ago one of my children and I walked through a cemetery. We paused and read the stones. We knew none of the deceased. It was a nostalgic, gripping encounter. Hand in hand we walked and talked. Softly. Thoughtfully. It was as though we were on sacred soil. Time stopped at each marker. Quietness swept over us as we drove away. I shall not soon forget what I learned.

First, *life is brief*. Terribly brief. On every stone there is a little dash... a horizontal line... illustrating time. Mozart's stone (wherever it is) reads:

1756–1791

But if only that "dash" could speak!
It'd teach us a lesson.

80 years ago, on 19th July 1941 that British Prime Minister Winston Churchill
launched his 'V for Victory' campaign.



22nd July—The other Mary

St Mary Magdalene - patron of repentant sinners

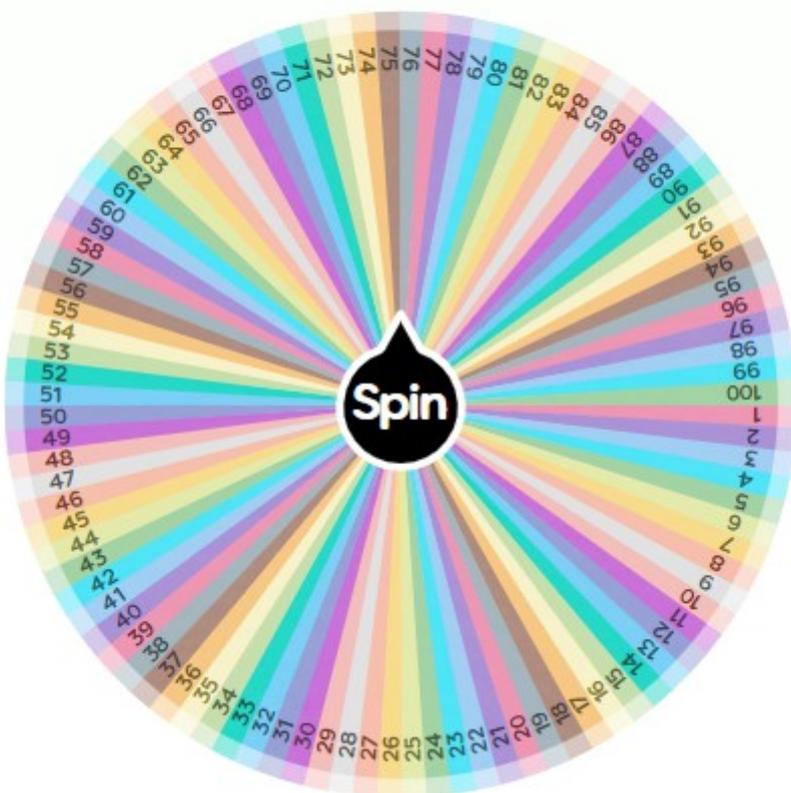
It is easy to understand the popularity of Mary Magdalene over the centuries: she is the patron saint both of repentant sinners and of the contemplative life.

Jesus drove seven demons from Mary, who came from near Tiberius in Galilee. She became His follower to the bitter end. She followed Him to Jerusalem and was present during the crucifixion, standing heart-broken at the foot of the cross. Her love for Jesus did not end there, for she went to the tomb to anoint His body on the Sunday morning.

Such faithful, humble devotion was richly repaid: it gave her a unique privilege among all mankind: she was the first person to whom the Risen Lord appeared on Easter Sunday morning. She thought He was the gardener at first.

Mary Magdalene has sometimes been identified with the woman who anointed Christ's feet in the house of Simon (Luke 7:37). Over the centuries many artists have painted this scene. Mary Magdalene's feast has been kept in the West since the 8th century. England has 187 ancient churches dedicated to her, as well as a College in both Oxford and Cambridge.

numbers 1 - 100



Winning numbers

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Churchyard Safeguarding Officer	(Vacancy) Pat Fitch	585289

THE CHURCH WEB SITE

www.stmarynorthshoebury.org.uk

Special Summer Evensong Services

During August five churches in the area are going to hold a service of Evensong. Here is a list of which church and when:

1st South Shoebury 6.00 pm
8th St Augustine's 6.30 pm
15th Holy Trinity 6.30 pm
22nd North Shoebury 6.30 pm
29th St. Lukes time to be advised.

Please try and support these services.



...just humour him - he's hoping it'll help him reach the young people in his diocese...



This month should see the start of the Tokyo Olympics, having been postponed from last year due to the Coronavirus pandemic. A number of New Testament letters refer to Olympic sport including Hebrews: 'Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith' (Hebrews 12:1-2).

The Christian life is compared to a long-distance race, but despite the struggles and obstacles, there is a great crowd of witnesses cheering us on. We have a heavenly Father who loves us and a Saviour who has run the race before us. If we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, He will enable us to finish the race.

During the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, the British athlete Derek Redmond was running in the semi-finals of the 400 metres. About 250 metres from the finish his hamstring tore. He fell to the ground in pain and stretcher bearers came over to him. However, Redmond was determined to finish the race and so he started hopping toward the finishing line. Suddenly Jim Redmond, Derek's father, ran out of the stands towards him. "You don't have to do this," he told his son. "Yes, I do," said Derek, to which his father said, "We're going to finish this together." They completed the lap with Derek leaning on his father's shoulder. As they crossed the finish line, the spectators rose to give Derek a standing ovation. Although he didn't win an Olympic medal, Derek Redmond finished the race with his father at his side. Let's not forget the encouragement we have to finish the race!

40 years ago, on 29th July 1981 that the marriage of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer took place at St Paul's Cathedral in London. Lady Diana would have been 60 this year.



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Promise and Fulfilment

When St Peter preached his first sermon on the day of Pentecost, he showed how the life, death and resurrection of Jesus had to be understood in the light of the Old Testament.

'The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.....They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.' (Isaiah 11:6,9)

That vision of peace and harmony inspired this month's painting, 'The Peaceable Kingdom' by Edward Hicks. Born in Pennsylvania in 1780 he became a Quaker, living as a preacher and minister before taking up his brushes. His fellow Quakers were uneasy with this pursuit of such a worldly profession, and so he tried his hand at farming. This proved unsuccessful and he returned to painting, He painted almost a hundred versions of the Peaceable Kingdom of which over 60 still exist. This one is from 1834.

The foreground is occupied by not just one child, but several. They are innocent and free, playing with the animals around – lion, tiger, leopard, bear, wolf, cow and lamb. There is no sign of 'nature red in tooth and claw' here for all is peace and tranquillity. The bear and cow nudge each other in the bottom corner with no fear and no assertion of strength. That vision of peace is being realised in the distant scene, where we see William Penn and his fellow Quakers working on a treaty of co-existence with the Indians. The animals in the foreground symbolise the human traits we see at work in the background: leadership and strength, sensitivity and gentleness.

But here in 1834 there is a freshness and a promise of paradise restored. That harmony can be realised in human affairs also, the artist is saying. 'Follow the Inner Light' and Isaiah's prophecy can be fulfilled in our world. It needs both the innocence and strength we see here; it needs action and waiting, it needs wisdom and gentleness as we take counsel one with another. Follow those qualities to be channels of God's peace to make this world the Peaceable Kingdom.



The Peaceable Kingdom' by Edward Hicks. It now hangs in the National Gallery of Art in Washington DC. You can see a copy of the painting at: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Edward_Hicks_-_Peaceable_Kingdom.jpg



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