





KEEPING GONTAGT

The Benefice of Faversham

Volume 2, Issue 10

December 2021—January 2022

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Revd. Simon writes

This Christmas - step into the flow of God's generosity.

God's gift of Himself (the incarnation) in Jesus coming at Christmas is the gift we celebrate. A gift freely given. Yet a gift that is so often forgotten by a material world.

At Christmas we often try and measure the amount we spend on gifts, what is the appropriate amount to spend on children, spouse, friends, distant relations. Each amount carefully measured in response to a collection of factors ranging from emotions, guilt, and our financial budget.

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas and welcome in 2022 our Bishop is asking us how we can live generous lives and make 2022 a year of living generously.

At Christmas we celebrate God's infinite generous giving in the gift of life, creation, and the giving of his Son. Whilst we celebrate all this, what is our personal response to God's generosity? Bishop Rose spoke of an aunt who each Saturday would prepare for church the next day; the best dress prepared hanging up, money placed ready for her gift on Sunday. All carefully thought through and made ready. An intentional act in preparation for worship the next day. Going before God prepared for worship, offering the first fruits, and offering him her very best. If we are to live lives as 'intentional Christians', we first have to pause and realise that we live in the flow of God's

generosity. Do we appreciate what we have through God's grace or is it simply taken for granted? If we are to live generous lives in giving back in the love what we have received, we need to spend time in thinking what it is we have received from God. This Christmas and new year can we pause at the turning of the year and look at our lives and ponder what we have in our faith. Only in understanding this can we recognise what we are led to offer in gratitude to our church community and wider community through our gifts and talents.

The humility of the Christ child stands in stark contrast to the brash commercialism of Christmas. The joy of the angels, the humility of the shepherds and the wisdom of the kings stand contrast with our secularised holiday period. We say we wish to reclaim Christmas, yet do we begin by responding to God's generosity or is it easier being critical of how other people are behaving. This Christmas let us be aware of stepping into the flow of God's generosity and respond out of our love and seek to live out our lives generously. A happy Christmas and blessed and generous 2022. Yours in Christ

Revd Simon.

"Step in the flow of Gods generosity"
Archdeacon Andrew, St Catherine's Day
2021.

Services in December - The Benefice of Faversham

	St Mary Magdalene with St Lawrence, The Brents and Davington	St Mary of Charity, Faversham	St Peter and St Paul, Ospringe	St Catherine's, Preston-next- Faversham
	(10am)	(10am)	(11am)	(10am)
5 December 2nd Sunday in Advent	Eucharist	All Age Worship with Christingle	Eucharist	Eucharist
Baruch 5:1-9; Benedi	ctus; Philippians 1:3-	11; Luke 3:1-6		
12 December 3rd Sunday in Advent	Eucharist	Eucharist	Morning Prayer	Eucharist
Zephaniah 3:14-20; Is	aiah 12:2-6; Philippid	ans 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-1	8	
19 December	Eucharist	Eucharist	Eucharist	Eucharist
4th Sunday in Advent		6:00 p.m. A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols	2.00 p.m. Baptism	6:30 p.m. Carol Service
Micah 5:2-5a; Magnii	ficat; Hebrews 10:5.	10; Luke 1:39-55		
24 December Christmas Eve	4:00 p.m. Crib Service 11:30 p.m.	5:00 p.m. Crib Service 11:30 p.m.	4:00 p.m. Crib Service 11:30 p.m.	5:00 p.m. Crib Service 11:30 p.m.
	Midnight Mass	Midnight Mass	Midnight Mass	Midnight Mass
(Midnight Mass) 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8-11, 16; Psalm 89: 2, 20-27; Acts 13:16-26; Luke 1:67-79				
25 December Christmas Day	Christmas Morning Service	Christmas Morning Service	Christmas Morning Service	Christmas Morning Service
Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-20				
26 December 1st Sunday in Christmas	10:00 a.m. Benefice Service (spoken only) at St Mary of Charity			
1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Psalm 148; Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52				

Services in January - The Benefice of Faversham

	St Mary Magdalene with St Lawrence, The Brents and Davington	St Mary of Charity, Faversham	St Peter and St Paul, Ospringe	St Catherine's, Preston-next- Faversham
	(10am)	(10am)	(11am)	(10am)
2 January	Eucharist	All Age Worship	Eucharist	Eucharist
Epiphany	EUCHAIISI	All Age Worship	EUCHUISI	EUCHANSI
Malachi 3:1-5; Psalm	Malachi 3:1-5; Psalm 24; Hebrews 2:14-end; Luke 2:22-40			
9 January	E. ala aniak	Evely suist	Manusia a Dunia a	Frank suitak
Baptism of Christ	Eucharist	Eucharist	Morning Praise	Eucharist
Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22				
16 January Second of Epiphany	Eucharist	Eucharist	Eucharist	Eucharist
Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11				
23 January Third of Epiphany	Morning Prayer	Eucharist	Morning Praise	Morning Prayer
Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19:1-6; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a; Luke 4:14-21				
30 January Presentation of Christ	Benefice Service @ St Mary of Charity, Bishop Rose			
Malachi 3:1-5; Psalm 24; Hebrews 2:14-end; Luke 2:22-40				

Carols in the Market Place

We hope that the Carols in the Market Place will go ahead this year.

This is, normally, an annual event organised by Churches together in Faversham [CTiF]

Currently it is planned for Thursday 23rd December, from 7:00 p.m.



Dan. writes

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas.

My heart lifts when I see boxes of mince pies in the shops. I look forward to seeing Christmas decorations in the aisles just as those gruesome Hallowe'en outfits (thankfully) disappear. And is it ever too early to hear Noddy Holder's famous words, "It's Christmas!"?

The Church's Calendar is (generally) very helpful - mostly for people who attend church every week. However, while no one minds hearing any other Bible story or singing any other hymn at any time of year (even Easter stories and hymns), for some reason there is discomfort because of a tacit law that banishes Christmas stuff to only a few weeks in the year. God doesn't need a calendar as he is at his work all year round and so as Christians we're called to be Easter-People every day of the year, keeping in mind that the same power that raised Jesus to new life lives in us. Maybe, then, we ought to be Christmas-People (and Epiphany-People, Ascension-People etc) all year round too, to keep in mind how, in Jesus, God's Word became flesh living among us in our mess. It is a pity that we stuff into a few weeks, the whole Emmanuel-season: the matter of the mucky manger and reality of Jesus as homeless refugee - both demonstrating God's bias towards the vulnerable and his call to serve. Maybe centuries of churchiness have found these themes too uncomfortable to be an all-year-round thing.

Of course, Christmas seems less and less about Jesus as secular society insists it's all about Santa or elves on shelves. When I once playfully challenged this idea saying "erm, Christmas' true meaning is in the name!" I received the slightly ironic

postmodern retort, "actually Christmas is about anything anyone wants it to be about – so shut up about your Jesus stuff!" What they meant was anyone, apart from Christians, can make Christmas about what they like. It didn't surprise me a while ago when out on the streets filming responses to the question "what's the true meaning of Christmas?" someone said, "Oh Jesus Christ, I have no idea"! They couldn't see what was funny.

We prayerfully make Christmas about Christ, communicating the great news, in and out of season, that in Jesus, God lovingly moved into the neighbourhood, right where we are, in our mess. And, although liturgy often makes it sound like he's always elsewhere, God's still with us through his Spirit. Jesus' incarnational ministry (God with skin) is a demonstration of what our mission and ministry should look like too: being Jesus in messy neighbourhoods embodying God's love, peace, justice and mercy.

With a message of hope this amazing, I wish it could be Christmas every day.

Dan Corcoran Mission Priest and Impressario

Singalong—the big event!



Teach the children

A Christmas Reflection – What is the meaning of Christmas

I was clearing up and preparing to go to bed. I heard a noise at the front of the house. I was surprised when I opened the door to see Santa step out from behind the Christmas tree. He placed his finger over his lips so I would not cry out.

"What are you doing?" I started to ask. The words choked up in my throat, and I saw he had a tear in his eyes. His usual jolly manner was gone. Gone was the eager boisterous soul we all know. He then answered me with a simple statement.

a "Teach the Children"

I was puzzled: what did he mean? He quickly produced a bag from behind the tree. He reached in the bag and pulled out a FIR TREE and placed it on the mantlepiece.

(a) "Teach the children that the pure green colour of the stately fir tree remains green all year-round, depicting the everlasting hope of mankind, all the needles point heavenward, making it a symbol of man's thoughts turning towards heaven."

He again reached into his bag and pulled out a brilliant STAR.

(a) "Teach the children that the star was the heavenly sign of promises long ago. God promised a Saviour for the world, and the star was the fulfilment of His promise."

He then reached into his bag and pulled out a CANDLE.

(and when we see this great light we are reminded of He who displaces the darkness."

Once again he reached into his bag, removed a WREATH, and placed it on the tree.

(a) "Teach the children that the wreath symbolises the real nature of love. Real love never ceases. Love is one continuous round of affection."

He then pulled from his bag an ornament of himself.

(a) "Teach the children that I, Santa Claus, symbolise the generosity and goodwill we feel during the month of December."

He then brought out a HOLLY LEAF.

(a) "Teach the children that the holly plant represents immortality. It represents the crown of thorns worn by our Saviour. The red holly represents the blood shed by Him."

Next he pulled from his bag a GIFT and said,

(a) "Teach the children that God so loved the world that HE gave His begotten SON...
"Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift."

"Teach the children that the wise men bowed before the Holy BABE and presented HIM with gold, frankincense and myrrh. We should always give gifts in the same spirit of the wise men."

Santa then pulled out a CANDYCANE and hung it on the tree.

© "Teach the children that the candy cane represents the shepherd's crook. The crook on the staff helps to bring back strayed sheep to the flock. The candy cane is the symbol that we are our brother's keeper."

Then he produced an ANGEL.

© "Teach the children that it was the angels that heralded in the glorious news of the Saviour's birth. The angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace and goodwill towards men."

Then, I heard a soft twinkling sound, as he pulled out a BELL.

(a) "Teach the children that as the lost sheep are found by the sound of the bell, it should ring mankind to the fold. The bell symbolises guidance and return."

Santa looked back at me and I saw that the twinkle was back in his eyes. He said.

© "Remember, teach the children the true meaning of Christmas and do not put me in the centre, for I am but a humble servant of the One that is, And I bow down to worship HIM, our LORD, our GOD."



Christmas services in The Benefice of Faversham

Church	Date	Time	Service
St Catherine's, Preston	Sunday 19	10:00 am	Eucharist
		6.30 pm	Service of Lessons and Carols
	Friday 24	5:00 pm	Crib Service
		11.30 pm	Midnight Mass
	Saturday 25	10:00 am	Christmas Morning Service
	Sunday 19	10:00 am	Eucharist
		6:00 pm	Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols
St Mary of Charity	Friday 24	5:00 pm	'Come to the Manger' Crib Service
		11.30 pm	Midnight Mass
	Saturday 25	10:00 am	Christmas Morning Service
	Sunday 19	10:00 am	Eucharist
St Mary Magdalene,	Friday 24	4:00 pm	Crib Service
Davington		11.30 pm	Midnight Mass
	Saturday 25	10:00 am	Christmas Morning Service
	Sunday 19	11:00	Eucharist
St Peter &	F. L. O.	4:00 pm	Crib Service
St Paul, Ospringe	Friday 24	11.30 pm	Midnight Communion
	Saturday 25	10:00 am	Christmas Morning Service

Michael Peter Hoey, B.A., Ph.D., D.Litt. 24th February 1947— 10th September 2021

It is nearly three months since our dear brother in Christ was taken from us after a short, traumatic fight with pancreatic cancer.

I still don't know how to condense my words about this wonderful man. He was 'one of a kind' & 'all things to all people' & everyone he met will have their own special memories.

Michael was a people person & warmth & generosity shone out of him. He was always curious to hear about other people's lives & his constant dialogue with God shaped his life.

We were so blessed when he & Sue joined us at Davington just at the right time to help the Reordering Project take shape. His energy & organisational skills were enthusiastically received although we did not realise just how much he also managed to give the local branches of Rotary & CAMRA (real ale was another passion).

He was such a shining light in the community, a clear example of how his Christian faith was fundamental to his whole being right until the end.

He reached out to everyone & up until the first lockdown he had led a Wednesday Pilgrim group where the depth of his faith, his general knowledge & his respect for all 'walks of life' was clearly appreciated by all who attended.

He was Deanery Synod Rep, Parish Secretary & PCC member with skilful knowledge to navigate reaching decisions more effectively. He always embraced change & worked hard with the initial review



of Benefice communication so hopefully this will be embedded in the foundations of our future communication systems?

When Michael stepped down as our Parish Secretary earlier this year it was to take time out with Sue. The pandemic had curtailed their adventures for her birthday last year & their Golden

Wedding in January so he wanted to arrange 50 romantic moments throughout this year!! Sadly this wasn't to be but he did manage the only lockdown fundraiser for the Benefice, a Zoom quiz based on what he had done for the Rotary while he was their President during the lockdowns.

This only gives you an idea of what he gave us in Faversham but his obituary, in both the Times & Telegraph, give you an idea of his academic achievements & the places he had travelled for both work & pleasure.

His commitment to life was so positive & full of God's love. He always let the Light shine through & in his funeral planning he requested donations for a Rotary literacy project & for a community cafe project being planned for Davington church. We now have Blossoms community cafe 2 to 4 pm every Friday & all are welcome to join us for a cuppa (rather than real ale!!). Please spread the word to anyone involved in collecting children from Davington school as it was Michael's wish to get them involved.

In the meantime please remember Sue, Richard, Alice & their families in your prayers.

Rest in peace brother Michael & Rise in Glory

Blossoms—an ideal rendezvous in Davington



COMMUNTY



FIND US AT DAYINGTON CHURCH

> Fridays 2pm - 4pm

COME AMD ENJOY A CUPPA WITH FRIEMDS

Getting to know you

Hello, I'm Nigel Edwards and count Davington as my home in the Benefice.

1 How long have you been in Faversham; have you ever lived anywhere else?

Both my wife and I arew up in the Kentish suburbs of London, moving to Faversham after we were married in 1988. Subsequently, if we allow for the odd technicality, we have lived in all four parishes of the benefice. We live now in Ospringe but attend still the church at Davington where for twenty years we have endeavored to contribute to the needs of the place in response to the friendly welcome we received during the early days.

2 How did you come to your faith?

At age 8 I asked my parents if I could join the local church choir as already I had acquired a deep love for hymns from school assembly. Yet not until my early forties did I seek confirmation in the Church of England. At the classes, generally held in the garden of the vicarage then at Brent Hill, there were four of us- two adults and two twelve year olds-in addition to the vicar, John Hess. At one stage we were asked by John to sing a short prayer. That I found myself capable of this, free altogether from self-consciousness and a fear of appearing ludicrous, was a kind of confirmation in itself!

3 What do you like most about your home church?

Davington Church, though an ancient space with wonderful stained glass through which the floor tiles are dappled with colour on sunny mornings, is a largely unadorned interior and this relative plainness serves as an invitation to prayer and for reflection away from everyday distraction. But those memorial stones that have been added



emphasize the passing of the generations that have shared the space as the world outside has transformed. The transitory nature of things is thus checked and we are drawn beyond the daily limitations.

4 What's your favourite hymn or chorus?

I do feel drawn towards the great anthems and being of Welsh ancestry, am partial to 'Guide Me O Thou Great Redeemer' and 'Alleluia, Sing To Jesus'. Of course there are hymns for all occasions therefore I would add 'Abide With Me'. On my list of favourite compositions there would be around fifty hymns, but probably no more than one or two from the last

hundred years! My favourite carol as a youngster would have been 'Once In Royal David's City'; these days I especially appreciate 'It Came Upon A Midnight Clear'.

5 What is your favourite bit of the Bible and why?

1 Corinthians Chapter 12 is an inspiring message to all of us that we have the opportunity to live through the Spirit towards a personal fulfilment managed by an enduring encounter with faith. Faith, being the lifeblood of the Spirit, is necessary to ourselves as healthy ingredients to the physical being. We shall make mistakes, suffer regrettable and even long-term lapses, but we need never be without this kind of guidance to turn to.

Nigel Edwards

Pray Worship Read Share Grow

Think Find

Learn

Equip Excite

Enable

Discuss

Explore

Engage

Imagine

Develop

Discover

Announce

Encourage

Connect

Envision

Reflect

Dream

Create

Pray

The Benefice of Faversham



an ongoing exploration of mission and ministry rooted in Scripture.

- Where are we now?
- How can we better serve a growing Faversham?
- What can we offer personally?

...with a focus on Messy Church to complement existing mission and ministry with children and families... ...living out Messy Church values: Christ-centred, All-age, Creativity, Hospitality and Celebration.

10.00am - 11.30am (tea, coffee and pastries from 9.30am) Saturday 27 November 2021 St Catherine's Church Schoolroom, (through the churchyard by the railway footbridge)

Please would you
Book your places(s)
and any dietary requirements:
dreamkingdomdreams@gmail.com

Amnesty International—Write for Rights https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights/

Amnesty International are again and letter campaign on behalf of Rights. They have chosen 10 have been abused and who help by sending a message, either a card.

The messages these people receive and can give them the strength to pressure on the authorities to stop When we take action together we

If you have internet access, it is the action online - go to the amnesty.org.uk, and you will find a particular focus on 4 of the cases. Better still, you can download the

INTERNATIONAL

holding their worldwide card people defending Human people or groups whose rights urgently need support – you can online or by writing a message in

tell them they are not alone, continue; the actions also put Human Rights violations. can make a difference.

quick and easy to take part in Amnesty website, link to take action, with

booklet which contains details of all 10 cases, with further options for action. (Do look particularly at page 1 of the booklet, and pages 16 to

At Davington, again, we are selecting 3 cases and will be encouraging church members to support these particular people by writing a message in a card – we will then send off the cards together to save on postage. If you would like to join in this with us, please let us know, and we will give you a card or cards you could use, together with a brief summary of the particular case and some suggested message content.

Every Message Counts.

https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights

19 for information about the effects of previous campaigns.)

Iris Neel

Help at The Abbey School



The Abbey School would like some volunteers to listen to Year 7 and 8 students read in the library, anytime between 9.30am and 2.00pm.

If you could give some time to this, please contact Librarian, Miss Evans: levans@abbeyschoolfaversham.co.uk.

Volunteers will need to be DBS checked by the school.

HOPE Faversham Youth









hope.faversham_youth

hopefavershamyouth@gmail.com

HOPE FAVERSHAM YOUTH

for Year 7 and above, meet Wednesday evenings 19:00 – 20:30 at the Baptist Church, St Mary's Road.

It has been delightful to start our meetings eating together with meals kindly provided by member of our different churches. The atmosphere is great with lots of engaging conversations. Sadly, five of our members had Covid last week so we were low on numbers – it's still fun.

Please continue to pray for us, for the young people to growth in faith, and do encourage others to join us.

Sarah Williams

Churches Together in Faversham - Prayer Meeting

Prayer Meeting. We meet in person on Saturdays 09:00 – 09:45 at the Baptist Church. (Main entrance on St Mary's Road.)

We pray for each other, our Christian communities, our town and local area, and the concerns of our hearts. All are welcome.

Our Christmas Cards should be arriving in your homes with The Net any day now. Do please pray for people to engage with the message of Heavenly Peace that we have through Jesus.



We are also planning to hold Carols in the Market Place on Thursday 23rd December at 7pm, respecting others and guidance.

Please be praying for all our Christian witness in our communities.

Sarah Williams

CONTEMPLATING CHRISTMAS 2021

THE INCARNATION

God so loved the world....



Join us this Advent for an hour of contemplative reflection on the true meaning of Christmas

at

ST. MARY MAGDALENE AND ST. LAWRENCE WITH ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST **DAVINGTON**

11am or 7pm ON MONDAYS 29^{TH} NOVEMBER 6^{TH} , 13^{TH} & 20^{TH} DECEMBER 2021

(also available on YouTube by searching Faversham Benefice)

From the shed.....

Thought the idea of a potting shed with the wood burner chugging away and me lolling in an old armchair could gave a suitably Autumnal feel to things.

The reality is a micro bedroom at the back of the house that serves for the editorial nerve centre devoted to Keeping Contact.

Wherever we are, we are into the final straight of

2021. We've survived Guy Fawkes, All Saints' and of course C19.

Though, as we go to press, things are not looking too great. Hopefully people will be sensible and respond to what common sense is telling us about appropriate behaviour.

In that spirit we include all sorts of information about what is coming up over the festive season. With the caveat that everything can change—do check for up to date information.

As Christmas approaches a lot of people are putting a lot of effort into things. Hopefully their efforts will not be thwarted by an 'out of date' virus.

Speaking of effort I want to put a word of thanks in here. That is for those who work away in the background getting Keeping Contact to you. Without them it would not happen. I offer a virtual round of applause for them and to them.

I owe someone an apology, sadly it is posthumous. That brings a host of theological questions with it—that I'm sure



will make my head explode, but not Michael Hoey.

I was negligent in seeking out an appreciation of his life and work for Keeping Contact. I sincerely apologise.

I enjoyed briefly working with him but it was only when I saw the tributes from his university and so on that I got an insight into what a great talent and man we had amongst us.

This month we do include an appreciation of his life and work here in Faversham.

On the matter of obituaries, I prefer appreciation. We do like to record those of our members who have gone on to greater thinas.

About 450 words in word format and a nice photo are much appreciated.

And a final few words.

I was an indifferent student in Cardiff. But that fine city boasted several underground gentleman's toilets of amazing Victorian splendor. Most people took it for what it was, a convenience.

Some wags felt they had to add to the décor, of one of these edifices, with the full range of epithets, aphorisms, limericks and other material of doubtful taste and worse humour.

My particular memory, apart from the limerick that started "there was a young lady of Lydd......", is of the contributor who seasonally added the phrase " all that remains is to offer all my readers the compliments of the season."

I leave you with that sincere good wish...

The Benefice of Faversham









Four Churches, One Benefice, One Town				
Contact details for Benefice Clergy				
Vicar	Rev Simon Rowlands	0179 553 0553		
		happyvicar@gmail.com		
Community & Mission Priest	Rev Dan Corcoran	0796 333 2221 danchadc@gmail.com		

Please contact the Administrator at the Benefice Office for information on Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals or other service in any of the Benefice Churches.

Office hours Monday to Wednesday 09:00—14:00

- FavershamChurches@gmail.com
- * 0179 553 0553

Contacts for individual churches in the Benefice of Faversham			
St Catherine, Preston next Faversham		fb.me/4favstc	
Wardens	Hillary Tulett Rodney Foord		
St Mary Magdalene w St Lawrence, Davington		fb.me/4favstmml	
Wardens	Maureen Gregory Frances Worthington* Iris Neel*		
St Mary of Charity, Faversham		fb.me/4favstmoc	
Wardens	Miranda Ford		
St Peter & St Paul, Ospringe		fb.me/4favstpp	
Wardens	Phil Larter Patrick Mulcahy Jane Wells*		

Keeping Contact is the News Sheet of the Benefice of Faversham. It shares details of services, news and activities of the member churches of the Benefice of Faversham and around the town of Faversham. It is available from your nearest Benefice Church or can be downloaded from various sites. If you would like to receive an electronic copy or a printed version, please contact your Church Warden.

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* Assistant Warden