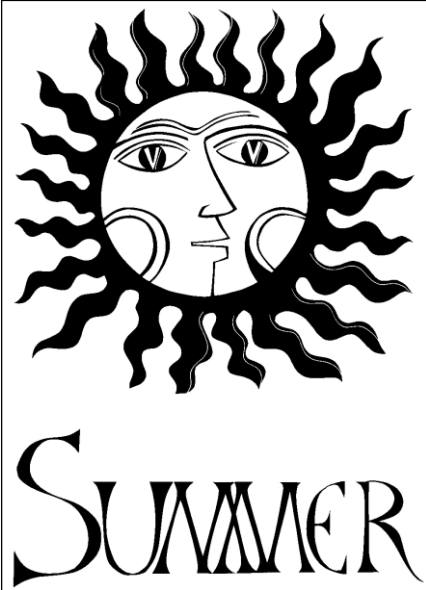


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THE NEW NORMAL

The Church closed in mid-March, due to the general lockdown. We reopened for public worship on July 12th. Daily mass hadn't ceased: it continued, in clergy homes, via video-link. People were able to see and hear mass via a video link-but not receive Holy Communion.

July 12th wasn't just a case of opening the doors and taking up where we left off! Normal worship IN CHURCH is very different from that prior to lockdown. A detailed risk assessment had to be worked out before we opened any doors.

The first **big** difference is that to attend the main 9.30am Sunday Mass you have to **reserve a 'place'** [one of thirty] for yourself, or as a couple/'bubble'. Larger groups can be accommodated in a very limited number of 'places'. Reservation is required because half of the seating is closed off so that worshippers can be socially distanced. Optional facemasks become compulsory from August 8th. You don't need to reserve for the resumed 6.30 pm evening mass [nor for weekday masses] as, often, very few attend.

What else is different in the new normal? One **must** sanitise hands on entry, **wait** to be escorted to a place (no more 'pick your own as near the back!') This prevents people passing each other. Church is filled in a very particular way. Also, there are no servers, no incense, no singing – still

regarded as too risky in an enclosed environment. The new 'normal' has nothing of the 'once normal' about it at all.

The most unusual aspect is Holy Communion itself. The Chalice is restricted to the celebrant – who constantly sanitises his hands throughout the service. He receives both the Body and Blood of the Lord as usual – then concludes the mass. The Body of the Lord is then carried to the Font area. Row by row, in strict order, flowing one-way through the building, the people sanitise their hands, lower any face covering, stretch out their hands over a barrier, and receive the Host. Note - receiving is NOT, and never has been, obligatory. After this they leave immediately, sanitising hands and re-masking if they wish. Any seating that has been used is then sanitised. The same pattern also applies at weekdays except people reach out over the Lady altar and then leave.

Finally, the new norm is that most masses, except Sunday 9.30 am, will be Zoomed - four weekdays at 10 am; Tuesday and Thursday 6.30 pm. We can provide guidance, perhaps eventually a visitor, to help set it up for those who are housebound or continuing to shield. This will be our new 'normal' in our new seemingly abnormal world.

Please, remain cautious, alert and take all necessary care.

Father James

The Bridge

Monthly Magazine of the Parish of Higham (Ss. John & Mary) with Merston

S.JOHN'S PARISH CHURCH - WORSHIP

Most MASSES also provided via Zoom

Monday, Wednesday, Friday & Saturday	MORNINGS	10.00 am
Tuesday and Thursday	EVENINGS	6.30 pm
Sunday Mass in Church only	MORNING	9.30 am
Contact F James to reserve your place		
Zoom only		11.00 am
Sunday evening Mass (Fr Peter on St John's Facebook)	EVENING	6.30 pm

Private Prayer daily 9 am -6 pm times published in the Bulletin each week – available on the Homepage of the website.

Please contact Father James or Father Peter if you wish to join us

NO Marriages, Banns of Marriage, Baptisms, Confessions, Confirmations, Mass, Home Communion nor Anointing of the Sick cannot take place in the Church building or in people's homes until further notice

Emergency Baptisms / Confession / Anointing Contact Fr. James

FUNERALS at the Crematorium or a Graveside service are STILL being offered .

In an emergency please contact him at any time or, if he is not available, one of the Churchwardens (details below).



PARISH The Rev'd. Canon James F. Southward

PRIEST The Vicarage, Hermitage Rd Higham, Kent, ME3 7NE.

Telephone 01634-717360 **Email** saintjohn.higham@yahoo.co.uk

PLEASE NOTE: FATHER JAMES IS NOT NORMALLY AVAILABLE ON THURSDAY

HON ASST PRIEST FATHER PETER BOLTON 17 HERMITAGE ROAD, HIGHAM TEL: 01474 822726

THE

Mrs Teresa Joblin Hill Cottage Telegraph Hill, Higham

Tel: 01474-823186

CHURCHWARDENS

Mrs Helen Walker 11 S. John's Road, Higham

* Tel: 01474-396569

CHURCH HALL BOOKINGS

THE HALL IS NOT CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

* Evening calls only on these numbers please

August 2020 at S. John's, Higham

Calendar and Mass Intentions

SUNDAY: 10am, 11am [Zoom] 6.30pm [on Church FACEBOOK]
 Most weekdays Mass at 10am - except Tue & Thur at 6.30pm.

DAY	DATE	CELEBRATION	INTENTION
Sat	1st	S.Alphonsus Liguori <i>Bishop, teacher</i>	(m) Preaching/Teaching Orders
SUN	2nd	18th ORDINARY SUNDAY	(+) THE PARISH
Mon	3rd	Feria <i>Ord. Week 18</i>	The poor and needy
Tue	4th	S.John Vianney <i>Priest</i>	(m) Parish Priests
Wed	5th	Dedication of S.Mary Major	(m) All Marian Shrines
Th	6th	The Transfiguration of the Lord	(f) Peace in this world
Fri	7th	Feria <i>mass of the Sacred Heart</i>	(v) International Aid Workers
Sat	8th	S.Dominic <i>Priest</i>	(m) ARCIC Discussions
SUN	9th	19th ORDINARY SUNDAY	(+) THE PARISH
Mon	10th	S.Lawrence <i>Martyr, deacon</i>	(f) The suffering Church
Tue	11th	S.Clare of Assisi <i>Religious</i>	(m) The Enclosed Orders
Wed	12th	Feria <i>Ord. Week 19</i>	Politicians
Th	13th	Feria	Additional Curates Soc.
Fri	14th	S.Maximilian Kolbe; <i>martyr</i>	(m) Prisoners of war
Sat	15th	Feria <i>Monthly requiem</i>	(v) + RIPs & July anniversaries
SUN	16TH	THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY	9.30AM (S+) 6.30PM THE PARISH WALSINGHAM
Mon	17th	Feria <i>Ord. Week 20</i>	Wealthy Christians
Tue	18th	Feria	Converts from other faiths
Wed	19th	Feria	The Unemployed
Th	20th	S.Bernard <i>Abbot, teacher</i>	(m) Christian unity
Fri	21st	S.Pius X <i>Pope, teacher</i>	(m) All in Liturgical Ministries
Sat	22nd	The Queenship of our Lady	(m) HM the Queen
SUN	23RD	21st ORDINARY SUNDAY	(+) THE PARISH
Mon	24th	S.Bartholomew <i>Apostle</i>	(f) Old Cicestrians
Tue	25th	Feria <i>Ord. Week 21</i>	The Holy Land
Wed	26th	Feria	The Church of England
Th.	27th	S.Monica <i>matron</i>	(m) Christian parents
Fri	28th	S.Augustine of Hippo <i>bishop, teacher</i>	(m) Christians under Islam
Sat	29th	Beheading of S.John Baptist	(m) Victims of injustice
SUN	30TH	22ND ORDINARY SUNDAY	(+) THE PARISH
M	31st	S.Aiden <i>bishop,</i> and the Lindisfarne Saints <i>missionaries</i>	(m) Christian Missionaries

KEY: (+) Holy Day of Obligation; (S) Solemnity; (f) Feast; (m) Memoria (V) votive

September 2020 at S.John's, Higham

Calendar and Mass Intentions

SUNDAY: 10am, 11am [Zoom] 6.30pm [on Church FACEBOOK]
 Most weekdays Mass at 10am - except Tue & Thur at 6.30pm.

DAY	DATE	CELEBRATION		INTENTION
TUE	1st	S.GILES		(S) THE PARISH
		<i>Patron Saint of Merston</i>	10am 6.30pm	Merston residents
Wed	2nd	Feria	<i>Ord. Week 22</i>	The sick & housebound
Th.	3rd	S.Gregory	<i>the Great Pope, teacher</i>	(f) The Pope
Fri	4th	Feria	<i>OF THE SACRED HEART</i>	(v) Christian charity
Sat	5th	Feria		The hungry & needy
SUN	6TH	23RD ORDINARY SUNDAY		(+) THE PARISH
Mon	7th	Feria	<i>Ord. Week 23</i>	Higham Parish Councillors
Tue	8th	Nativity of Our Lady		(f) The Marian Societies
Wed	9th	Feria		Justice for the world's poor
Th	10th	Feria		Additional Curates Society
Fri	11th	Feria		The blind / sight impaired
Sat	12th	Feria	<i>mass of requiem</i>	(v) +RIP's & Anniversaries
SUN	13th	24TH ORDINARY SUNDAY		(+) THE PARISH
Mon	14th	Holy Cross Day		(f) Society of the Holy Cross
Tue	15th	Our Lady of Sorrows		(m) The PCC
Wed	16th	Ss. Cornelius & Cyprian	<i>martyrs</i>	The suffering church
Th	17th	Feria	<i>Ord. Week 24</i>	The diocese
Fri	18th	Feria		The 'disturbed'
Sat	19th	S.Theodore of Tarsus	<i>Archbishop</i>	(m) The Archbishop
SUN	20TH	25TH ORDINARY SUNDAY		(+) THE PARISH
		<i>Harvest Thanksgiving Sunday</i>		
Mon	21st	S.Matthew	<i>Apostle, Evangelist</i>	(f) The Church Army
Tue	22nd	Feria	<i>Ord. Week 25</i>	Young Homeless people
Wed	23rd *	S.Padre Pio	<i>priest, mystic</i>	(m) orthodox ordinands
Th	24th	Our Lady of Walsingham		(m) Walsingham
Fri.	25th *	Feria		orthodox vocations
Sat	26th *	Feria		Fr. Simon Walker
SUN	27TH	26TH ORDINARY SUNDAY		(+) THE PARISH
Mon	28th	Feria	<i>Ord. Week 26</i>	The Samaritans charity
Tue	29th	Ss. Michael, Gabriel	<i>Archangels</i>	(f) * Our Church Wardens and Church Officers
Wed	30th	S.Jerome	<i>priest, teacher</i>	(m) Bible Study Groups

KEY: (+) Holy Day of Obligation; (S) Solemnity; (f) Feast; (m) Memoria (v) Votive; * Ember Day

THE AUGUST REQUIEM

is on Saturday 15th August 2020 at 10AM

*The recently departed (and those named below) will be prayed for at this Mass.
Those named below are remembered on the Sunday before and the actual date itself.*

3 rd	Susan Snell	21 st	Greta Joyce Irene Booth
5 th	Ian Matthews		Mary Esther Fallon
7 th	Cecilia Veronica Hunt	22 nd	Percy William Lunn
	John Shulver	24 th	Christopher Hopson Hill
	<u>Frederick George Figg</u>	26 th	Agnes Green
9 th	William Blomeley Nuttall		Douglas John Martin
10 th	'Bill' (Charles Wm) Coulson	27 th	Barbara Mary Gilchrist
	Anne Katherine Mary Kingston		Andrew Claridge
11 th	Olive Ruth Baker		David Johnathan Northeast
	Robert Walton		'Peta' (Peggy Diana) Whitebread
	Eileen Earl	29 th	Cheryl Faith Hoad
12 th	Frederick Davis	30 th	Clare Austen <i>Child</i>
15 th	'Bill' (George Wm) Cole		Brian Ralph Sutton <i>PRIEST</i>
16 th	Leonard Arthur Grain		Barbara Jessica May Moore
19 th	Eileen Dorothy Farrant		Bethan Jane Wale <i>Child</i>
20 th	Frances Beatrice Plummer	31 st	Audrey Elizabeth Mills
	Augustus Horace Bassam		

PLEASE NOTE: Except for previous Incumbents of this Parish
(and where it is known that people attend this mass to pray for someone)
the names of those deceased more than 20 years have been removed from the list.
However, should someone attend this requiem mass AND request the inclusion
of other names these will be included in the list of those for whom we pray.

*Dying you destroyed our death.
Rising you restored our life.
Lord Jesus, come in glory.*

THE SEPTEMBER REQUIEM

is on SATURDAY 12th September 2020 at 10AM

*The recently departed (and those named below) will be prayed for at this Mass.
Those named below are remembered on the Sunday before and the actual date itself.*

1 st Jack Dockrell	Terence Frederick Charles Foster
Albert Chinery	18 th Mary Elizabeth (Molly) Hills
3 rd Margaret Kathleen Humphrey	James Albert Ward
5 th Betty Pamela Weller	19 th Karen Smith <i>child</i>
6 th Joan Patricia Walton	Minnie Annie Reader
7 th Horace Glazier	20 th George Henry (Bill) Clare
9 th George Edward Hance	21 st Pamela Ford
11 th Ernest Graffin	22 nd Lilian Hill
Margaret Benfield	23 rd Brian John Masters <i>BISHOP</i>
13 th John Ivor Jeffrey Hollis	24 th Douglas William Dicks
Frederick Albert Humphrey	Olive McAllister
14 th Charles Thomas Gaskell <i>BISHOP</i>	26 th George Henry Smith
Richard <u>David</u> Say <i>BISHOP</i>	Maurice George Walden Rogers <i>PRIEST</i>
16 th Keith Charles Pearce	28 th Charles Edward Benfield
17 th Florence Dora Petrie	Patricia Martha Stickells

PLEASE NOTE: Except for previous Incumbents * of this Parish
(or where it is known that someone will attend this mass to pray for particular persons)
the names of those deceased for more than 20 years are removed from the annual list.

However, should someone attend this requiem mass AND request the inclusion
of additional names these will be included in the list of those for whom we pray.

*Lord by your Cross and Resurrection
you have set us free.
You are the Saviour of the world!*

~ DAILY BIBLE READINGS ~

ONLY A FEW MINUTES EACH DAY and following the readings used at the Daily Mass in Church - even if you can't be there. Choose one or both readings. There are three readings assigned for Sundays and special holy days.

Ordinary Time - Week 17 *Aug 1st*
S Leviticus 25.1,8-17 Matt. 14.1-12

18TH ORDINARY SUNDAY **AUG 2ND**
Isaiah 55.1-3
Romans 8.35,37-39
Matthew 14.13-21

M Numbers 11.4-15 Matt. 14.22-36
T Numbers 12.1-13 Matt. 15.
W Numbers 13.1-2, 13.25-14.1, 14.26-29, 34-35 Matthew 15.21-28

Th Transfiguration of the Lord Aug. 6th
Daniel 7.9-10.13-14 or 2 Peter 1.16-19
Matthew 17.1-9

F Deuteronomy 4.32-40 Matt.16.24-28
S Deuteronomy 6.4-13 Matt. 17.14-20

19TH ORDINARY SUNDAY **AUG 9TH**
1 Kings 19.9, 11-13
Romans 9.1-5
Matthew 14.22-33

M **S.Lawrence** **Aug 10th**
2 Corinthians 9.6-10 John 12.24-26
T Deuter. 31.1-8 Matt. 18.1-5,10-14
W Deuter. 34.1-12 Matt. 18.15-20
Th Joshua 3.7-11,13-17 Matt. 18.21-19.1
F Joshua 24.1-13 Matt. 19.3-12
S Joshua 24.14-29 Matt. 19.13-15

SUNDAY - THE ASSUMPTION **AUG 16TH**
Revelation 11.19 & 12.1-6,10
1 Corinthians 15.20-26
Luke 1.39-56

Ordinary Time - Week 20
M Judges 2.11-19 Matt. 19.16-22
T Judges 6.11-24 Matt. 19.23-30
W Judges 9.6-15 Matt. 20.1-16
Th Judges 11.29-39 Matt.22.1-14
F Ruth 1.1-6,14-16,22 Matt. 22.34-40
S Ruth 2.1-3,8-11; Matt. 23.1-12 & 4.13-17

21ST ORDINARY SUNDAY **AUG 23RD**
Isaiah 22.19-23
Romans 11.33-36
Matthew 16.13-20

M **S. Bartholomew** **Aug. 24th**
Revelation 21.9-14 John 1.45-51
T 1 Thessalonians 2.1-8 Matt. 23.23-26
W 1 Thessal 2.9-13 Matt. 23.27-32
Th 1 Thessal 3.7-13 Matt. 24.42-51
F 1 Thessalonians 4.1-8 Matt. 25.1-3
S *Beheading of S.John Baptist* Aug. 29th
Jeremiah 1.17-19 Mark 6.17-29

22ND ORDINARY SUNDAY **AUG 30TH**
Jeremiah 20.7-9
Romans 12.1-2
Matthew 16.21-27
M 1 Thess. 4.13-18 Luke 4.16-30

NB: August 15th is normally observed as the Solemnity & Holy Day of Obligation (H.D.O.) of **THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY.** Any H.D.O. which fall on a Saturday of Monday are moved to the nearest Sunday

End by using the Sunday Bulletin 'Collect' or this 'Prayer after Reading Scripture'

Lord God, we thank you for the gift of your holy word.

May it be a lantern to our feet, a light to our paths, and a strength in our lives.

Take us and use us to love and serve others in the power of the Holy Spirit, and in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

~ DAILY BIBLE READINGS ~

ONLY A FEW MINUTES EACH DAY and following the readings used at the Daily Mass in Church - even if you can't be there. Choose one or both readings.
There are three readings assigned for Sundays and special holy days.

T S.GILES; Patron of Merston SEP.1st

Genesis 12.1-4
1 Corinthians 1.26-31
Mark 10.17-30

Week 22

W 1 Corinthians 3.1-9 Luke 4.38-44
T **S.GREGORY THE GT** **Sep. 3rd**
 2 Thessalonians 2.2-8 Matt 16.13-19
F 1 Corinthians 4.1-5 Luke 5.33-39
S 1 Corinthians 4.6-15 Luke 6.1-5

SUNDAY - WEEK 23 SEP. 6th

Ezekiel 33. 7-9
Romans 13.8-10
Matthew 18. 15-20

M 1 Corinthians 5.1-8 Luke 6.6-11

T NATIVITY OF OUR LADY Sep. 8th

Micah 5.1-4 Matthew 1.1-23

W 1 Corinthians 7.25-31 Luke 6.29-26

Th 1 Corinths 8.1-7,11-13 Luke 6.27-38

F 1 Corinths 9.16-19,22-27 Lk 6.39-42

S 1 Corinths 10.14-22 Luke 6.43-49

SUNDAY - WEEK 24 SEP. 13th

Ecclesiasticus 27.30-28.7
Romans 14.7-9
Matthew 18. 21-35

M HOLY CROSS DAY Sep. 14th

Numbers 21.4-9 or Philippians 2.6-11
John 3.13-17

T Our Lady of Sorrows Sep. 15th

Hebrews 5.7-9 John 19.25-27
Or Luke 2. 33-35

W 1 Cor. 12.31b -13.13 Luke 7.31-35

Th 1 Corinthians 15.1-11 Luke 7.36-50

F 1 Corinthians 15.12-20 Luke 8.1-3

S 1 Cor. 15.35-37, 42-49 Luke 8.4-15

SUNDAY - WEEK 25 SEP 20th

Isaiah 55. 6-9
Philippians 1.20-27
Matthew 20.1-6

M S.MATTHEW Sep. 21st

Ephesians 4.1-13 Matthew 9.9-13

T Proverbs 21.1-6, 10-13 Luke 8.19-21

W Proverbs 30.5-9 Luke 9.1-6

Th Ecclesiastes 1.2-11 Luke 9.7-9

F Ecclesiastes 3.1-11 Luke 9.18-22

S Ecclesiastes 11.9-12.8 Luke 9.43-45

SUNDAY - WEEK 26 SEP. 27th

Ezekiel 18. 25-28
Philippians 2. 1-11
Matthew 21.28-32

M Job 1.6-22 Luke 9.46-50

T Ss. MICHAEL, GABRIEL Sep. 29th

and RAPHAEL; Archangels

Daniel 7. 9-14 John 1.47-51

W Job 9.1-12, 14-16 Luke 9.57-62

End by using the Sunday Bulletin 'Collect' or this 'Prayer after Reading Scripture'

Blessed Lord, who caused holy Scripture to be written for our learning:

Help us so to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest it that, through patience and the comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the hope of eternal life,

Given to us in our Saviour Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

A Holy Day of Obligation

THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY

Sunday 16th August 2020

This Solemnity celebrates the
the most important feast of
Mary, the Mother of God,
principal patron saint of
Higham since the 8th Century

SOLEMN MASS
9.30AM

*Holy Communion can be brought
to the sick/housebound upon request*

**PLEASE NOTE: SAID MASS
IS ALSO AVAILABLE AT 6.30pm**



The Solemnity of S. Giles Day

Patron Saint of Merston
and Co-Patron of the whole Parish

TUESDAY 1st September 2020

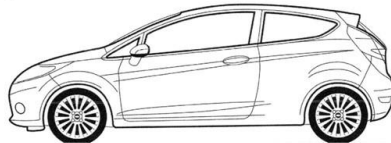
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HIGHAM MEMORIAL HALL

'HIGHAM MEMORIAL HALL IS CLOSING---' This really caught peoples' attention!! As promised, for those interested in carrying on the running of the Memorial Hall we are holding a **Public Meeting to attract Trustees on Saturday September 19th at 2pm** at which we will present the current situation and, hopefully, find a solution to the continued running of the hall.

During these difficult times we have not been idle. The heating system, installed in the 1980's, has been completely renovated ready for another 40+ years. All the vegetation around the car park will be given a cut. Various painting and renovation jobs have been attended to. The flat roof has been patch repaired. [too big a cost to undertake without a grant] More anti-vandal paint installed to deter unauthorised climbing onto the roof to collect footballs. [The Hall car park is private property and we cannot afford to keep suffering the damage being caused by kids footballing, there is a big field for that!! This year we had the police involved because of the damage caused].

COVID 19- As life is beginning to get back to a 'norm' we are getting the hall facilities prepared for a new way of operating. As prescribed by 'the powers that be'; there will be one way systems operating in the hall; personal hand washing and sanitisation plus cleaning/sanitisation before and after each use and of course, social distancing. We expect all hirers to observe these requests so that we can stay safe from this dreadful bug. We will be notifying all groups of a familiarisation meeting before we open as things in the hall are not what they were!

LEASE- Unfortunately, we are still waiting for Higham Parish Council to issue the renewal of our lease. It is 7 months since we submitted the draft to the Parish Council for legalising, we can then try for advantageous grants.

BACK IN CHURCH

Can you even remember what you gave up for Lent?

List of unlikely choices:

1. Seeing family;
2. Shopping without looking like Dick Turpin;
3. Any semblance of reality; and,
4. Going to Church for a third of a year.

As the Church building reopened for public worship I was made to think of the hymn lyrics:

*We sing for you a morning hymn
To end the silence of the night*

Ok, it is not a perfect fit, we aren't singing yet (or even burning incense - don't tell Malachi) and this long night is not quite over, but the silence has been broken!

What a joy it is to see one another again, and to meet in our church that is our share of sacred ground. How good is it to say the responses together without a Corporal Jones-like echo? Oh, and then there is the feeding on the body of Christ, the food of our souls.

They say that cleanliness is next to godliness, in which case we are pretty close. There is enough hand sanitiser to have ensured clinical hygiene at the feeding of the five thousand. Everyone is socially distanced through the intricate and, dare I say it, artistic use of sealing-off ribbons and a one-way system that would make a town planner proud.

Truth time: there is a sense of it being incomplete with only 30 places available for our brothers and sisters in Christ; and the necessary and well thought through risk mitigations seem to form a psychological barrier between us. But being back in Church is some of the best news since this whole Coronavirus showed its ugly and deadly head. God is ever-present and we are on our way back but until it is defeated - stay safe.

Chris Hanson

HARVEST THANKSGIVING

will be within the 9.30am Parish Mass

ON SUNDAY 20TH SEPTEMBER



For many years now we have collected goods at harvest-time such as tinned foods, packet foods, toiletries, root vegetables to be used by S.John's House of Mercy (in Gravesend) which meets the needs of local young and homeless people in our area.

Please give again and help make our harvest thanksgiving both a genuine and a generous celebration! If you can't be at the Sunday service do leave your offerings at the back of Church on Friday or Saturday. **NO SOFT FRUITS OR SOFT VEGETABLES PLEASE** as they just get squashed during transport to Gravesend. Thank You.

SOME HARVEST THANKSGIVING THOUGHTS

A Blast from the Past

EXTRACT FROM 'A SERMON ON CHARITY' by S.Basil the Great

One should be like the earth and bear fruit; one should not let inanimate matter appear to surpass you. The earth bears crops for your benefit, not for its own, but when you give to the poor, you are bearing fruit which you will gather in for yourself, since the reward for good deeds goes to those who perform them. Give to the hungry, and what you give becomes yours, and indeed it returns to you with interest. As the sower profits from wheat that falls onto the ground, so will you profit greatly in the world to come from the bread that you place before a hungry person. Your 'husbandry' must be the sowing of heavenly seed: '*Sow integrity for yourselves*', says Scripture.

You are going to leave your money behind you whether you wish to or not. On the other hand, you will take with you to the Lord the honour you have won through good works. In the presence of the Universal Judge, all the people will surround you, acclaim you as a public benefactor, and tell of your generosity and kindness.

If you are miserly with your wealth, how can you expect any honour? Your reward for the right use of the things of this world will be everlasting glory, a crown of righteousness, and the kingdom of heaven; God will welcome you, the angels will praise you, all who have existed since the world began will call you 'blessed'. Do you care nothing for these things, and spurn the hopes that lie in the future for the sake of your present enjoyment? Come then, distribute your wealth freely, give generously to those who are in need. Earn for yourself the psalmist's praise: '*He gave freely to the poor; his righteousness will endure for ever.*'

How grateful you should be to your own benefactor; how you should beam with joy at the honour of having other people come to your door, instead of being obliged to go to theirs! But are you are now ill-humoured and unapproachable; do you avoid meeting people, in case you might be forced to loosen your purse-strings even a little? Can you say only one thing: "I have nothing to give you. I am only a poor man."? A poor man you certainly are, destitute of all real riches; for you are poor in love, in generosity, in faith in God and hope of eternal happiness.

A LETTER FROM FATHER ANDREW

Dear Friends

Sometimes at the end of the day when I look back on the course of the day, I realise that I've been talking the whole day – talking to God in the various offices of the day, in the celebration of mass, to other people on the phone, on the computer, in the street, at meetings, to children at school, animals, shouting at people on the tv and finally, talking to myself! This has not been quite the same in the increased



silence of the lockdown, especially for people living on their own, but talking one way or another still occupies a large part of the day. It's very easy to hear other people talking and just wait until they finish, without paying too much attention, and then carry on talking oneself. It's happens to me all the time – sorry!

For all of us, it's important to listen as well as to talk. St Benedict, a theological student in late fifth century Rome said “the world is too noisy”. It was impossible for him to continue his search for knowledge of God amid all the hubbub of the city. He left for the silence of the empty hills in the south (He was soon joined by other students and he formed them into small communities – monasteries). What would he think of the noise of the world now?! An interesting side-effect of the present crisis and lockdown has been a quieter atmosphere – less cars and planes and people on the pavements. Most of us have had ‘greater silence’ imposed on us. We should learn from this. One of my favourite New Testament texts (from the Letter to the Hebrews) is “Let us listen for the voice of the Lord, and enter into his rest”. Reflecting on the infidelity of the Israelites in the wilderness after the

exodus, it's calling on the new Christians to listen attentively and obediently to the Word of God and thereby receive his promise of his kingdom.

I would like to share with you extracts from a recent article by Brother Keith Nelson, SSJE, of the Society of St John the Evangelist Monastery in Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA.



“I am listening more deeply, more intently, and with a greater sense of urgency, than I have ever listened. I am listening to the lonely cry out for human touch and the holy cry out for sacraments shared. I am listening to words of joy and lament from the masked mouths of strangers and friends alike... I am listening to slow-motion sounds of collapse as political maneuvers falter and fail. I am listening to ice melting beneath the paws of the polar bear. I am listening to the inhalation and exhalation of breath, rhythmically reminding me that every moment is precious, and none is a given. I am listening to the heart of God beneath it all.

Are you listening? I hear you, even as I type this, and I know that you are. Somehow, I hear *us*, gathered in *our* listening. It is the sound of a single heart learning, re-learning to listen to the Word, and to the world.

In such listening, St. Paul heard creation groaning “in eager longing for the revealing of the children of God.” In such listening, Elijah heard that “still, small voice” which was not to be heard in wind, earthquake, or fire. In such listening, Jesus heard the God he knew as Abba say, “This is my Beloved, in whom I am well pleased.” And he heard another call, to the darkness of Calvary.

If you're hearing what I'm hearing, maybe we're listening to the Church *becoming more*. In this place "within listening distance of the silence we call God" (R.S. Thomas) and within shouting distance of one another, we are finding something precious: a *deep church*. These are shouts of 'Why?' and 'How Long?' but also 'Thank You' and 'I'm Here for You' and 'Amen.' We've long stewarded this deep church in packets of seeds, but often planted them in seasonal gardens: a retreat here, a small group there, an afternoon of Sabbath rest. In this new place, we're learning a different way. In between the unmaking of one world and the gestation of another, stricken in conscience, overflowing with questions, and wrestling with demons, we're learning that spiritual practice, presence, and purpose are the seeds we need *to survive*.

Blessedly, history shows that these are the causes and conditions that make *saints*: Christians of depth. Moved by those pressures, we're doing our inner work because it is the work to be done. We're learning to pray one distracted word at a time, to meditate one distracted breath at a time, to measure our hours and days. We're speaking the truth of what truly matters to us and listening to others do the same because none of us have all the time in the world, and we know it. The powerful among us are learning to listen to the disempowered without defensiveness or pride. We're discovering how to abide like a planted seed in the darkness of impasse because our faith, our impossible "conviction of things not seen," tells us that seeds were made to grow. We can't go over or under or around the pain. And so, together, we are going *through* it, into the depths.

Jesus said, "Pay attention to how you listen." Let's keep listening to him, and to one another.

Brother Keith Nelson, SSJE (*I am grateful to the monastery for giving me permission to use fr Keith's article*)

We all pray and hope that the pandemic is moving towards its end in our country. It may be a long time before we are totally safe from its effects. God is loving and merciful in all things even though we cannot always perceive his ways. Beyond the terrible loss of life we will all have learnt something from the deprivation and fears that we have endured. Not only have we had to learn again our dependency on each other, we have also deepened our understanding of the indwelling presence of God. We seek him in listening and in stillness. In the workings of our minds he may seem far off and difficult to understand but to the listening ear he is always present.

With best wishes and constant prayer

fr Andrew

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To see the latest village news, Annual Parish Newsletters, What's On and Parish Council go to www.higham-kent-pc.gov.uk

If your group or society plans an event or meeting and you want more advertising, just let me know so that it can be added to the village website to spread the word. Club and society contact details are always needed to update and extend the online list of groups. If your society has a website, then we can list this as well and link back to you.

Higham is a buzzing, friendly village so lets share this feeling on our parish website!

Robert Gilby, Webmaster

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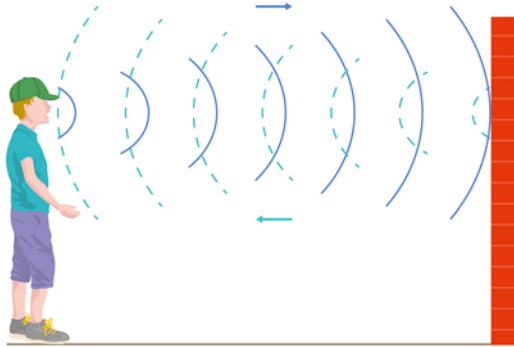
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References Available

Contact Pete on: 07704706306





Life is an Echo !

A father and his son were walking in the mountains. Suddenly, the son falls, hurts himself and screams: **AAAhhhhhhhhhhh !!!**"

To his surprise, he hears the voice repeating, somewhere in the mountain: **"AAAhhhhhhhhhhh !!!"**

Curious, he yells: **"Who are you?"**

He receives the answer: **"Who are you?"**

Angered at the response, he screams: **"Coward!"**

He receives the answer: **"Coward!"**

He looks to his father and asks: **"What's going on?"**

The father smiles and says: **"My son, pay attention."** And then he yells to the mountain: **"I admire you!"**

The voice answers: **"I admire you!"**

Again the man yells: **"You are a champion!"**

The voice answers: **"You are a champion!"**

The boy is surprised, but does not understand.

Then the father explains: **"People call this ECHO, but really this is LIFE. It gives you back everything you say or do. Our life is simply a reflection of our actions."**

If you want more love in the world, create more love in your heart. If you want more competence in your team, improve your competence. This relationship applies to everything, in all aspects of life; life will give you back everything you have given to it."

*** YOUR LIFE IS NOT A COINCIDENCE. IT'S A REFLECTION OF YOU!**

Author unknown

Source: Parish Pump

DON'T FORGET EASYFUNDRAISING

Don't forget that if you shop online for food, clothes, holidays – when you can! or gifts you will support St John's Church if you become a member of **Easyfundraising** since many businesses donate a set amount or percentage of your purchase values to a chosen cause.

Simply search for Easyfundraising, register your details and identify your cause. If you use a mobile device download the App, make your purchases through the app and the cause will benefit. On a computer you have already reached the right site when you became a member. Just bookmark or add the page to your favourites.

By the end of June 2020 over £606 plus Gift Aid had been donated until April 2019) at no cost to the members.

Full details of how to join, etc, are available by using the links on the home page of St John's Church website:
www.highamparishchurch.org.uk.

Why not give it a try?

Liz Croker
Easyfundraising Administrator
St John's Church

The graphic features the Easyfundraising logo at the top left, with the text 'easyfundraising.org.uk' and 'feel good shopping' below it. The main headline reads 'Help out when you check out' in large, bold, teal letters. Below the headline, there are several shopping-related icons: a green Argos shopping bag, a white Tesco shopping bag, a stack of books, a soccer ball, a John Lewis shopping box, an Amazon.co.uk shopping box, and an OSOS shopping box. A yellow AA logo is also present. At the bottom, the text 'Join, shop and raise here:' is displayed. Below this, it says 'As featured in:' followed by logos for 'the guardian', 'The Telegraph', 'Daily Mail', 'The INDEPENDENT', 'Evening Standard', and 'MAIL'.

Submitting Articles or Items to The Bridge

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33 Hermitage Road, Higham, Rochester, Kent, ME3 7DD
Tel 01474 822456

The Club is currently closed as we are following Government guidelines, we are hoping to open 4th July.

Please check our Club website or telephone the Club

Join our Website for up to the minute news on all events

www.highamvillageclub.co.uk

*The club has a hall which can be hired out for
Private functions to members and non-members.*

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www.highamvillageclub.co.uk

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Multiply

Noah opened up the ark and let all the animals out, telling them to "Go forth and multiply!" He began to close the great doors of the ark when he noticed that there were two snakes still sitting in a dark corner. Concerned, he said to them: "Didn't you hear me? You can go now. Go forth and multiply."

"We can't," said the snakes sadly. "We're adders."

What am I?

A teacher gave her young class a lesson on Zoom on the magnet and what it does. The next day in a short test, she included this question: "My full name has six letters. The first one is M. I am strong and attractive. I pick up lots of things. What am I?"

When the answers were sent in, the teacher was astonished to find that more than half her students had answered the question with the word: "Mother."

Body parts

A doctor in our village surgery often plays a game with his younger patients to put them at ease, and to test their knowledge of body parts. And so it was that one day, while pointing to my young son's ear, the doctor asked him solemnly, "Is this your nose?"

Alarmed, my son glanced over to me and said softly: "Mum, I think we'd better find a new doctor!"

Source: Parish Pump

SUMMER 2020 Donation Guide

The Summer collection dates are Saturday and Sundays 9 am to 6 pm
29th and 30th August, 26th and 27th September

PLEASE NOTE: FOR AUGUST/SEPTEMBER THE FOODBANK HAVE SPECIALLY REQUESTED THAT WE GIVE PRIORITY TO THE HIGHLIGHTED ITEMS BELOW

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Instant packets of cup of soup ✓ Tinned ham & corned beef ✓ Tinned potatoes & smash ✓ Meals in tins - ravioli, chilli con carne, curry ✓ Instant packets of noodles, pasta and rice ✓ Tinned rice pudding & custard ✓ Small bottles of squash | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cereal bars & crisps ✓ Small bottles of washing up liquid <p>Toiletries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Men & women's deodorant ✓ Bio laundry tablets |
|---|---|

Also required:

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|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meat pies • UHT whole and semi skimmed milk <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tin macaroni cheese • Tin spaghetti and sausages • Rice • tinned custard • Juice • Tinned vegetables • Instant packets of cous cous • Spreads – jam and peanut butter marmite <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetarian foods • Coffee, tea, hot chocolate, sugar. • Jars of pasta sauce • Cereals, sweet & chocolate biscuits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jars of pasta sauce • Cereals, sweet & chocolate biscuits • Tinned fruit, sponge puddings, <p>Cleaning and toiletries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household cleaners, spray polish • Toothpaste, toothbrushes, bars of soap • Ladies personal toiletries, toilet rolls • Nappies size 4 & 5 • Shaving foam/gel, body spray • Shampoo • Hand soap • Shower gel, |
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"Looks like no one was available to fill in for the vicar's annual holiday again."

"The world and all
that is in it belong



to the Lord, the
earth and all who
live on it are His."

Psalm 24:1