

HURST GREEN NEWS

March 2021

What is Lent?

The season of Lent is well and truly upon us. Growing up, I would often hear school friends saying that they were giving up chocolate for Lent and wondered why that was. In particular, at that time, I wondered what Lent was all about, and why chocolate?

Fast forward several years and training to become a vicar in the Church of England continues to deepen my engagement with Lent. Lent is the 40

day period observed from Ash Wednesday right up until Easter. These 40 days reflect the 40 days that Jesus abstained from food, fasting in the desert, a very testing time during which he was tempted by the devil. Lent allows us to reflect on these events leading up to the death of Christ and his resurrection.

Giving up something, or abstaining for a period of time from something one enjoys, for example chocolate or sweets is a sign of sacrifice and self-discipline helping us to acknowledge and remember the sacrifice that Jesus made and his exemplary self-discipline in truly testing times. Whatever one chooses to abstain from during Lent is a personal choice, for example in recent times, I've known people to abstain from social media, the television and even complaining!

Rather than giving things up, I've also known people to take up a new habit for Lent including exercise, prayer, expressing gratitude, being kinder, helping out more at home, and donating to charity.

Although Lent has already begun, it is never too late to join in the Spirit of Lent; to reflect on one's life choices to date, and to make those adjustments that help us to go forward in a more Christ like manner. So whether you decide to give up something, take up something new, or none of these aforementioned things, I hope that this season of Lent becomes a season of reflection, of Christ's peace and points the way to the hope of resurrection that Easter brings.

Revd Lotwina Farodoye, Oxted Team Curate

I would give up CHOCOLATE



But I'm not a quitter

Helping our Community

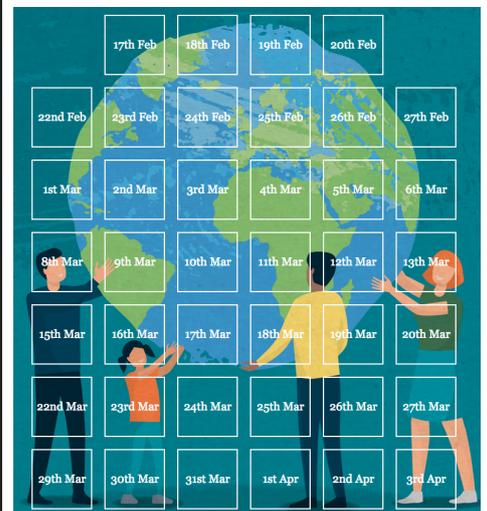
We wanted to let you know that St John's Church offered its facilities to the NHS as a potential vaccination centre, but we have been advised that it isn't required for the time being as the arrangements at the Council Offices are proving to be very effective. It would be great to be able to share our facilities if they can help our local community and the NHS will keep us in mind for possible future use. *St John's Church*

Lent Calendar

Following our very popular online Advent Calendar, we have created another online calendar, this time for Lent.

The theme is God's Creation and how we can care for it. As before, we have all kinds of adventurous ideas, music and activities! You can catch up on days in Lent so far and follow daily on the Oxted Team of Churches website

otoc.uk/lent-calendar



Pray For The Nation, at 6pm every day

COVID-19 has caused much suffering and sadness. In response, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York invite us to set aside time every evening to pray, particularly at 6pm. More than ever, this is a time when we need to love each other. Prayer is an expression of love. A printable prayer booklet, with themes to pray for each day of the week, is available here: <https://bit.ly/3p3pGvn>

Hurst Green Gardening Club - Brian Parrott

The last time I put pen to paper, the weather had been warm and the garden was showing promises of things to come. Now, it is covered with snow and everything is on pause. It's been a long time since we had snow and who knows when we will see it again, but perhaps now is the time to consider having some plants that will survive frosts in your garden?

Some of you will remember our garden shows and friendly competitions with other local clubs. This year we will be online again for our annual competition (I will miss the tea and cakes!) and we will not be meeting in Aggies for the foreseeable future. In the meantime, enjoy the Creative Community Garden, the railway station planting, and the purple crocus (planted by Oxted Rotary) on the green and on the A25 roundabout.



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Via Zoom

**Friday 19 March
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HURST GREEN CHURCHES WELCOME YOU

Please check websites for up to date information, but at the time of writing:

St John's, Hurst Green is open for private prayer on Sundays and Wednesdays from 10am to 4pm.

Hurst Green Evangelical Church is offering online Sunday worship, prayer meetings and Bible studies during lockdown. These are open to all and if you would like to be part of these times together, please contact Pastor@hgec.org.uk.

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

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FAITH & LIFE

Lent Talks 2021 on Zoom

A CHANCE TO LISTEN, REFLECT AND DISCUSS

Wednesday
10 March
11am & 7.30pm
Feeling the Passion
Through Renaissance Art
Frances Withers

Wednesday
24 March
11am & 7.30pm
Genetics and Medicine:
For Better or for Worse?
Mary Seller

*The talks will last approx 45 minutes,
followed by questions and discussion
Come and go as you please!*

For more information and to obtain the
Zoom link, contact office@stjhurstgreen.co.uk.

Donations to the Bishop's Lent Call
(details below) welcome, but not essential

Bishop Christopher's Lent Call 2021

Each Lent since 1986, successive Bishops of Southwark have called the parishes of the Diocese to a time of prayer and contemplation, through the Lent Call. The theme for this year is food insecurity, and focuses on the work of food banks in our Diocese and food insecurity in places where we, as a Diocese, have strong links: Zimbabwe and the Holy Land. Each week of Lent there will be a focus on food insecurity in these troubled places where many of our brothers and sisters find it hard to ensure that their families are fed.

For many in our communities and Link Dioceses, not having enough to eat is sadly and appallingly now a regular occurrence. I urge you all to pray for those in these situations and to consider prayerfully what you can give to help to support them - Bishop Christopher
More info at: southwark.anglican.org/about-us/what/the-bishop-of-southwarks-lent-call/

The Challenge of Face Masks for those with Hearing Loss

Face masks, shields, social distancing and plastic barriers as seen at checkout tills in supermarkets muffle or reduce sound, but they are there to protect us during the pandemic. Face masks can also make people with hearing loss feel isolated and anxious, especially for individuals who very much rely on lip reading. By now, nearly all of us, even those with normal hearing, have had to ask a person with a mask to repeat themselves or to speak up. So, how do we cope?

If you have hearing loss, asking someone to speak up may not help. Louder speech bordering on shouting can actually hurt your ears, so instead, it is helpful to know how to adjust hearing aids for noisy environments like supermarkets. If you wear behind-the-ear hearing aids, you may encounter problems trying to wear a mask - basically, everything tends to fall off! Wearing glasses adds to the 'hassle' mix, so try and check everything is comfortably in place before setting off. Face mask extenders are a great way to get a snug fit without dislodging hearing aids and glasses. These little plastic or fabric devices can be attached to the face mask straps across the back of the head, instead of resting over the ear.



To improve communication if you have a hearing loss, try the following tips:

- Acknowledge that the situation will be tricky, but you will get there. Try to feel confident and then you will cope more easily.
- Firstly, ask the person if they can hear you too. Remember everybody has a few difficulties at the moment, especially in a noisy environment.
- Think what you need to ask/say beforehand and speak slowly and clearly.
- If you need to tell someone you have hearing loss, think of a phrase that might help, e.g. 'I wear hearing aids; please can you speak a bit more slowly? That really helps me to understand you.'
- Or: 'I am quite deaf; please can you lower your mask so I can lip-read?'
- When speaking to someone with hearing loss, speak slowly and clearly. Do not shout or walk away while speaking.
- If you are not understood, try to rephrase what you said with different words. Gestures and body language all help, and there is always pen and paper or apps for 'speech to text' such as Google Live Transcribe for mobile phones.
- For doctors or hospital appointments, you can request support according to need and always get the information in writing.

Finally, do smile! I think we have all learnt how to recognise when someone is smiling even from behind their face mask. *Helen Akers*



Wonderful Wellies

It is probably fair to say we have an excess of winter water at the moment and those of us who enjoy walking, running or cycling locally, will have had to navigate several challenging situations.

As someone who regularly walks in walking boots, I was very sceptical about walking in wellies. However, I had a new pair for my birthday in January and they have had so much use! I thought they would be tricky to walk in compared with walking boots but in case you didn't know, they have come on a long way. I used to have wellies from Woolworths which were

shaped like the letter 'L'. They didn't fit that well and if you walked in squishy mud they got sucked off your feet and were left behind. Not a great outcome for anyone, but especially for me with a preference to stay dry and warm at all times. But things have changed and these days wellies fit well and feel comfy on long walks and even stay on. This means I can go in all the puddles I find and I also try to keep them looking like new on every walk. I don't like coming home muddy so I like to seek out the perfect puddle. What is the perfect puddle you may ponder? For me, it is filled to the brim with clean rainwater, has a gravel base and is deep enough to enable a good wriggle around in. If you share my level of fixation of such watery matters you might like to get a pair too. *Debbie Gilbert*



Garden Birds in Winter

I am sure that, as we have been in lockdown since the beginning of the year, some of us have been noticing the birds and other wildlife as we take our daily exercise in our lovely local area. Some people are not able to do that, though, especially in the winter weather. Many local residents have probably therefore taken extra enjoyment from the birds in their garden. We won't have been doing much actual gardening but some of the birds have been doing it for us, tossing leaves and other debris around and disturbing the soil while they hunt for what little food may be around.

If you have a bird feeder in a place you can easily see from your armchair you can expect to see a variety of small birds there, such as blue tits, great tits, coal tits, house sparrows, chaffinches, greenfinches and perhaps great spotted woodpeckers, nuthatches and long-tailed tits if you are lucky. On the ground or perched on branches will be robins, blackbirds, song thrushes, magpies, dunnocks, woodpigeons and collared doves. I have also recently had regular visits from pheasants which are happy to Hoover up seeds dropped from the feeder by the smaller birds. It may surprise you to know that some of 'our' blackbirds and robins are actually winter visitors from other parts of Europe where it is much colder than here. If you are particularly lucky you may have a visit from what we call 'winter thrushes' - the beautiful redwing or (less likely in a garden) a fieldfare. These are more likely to come in very cold, snowy weather like we had recently as they find it difficult to find food elsewhere. These days you may well also see the odd red kite or buzzard flying over as they are becoming more common in our area.

You will definitely see more garden birds if you feed them. Peanuts, mixed seeds, sunflower hearts and fat balls are, of course, favourites. I also love to see robins, blackbirds and the occasional pied wagtail on my patio where I scatter dried mealworms for them. And, very important, don't forget to make sure there is water available for them to drink (not frozen solid!). Happy armchair birdwatching! *Barbara Richards*

Litter Angels

In June 2019 I saw a poem in Hurst Green News written by Sue Fox about Tandridge Council's Litter Angel scheme. I get fed up, as I'm sure lots of you do, when I see the amount of rubbish that is dumped around Hurst Green, so I decided to follow up and join the scheme by making one simple call to the Council.

A supply of bags, litter grabber and hi-viz vest were duly delivered to my home and since then I have been going out on litter picking expeditions in my local area on a regular basis. The majority of dumped litter is cans and plastic or glass bottles, which can all be recycled, so good for the environment as well. Apart from benefiting the local area, litter picking makes a walk more worthwhile because it gives a sense of doing something useful for the local community.

Especially during the recent lockdowns with more people walking the local streets, it is surprising how many have commented when passing that it's a great thing to do and how much they appreciate it. I'm tempted to say, and sometimes do say, 'it's a Council run scheme and more volunteers are always welcome'. (Call 01883 722000 or e-mail customerservices@tandridge.gov.uk.)

So when I saw the Hurst Green News Compiler's request for short articles of local interest I decided to write a reminder of the existence of the Litter Angel scheme. It's an activity that can be done as a group or on an individual basis and is truly rewarding.

Hurst Green Litter Angel

PARISH REGISTERS

Funerals

Our sympathy goes to all their relatives and friends:

27 January	Leslie Blunden
2 February	Raymond Gregory
10 February	Elsie Foster
16 February	Ivan Geal
27 February	John Pope

St John's Book of Remembrance

To have a name entered, please email office@stjhurstgreen.co.uk

A Wildlife Garden (Part 1)

Driving down from Durham on a cold December night in 1979, David and I wondered what our new house would be like - a tied cottage that went with my husband's job. We were so pleased to have a house with two indoor toilets, after a small flat with a 'nettie' in the yard that froze up in winter! But the thing that pleased us most was a very large garden.

Within months our garden was full of vegetables, hens and Springer spaniels. David came back from the family farm with a very handsome and friendly cockerel we called George, and four hens we named Bidy, Edna, Mavis and Brownie. Gradually the flock increased to 25, mainly little 'ginger jobs' who were superb layers - we had a waiting list of customers!

Over the years our animal family increased because we gave a home to unwanted animals: two Aylesbury ducks, two rabbits, a tortoise and five Spaniels, although not at the same time! We never needed to use insecticides to protect our vegetables as our hens cleared the pests. Their favourite place to have a dust bath was in the courgette plants.

One permanent fixture in the garden was a Bramley apple tree which I know for a fact was planted on 3 September 1939. It survived the Great Storm of 1987 and still produces a magnificent display of blossom and lots of apples. Nothing stays the same for ever - we lost our hens to a fox who got into the henhouse through a tiny gap; we never replaced them.

Suzanne Hill, Old Oxted



Hurst Green Litter Angels

I would like to take this opportunity and outlet to express my gratitude for the great work that the Hurst Green 'Litter Angels' do. At a time when more than ever, people are outside enjoying the lovely countryside that we are fortunate enough to reside in, they are out in all weathers picking up rubbish making the village a nicer, cleaner and safer place to be out in.

It is unfortunate that in these times when it feels like hygiene should be uppermost in people's minds that these litter angels are needed now more than ever. It would be nicer for them, and everyone else too, if there was a decreased need for their service but this is only possible if people all contributed to disposing of their waste responsibly.

So please next time you are out for a walk, remember how much work it takes to keep our countryside beautiful. Please keep our village tidy. *Donna Carman*

East Surrey Walkers

Restrictions in place at the time of writing still preclude ESW from implementing our walks programme. Please see our website for updates www.eastsurreywalkers.org.uk.



ESW operates within the Ramblers Association, comprising some 500 local walking groups and 107,000 members. Walking in the countryside became popular during the 19th century, offering, for many people living in towns and cities, a welcome escape from pollution and hard working lives. Landowners began to restrict and close access using the Enclosure Movement. From the mid-nineteenth century to the 1930s, walking clubs and groups started to form and campaign for walkers' rights and in 1931, walkers from all over Britain

joined to create the National Council of Ramblers Federations. The following year, 400 walkers took part in a 'mass trespass' at Kinder Scout which became a landmark event in progressing rights and access to land.

The Ramblers Association was officially created on 1 January 1935 and over the years has grown significantly, continuing to campaign and to promote walking as an easy, accessible form of exercise. *Stephen Hanks, (ESW Publicity Officer)*



BARN BAKES - Calling all cake makers in the area!

If you have the time to bake a cake and bring it to the Barn Theatre (car park), Oxted on Saturdays between 12noon and 1pm, it will wing its way to the staff of a COVID ward or NHS COVID worker shortly after. Last week we collected 70+ cakes which went to St George's Hospital but word has got out and in future they will be going to St George's, Kingston and East Surrey Hospitals, Godstone Ambulance Station and the District Nursing Service that covers the Oxted, Godstone and Lingfield areas.

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