



HURST GREEN NEWS

October 2020

Colour-full

Have you seen the glorious wild flowers on the Green near St Agatha's Hall? I was walking a different way to church the other day and spotted them. After getting over my resentment that these flowers have taken beautifully, (unlike my attempt in our garden which now looks like a patchy bed of weeds), I could then really admire how super they looked. Thank you so much to a wonderful local organisation called 'Creative Community' and their volunteers, plus some help from the council, to make this happen.



Creative Community have called this and other related projects, 'Colour Hurst Green'. You may have 'read all about it' in this very newsletter! Marvelling at this sweeping swathe of bright dots I suddenly grasped their intention. Hurst Green is, as it says on the tin, very 'green'. We are blessed to be surrounded by such greenery. But the countryside here, compared to the countryside of my youth (South West) is less naturally colourful. This strip of bright wildflowers has certainly helped.

How are we all feeling at the moment? As I look around it seems that as we wear masks and follow 'social' distancing rules, life itself has become more muted and monochrome. In church this is particularly stark. What should be a joyful community, singing hymns and enjoying friendship over a coffee and biccie after the service is under strain. And I think we're all struggling in one way or another. As a friend of mine said the other day, 'it's like a tasty sausage casserole with the sausages, garlic, tomatoes and onions taken out and all we're left with is a thin broth'. She went on to explain, we are lacking many of the things that get our endorphins going. You know, the chemical that is triggered in the brain through a variety of ways which basically makes us feel better and more alive.

Some of the things that trigger endorphins are currently diminished. Seeing a smile. Singing. Making music. Socialising. A hug. These are all the things that bring 'colour' into our lives. And the trouble is that the less we receive these little boosts the less open to them we are. We become numb.

So, we need to be more proactive. There is still 'colour' around us that can cheer us and enliven us; we just have to look for it and be open to it. There is the natural world around us: birdsong, a beautiful sky, and those glorious wildflowers. Gifts and kind words help too. I feel blessed to have received some lovely words recently. And exercise can bring us colour (literally) too!

And of course, there is always love. Even with our mouths masked, let us open our eyes, ears and hearts to the colour and energy all around us, gifts and signs from God that bring us joy and fullness of life.

Revd Canon Anna Eltringham

(Anna was made a Canon of Southwark Cathedral at the start of September)

Help required with delivering the Hurst Green News

Not all of our usual willing distributors are currently able to help with distributing Hurst Green News and we're keen to ensure it reaches as many houses as possible within our community.



If you can help with this, please come along to St John's Church where you will find a big plastic box outside the main entrance which contains the printed copies. There is a list of the roads, in the box, to which we normally deliver together with an estimate of the numbers required for each road. If you feel it is appropriate and safe for you to do so, please take a number and deliver them to a specific road, ticking off on the list so we know what has been covered. Many thanks.



HARVEST at St John's Sunday 4 October 2020 9.30am AND 10.45am

This year we will be helping our global neighbours with *their* Harvest. In particular buying as many cocoa plants as we can for cocoa farmers in Nicaragua who must diversify as coffee plantations suffer from Climate Change. Let's thank God for his gifts to us and share them with others.

9.30am Holy Communion
(bring a mask, sanitise on entry, social distance)

10.45am Outdoor Church

For all ages *(bring flask/drink/refreshments and a mask for indoors in case it rains)*



Donations are for Christian Aid and are best made by contactless payment. Please come prepared!

Foodbanks



St John's Church cannot currently receive foodbank donations but there is still an urgent need and we encourage you to give in other ways if you can.

We are no longer able to collect empty crisp packets for recycling either, as the local collection centre no longer processes these.

Morrisons and Sainsbury's in Oxted both have foodbank collection points. Details of the items most needed can be found at caterham.foodbank.org.uk and eastgrinstead.foodbank.org.uk

HURST GREEN CHURCHES WELCOME YOU

Contact details for the respective churches are shown below. Please telephone any of these numbers for further details. You are advised to check websites for the latest information about any services being held.

ST JOHN'S, CHURCH WAY

Rector: Anna Eltringham, 712674, 14 Oast Road (day off - Monday)
Assistant Priest: Mary Seller, 715675, 11 Home Park
Southwark Pastoral Auxiliary: Monica Fenton, 715769
www.stjohnshurstgreen.org.uk

ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH OF OXTED & WARLINGHAM

All Saints' Church Chichele Road, Oxted - 627762
St Ambrose Church Warren Park, Warlingham
Parish Priest Fr Stephen, 713776
www.oxtedandwarlinghamparish.org

METHODIST CHURCH, HURSTLANDS

HURST GREEN EVANGELICAL CHURCH
Pastor: Keith Dickson, 712017
www.hgec.org.uk

OXTED UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

The Church of the Peace of God
21 Bluehouse Lane, Oxted, 730406
oxtedurc@gmail.com
Minister: Graham Dadd, 07894 507467
www.oxtedurc.org.uk



Lockdown Stories

Memories of Lockdown: We all have different memories of lockdown. Some will have been shielding and not ventured out. Some will have used all that extra time to volunteer, picked up new skills and made new friends. Others will have been on the front line or been doing the key work we all relied on. As a regular swimmer my abiding memory is of the battle to maintain some modicum of fitness after the pools were closed. I tried long walks but unsurprisingly they took too long. Then I tried cycling but there was a problem with my bike which meant that the front wheel was reluctant to turn and so, after an epic cross country ride with an average speed of just over 5 miles an hour, I was relieved when swimming was again permitted.



However, at first this was only if you were prepared to swim somewhere like a reservoir in Forest Row or a disused sand pit in Godstone, neither of which is heated. So a wetsuit is called for. Normally not a problem. However, my wetsuit will not do up without assistance from a kind passer by just before I get into the water. Unfortunately with social distancing in place, such assistance was strictly forbidden and so the wetsuit had to be put on at home where someone in my bubble could do me up and then I had to drive from Oxted to Forest Row fully kitted up, which I learnt was a good way to lose weight but just about do-able in the heat if you open all the windows of the car and keep moving. But I suppose my most distinctive memory of lockdown came when my household assistant announced she had to go out at lunchtime and I wasn't due to leave the house until 5pm. So if asked what my most distinctive memory of lockdown is, it will be the hot sunny afternoon I spent at work writing emails and dealing with colleagues and clients by phone whilst sitting at my desk fully zipped up in neoprene. *Michael Harman*

Thank you helpful people! I would particularly like to thank Lorna, I'm afraid I don't know her surname, who was the first person to put a note through my door at the beginning of "lockdown" to offer her help. She doesn't even live in my road, Boulthurst Way, and has been so helpful. I feel very blessed to also have a number of very good neighbours who have also offered help which I have been so pleased to accept. My next door neighbour Natalie, has a family of her own to care for but continues to ask if there is anything I need almost every day and has willingly brought me any shopping I wanted. I feel so fortunate to live in such a caring community. A big thank you to all of them, *from Brenda Ralph*

The Woodhouse Centre: After Boris Johnson's speech in March The Woodhouse Centre went into immediate lockdown. Since that date we have managed to keep in touch with all of our members either by telephone calls or visits to make sure everyone had someone looking after them, such as a family member or a friendly neighbour. We have been fortunate that not one of our members has contracted the virus and we pray this will continue. All our members have been fantastic in being extremely diligent with not going out and keeping themselves safe.

We will need all the help we can get to survive to ensure we continue to provide a friendly, creative environment for the elderly and/or disabled residents of Oxted and surrounding areas. As loneliness and social isolation are growing problems in our community, especially now in this current situation, we are keen to get everyone back to the Centre, as well as Men-in-Sheds. Therefore the Centre is scheduled to be reopened in the middle of September with everything in place so we can welcome not only our members but anyone who may wish to visit the Centre and perhaps buy any of the items we have been making during lockdown.



Autumn - a season of mists and mellow fruitfulness

Hurst Green Community, how does your garden grow? Because of having more time at home many of our gardens are in better shape than normal. My family made a vegetable bed with reasonable success in potatoes, onions, courgettes and tomatoes (super) but less so with kale (eaten to sticks by caterpillars) and peas. We have worked hard inside as well to nurture orchid plants. Several local people have shared their garden pictures on Facebook. Others have turned to creative expression, such as painting, embroidery and exquisite tapestry. Have you contributed to our Community Art Project? How many of us have baked our own cakes and now have to work off the additional pounds we have gained?

I have been pondering on the beauty of Creation and how we often work so hard to cultivate and nurture plants, trying to grow the most beautiful dahlia, the biggest pumpkin, the sweetest rose, the ripest figs and apples, the abundant grains. However, in the last couple of weeks at the edge of our rockery, beneath the bird table has popped up a sunflower from a discarded bird seed. It is in a place with hardly any soil, in a crack of paving. It hasn't been watered or tended and yet it smiles beautifully at the world in its odd position, becoming a haven for bees and other insects.

I wonder sometimes if we try too hard to flourish in life. Perhaps all the Creator wishes is for us to rest, stop a while, and for freshness and beauty to blossom unexpectedly in the hard places. For flowers we thought were over and gone 'to set budding more, and still more, later flowers for the bees' as Keats wrote on 19 September 1819 over 200 years ago in his poem 'To Autumn'. Do look this up if you can. It spins a web of past days and senses, reminding us of the beauty and abundance of this time of year.

In these strange times let us remember to be thankful for all of Creation, to be aware of our responsibility to support those in need, bringing small offerings of beauty from our simple lives and trusting in our Creator's hold on the Earth. Jesus told many stories about nature. He told his followers not to worry about life, but to trust in God's care. 'Consider the lilies of the field', he said 'how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you - you of little faith?' May our Creator show us small moments of beauty daily to remind us of His love no matter what is happening in the world today. God give us eyes to see the fruit of autumn, to hear 'with treble soft the red-breast' whistling, to touch, smell and taste the ripened fruits so we can be thankful. *Wendy Hewitt, Lay Reader, St John's*

These boots are made for walking... and that's just what we'll do...

Hurray! In line with Government guidance, East Surrey Walkers are back walking as a Group and we look forward to welcoming you on one of our walks. We're restricting numbers on our walks in order to follow current social distancing rules, so you will need to book in with the leader if you would like to join us.

Just look at our website, www.eastsurreywalkers.org.uk to find a walk that suits you, book in with the leader, as per the instructions on the listing, and come along on the day. You will find a warm welcome awaiting you, along with a healthy, invigorating walk and friendly conversation.



Life is by no means back to normal and living with Covid is certainly challenging, but we can still do things that bring us joy and thereby boost our mental well-being. As an organised 'outdoor physical activity event', Ramblers and Walking for Health group walks are exempt from the restrictions on social gatherings known as the 'rule of six' in England (from 14 September). This is taken from the Ramblers website but advice is changing constantly, so please check our website at the time of your walk.

If you are one of the many who has discovered the delights and benefits of walking over the past few months, you might want to consider making it a permanent part of your life and I would urge you to think about joining East Surrey Walkers. We are a friendly group that enjoys talking whilst walking in the countryside, making new friends and having pub lunches. In 'normal' times we also enjoy various social events throughout the year and organise holidays together, both in the UK and abroad. Sadly, these gatherings have been put on hold for the moment but they will be back. Each week we offer a selection of walks for different abilities, ranging from 3 to 12 miles. There's bound to be one that suits you, and you are welcome to walk with us on one or two occasions before you decide whether to join East Surrey Walkers. We'd love to have your company...

Pamela Cunniffe, Publicity Officer

St Agatha's Hall
Booking Administrator
07586 863079 or
aggieshall@gmail.com

You can check the availability of the hall by logging on to the website:
stagathashall.weebly.com/contact.html
and going to the 'what's on' calendar.

The Oxted Rotary Charitable Trust

We have a Grant Scheme to help single parent families and families living with a disability who are directly affected by the pandemic:

'CoronaCare in the Community'.

Any single parent family on a low income or those living with a registered disability or chronic illness can apply if they meet the criteria. Applications must benefit the whole family and the applicant's family must live in areas where the Rotary Club of Oxted & Limpsfield operates. More details from:
grants@oxtedrotary.org.uk



All Souls' Day, Sunday 1 November

Because of the Covid restrictions, sadly, we are unable to hold our usual All Souls' Day service which falls on 1 November this year.

Instead, we invite you to visit St John's Church some time between 3pm and 4.30pm and light a candle in memory of your loved one(s), and place it on the table in front of the altar as usual. A priest will be there, and will say a prayer with you if you wish. In addition, the names of all those we have in our records who have died during the last two years will be read out during the afternoon. If you have names of other people you would like remembered, then please email them to: office@stjhurstgreen.co.uk. They will all be read out, but we are unable to say at what exact time. I look forward to seeing you there.

Mary Seller, Assistant Priest

St Agatha's Hall

At last some normality is returning to St Agatha's with regular classes now running - risk assessed for Covid conditions of course.

On offer are various dancing classes for both young and more mature members of our community, Yoga, Pilates, Zumba and a Sing and sign session for babies. For more details see stagathashall.weebly.com. New Covid rules mean that sadly the Hall can only be available for certain private events. Please contact the booking secretary on 07586 863079 or aggieshall@gmail.com if you have something in mind.

We are very grateful to Tandridge District Council for a contribution towards our recent updating of the washrooms. St Agatha's Hall is managed by a committee of volunteers and assistance in any form is much appreciated.



Hurst Green Gardening Club

 Our autumn online show had 235 entries! Something for everyone. Take a look at www.HGgardeningclub.blogspot.com.

The lack of rain may show that you need to review your plants; trying to keep them alive when they really are now in the wrong place turns a joy into a labour. While you are at it, don't forget to pot up some prunings or split plants, or even pick seeds and plant them. When you get tired of that, sit down with a cup of tea and check out the bulb catalogues, they are not just for the springtime. *Brian Parrott*

Hurst Green Infant School & Nursery

CHANGE OF DATES TO OPEN DAYS

Due to the current Covid restrictions, we need to make amendments to both the dates and the format of the Open Days.

These will now take place as follows:

Saturday 24 October from 9.30am

Friday 27 November from 4.30pm

Please contact the School Office by email office@hurstgreenschool.org to book a half hour slot. We request that adults only attend. Tours will be in small groups of no more than 6 adults (to include school staff). Masks must be worn and we would ask all adults to observe social distancing rules. More information: www.hurstgreenschool.org



Come along and go home feeling happier! New singers welcome, no experience needed, no audition. Under 25s go free for the first term. Rehearsals start on:

Monday 28 September 8-10pm

Christ Church*, Kings Cross Lane, South Nutfield. RH1 5NG

Further info: Pat Denchfield, 07841 827496, sncscontact@gmail.com

*Covid-secure, risk-assessed. Please check the choir's website in case the situation changes.

www.southnutfieldchoralsociety.org.uk



We'd love to hear your lockdown stories. How did you spend your time? What new skills have you or your family members acquired? What has been your personal experience of lockdown? Have you experienced some of the many acts of kindness over the last few months and is there a person or an organisation that you'd like to thank for what they have done for you or your community? Please send your stories to hgncompiler@gmail.com and we'll include them over the next few months.

News from the Oxted One World Group

Many of the Group's normal fundraising events were cancelled this year because of the pandemic. Instead, an online Silent Auction in July raised nearly £2,500, many lots having already been donated. In addition over £1,000 of received ticket money was donated to the Group. Photos of the gardens which were to be open in May were circulated and £734 donated. The collection at Morrisons planned for June was cancelled but the Group was pleased to receive a £1,000 donation from the Oxted United Reformed Church in August.

The Group has supported several projects in Africa as well as a vegetable growing project involving 300 children in Haiti, a scheme to support deaf children and their families in North Bengal, India and a project to provide safety, shelter and support for up to 500 destitute children each year in Bihar, India.

A local charity, founded in 1983, the Group usually raises around £40,000 annually for projects in the developing world and is well supported by local churches and schools.



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