

Keeping Contact

The Benefice of Faversham

Volume 2, Issue 4

May 2021

Rev. Simon writes

I have a little notebook on my desk where I enter the names of people I have had prayer requests for. Praying through a list of names causes me to pause and consider other peoples lives and experiences and place their needs before God. The prayer may not be spoken aloud but silently spoken in heart and mind. At the center of any prayer is our own relationship with God, the focus of our prayers.

But what is prayer and how do we go about it?

In the past working with students, I asked them to create paper airplanes and write within them the hieroglyphics or images of the thought 'I love you' and try and fly the planes into a wastepaper basket. The purpose was three-fold.

How do we construct our prayers? Are they silent, or spoken, sung, or said?

What language do we use to communicate with God? How do we offer our prayer to God, petition, request, pleading or hopeful? Where are we sending our prayer – how do we imagine God in the sense of time and space.

These questions always caused much discussion as so often we take prayer for granted. We place our head in our hands (the Vidal Sassoon wash and go position) and offer a list of names in quick order. Prayer I would suggest is like any relationship, a two-way exchange, do we ever leave time and space for God to reply?

Jesus is often shown after a busy period of ministry going to a quiet place to pray and focus on God. That brings me to my final challenge to the students – how do we imagine God when we pray? I would seek to

challenge stereotypes not to be difficult but to engage in expanding our prayers and relationship with God.

Some people require absolute quiet to pray others find music essential. Both are of equal value. For someone coming into church for the first time, prayer can be an impossible expression, yet lighting a candle somehow signifies the offering before God of the very thoughts of one's hearts. God listens to us however we pray.

Some people have minds that are constantly engaged in a deluge of thoughts, how can space be found for God? It is here that prayer cycles like the Jesus Prayer, 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Father have mercy on me a sinner', repeated until the muddle of thoughts quieten to a point where prayer is possible can be of help.

For those who have a visual imagination, using bible passages where Jesus is present may be helpful to read and imagine, the Word becomes the presence of Christ in our minds and draws us closer in prayer.

There are so many different techniques that can help us in our relationship with God if only we gave time and headspace to prayer. May each of our churches become schools of prayer as we re-engage in our relationship with God. My constant prayer is that one day I will see Christ face to face. For all things in God are possible.

Yours in Christ

Simon.



In this edition

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Services in the Benefice

**Church Services
across the Benefice.**

**Churches may have
different booking
arrangements!**

<p>Davington All services are at 10 am To book: Maureen Gregory— maureeng53@msn.com</p>				
2 May Fifth Sunday of Easter	9 May Sixth Sunday of Easter	16 May Seventh Sun- day of Easter	23 May Pentecost	30 May Trinity Sun- day
Service of the Word	Service of the Word	Service of the Word	Eucharist	TBC
<p>Faversham All services are at 10 am To book: Miranda on 4favershamchurches@gmail.com or telephone 01795 227202</p>				
2 May Fifth Sunday of Easter	9 May Sixth Sunday of Easter	16 May Seventh Sun- day of Easter	23 May Pentecost	30 May Trinity Sun- day
All Age Worship	Eucharist	Service of the Word	Eucharist/Service of the Word TBC	TBC
<p>Church open for private prayer and reflection Wednesdays, 11 am – 2 pm. Usual COVID regulations apply.</p>				
<p>Ospringe All services are at 10 am Phil Larter - BeneficeofFaversham+wardenspsp@gmail.com Jason O'Hagan - BeneficeofFaversham+wardenspsp@gmail.com</p>				
2 May Fifth Sunday of Easter	9 May Sixth Sunday of Easter	16 May Seventh Sun- day of Easter	23 May Pentecost	30 May Trinity Sun- day
-	-	Eucharist	Eucharist TBC	TBC
<p>Preston All services are at 10 am Hilary Tulett – Tel: 538013, Email htulett@uwclub.net Rodney Foord – Tel: 535937, Email rafoord38@btinternet.com</p>				
2 May Fifth Sunday of Easter	9 May Sixth Sunday of Easter	16 May Seventh Sun- day of Easter	23 May Pentecost	30 May Trinity Sun- day
Eucharist	Service of the Word	Service of the Word	Eucharist/Service of the Word TBC	TBC
<p>Church may be open for private prayer Wednesdays, 10 – 11 am. Usual COVID regulations apply.</p>				

What did the Victorians leave us?

St Peter & St Paul's Ospringe is thought by some to be a fine example of Victorian church decoration.

All done in the days before "a Faculty" was required.

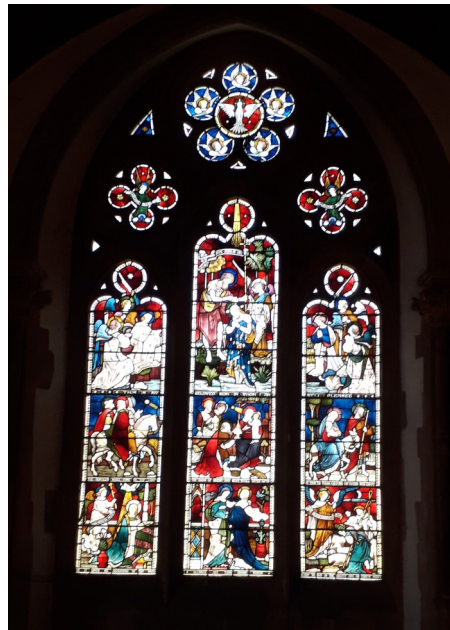
What a legacy the Victorians have left us? I have a liking for art and stained glass and the other week I thought I would look at the glass of St Peter and St Paul, Ospringe. I was surprised by what I found.

Stand in the centre of the church and look to the west window (back to the Altar). This window begins our journey. It starts with God's promises to Israel, the

announcement to Mary of Jesus' birth, the flight to Egypt and Jesus' baptism. If you turn round and face the altar and look to your left there are two windows. The first covers some of Jesus' teaching from the Sermon on the Mount and some of the promises to those who die in the Lord. The second window covers Jesus' relationships and one of His signs the raising of Lazarus. Plus some verses of comfort 'I am the resurrection and the life'

Turn right and there are two windows one to St Peter and St Paul emphasizing the need to 'do good and care' and the other shows a quote from Isaiah promising a carer for his flock and Jesus caring for children. Travel down the church towards the altar keeping the depiction of the crucifixion in view. The text says 'God is Love'. Unfortunately you cannot see the final text 'by thy cross and passion good Lord deliver us'

Turning to the left we see the communion bread and wine and a quote from 1 Corinthians 10



verse 16, 'the bread which we break is it not the communion of Christ. The cup of blessing which we bless is it not the communion of the blood of Christ.'

To the right Psalm 116 verses 12-17 'What shall render unto the Lord for all his benefits to me. I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the Lord.' Turn around and go into the chapel to

the left and on your left is a window which depicts the resurrection. The centre panel shows Christ the King, the left and right panels show two women and two disciples visiting the tomb. Turn around and head out on your left are two more windows the first has 'blessed be the Lord God of Israel for he hath redeemed his people'. (Luke 1 v68) and 'Suffer the little children to come to me for of such is the kingdom of God' (Matthew 19 v 14).

The second is another resurrection scene with quotes from Matthew, John and the Nicene Creed.

The whole artistic experience has taken us through God's expression of love for his creation from Christmas to His Ascension and expresses our hope in the resurrection and the life to come. What a story!

Patrick Mulcahy

In church there is a copy of a biography of the architect responsible for the décor. Contact the editor for an electronic copy contact.

**William Thomas
"Tom" Wills**

**Reflection on the life
well spent.**

If I can help somebody

This was the opening line of the music played at Tom's cremation service and was his motto throughout his life.

Tom was born in Northamptonshire, WILLIAM THOMAS WILLS after his Grandfather but was known as Tom all his life.

He grew up in Little Harrowden near Wellingborough, the youngest of eight children 3 boys and 5 girls. He attended Sunday school there with his siblings.

Tom had a serious burn to his leg and was admitted to Burns Unit at Stoke Mandeville Hospital. When he recovered he stayed on as a Ward Orderly. He could understand their pain and discomfort having endured the same himself.

We met when I started my nursing training at the hospital, fell in love and were married at St Catherine's on 27 May 1972. I was born and lived in Faversham and have been a lifelong worshipper at St Catherine's. My parents Bruce and Win Martin were both heavily involved with this church and my Dad was Churchwarden for several years.

Tom was presented for confirmation at St Catherine's in 1973 by Bishop Warner who had confirmed me a few years before. Tom acted as a Server for several years but said he would not be Crucifer as he felt his faith was not strong enough. He told the Vicar he had the right name – doubting Thomas. Tom was not a regular churchgoer preferring to admire the wonders of God's creation on



countryside walks. Tom was willing to help anyone in small practical ways. He also gave 93 blood donations and was disappointed he could not achieve 100 because of health problems. In his work at Faversham Pools as a cleaner he would help

people with their lockers, hold babies while their parents changed or find large changing rooms for families.

Tom enjoyed spending time with our three sons Matthew David and Brian and all of us going on days out around London and Kent and further afield on occasional holidays. Tom was a member of 1st Faversham Scout committee while the boys were in the Cubs and Scouts, helping with setting up camp and fundraising.

Tom was a great support to me in my work as a Childminder both in caring for the children we minded in our own home and in attending Conferences and some training with me.

The tributes that have been paid to Tom by local people show how much he was respected and appreciated in the town and made me realise how well known and loved he was. This was shown by the large number of people who stood in Stone Street to say farewell on our way to the Crematorium. Tom requested that he have waving hands on his coffin and I hope this sense of fun helped to raise a smile in these uncertain Covid days.

I am thankful that Rev Simon

(Continued on page 5)

PRAYER EVENT Ascension to Pentecost May 13th - 23rd 2021

All the local churches are involved praying together. Each church is taking a day and will (usually) arrange a prayer walk, and an online Zoom meeting at different times.

All are invited to join in any of the events.

Details of how to join in will be online and at hopefaversham.org.uk

We will use the Thy Kingdom Come materials, Praying the Psalms, which are all online, or they can be ordered.

There are materials for children too.

We are all invited to pray for five friends or family to come to know and trust in Jesus.

Sarah Williams



(Continued from page 4)

Rowlands was able to give us Holy Communion together at our home on Christmas Eve. This is now a precious memory that we were able to share the sacrament together, as Tom died five weeks later.

There will be a memorial seat installed at Faversham Pools during the summer.

Tom's ashes will be interred at St Catherine's Churchyard on Saturday 9th October when I hope we are able to meet in larger numbers and be able to reflect and celebrate Tom's life together.

Yvonne Wills

**Churches
Together**

in

Faversham

**This is an umbrella
organisation of most
of the Christian
Churches in the
Town.**

William Thomas

"Tom"

Wills

Springtime, is when?

Having worked for an Iranian owned organisation for 36 years, I was surprised and disappointed when listening to BBC Radio 2 on Monday 1st March 2021, to hear both Zoe Ball and Ken Bruce announce to that 1st March represented the first day of Spring.



Each of the items placed on the table represents some aspect of renewal, such as beauty. Fertility, love and health. Among the seven items that will always be seen on such a table are; Goldfish, coins, a mirror, Apples, and in a great similarity to our own Easter traditions, flowers and eggs.

In the Northern Hemisphere the Spring or Vernal Equinox the genuine first day of spring, arrives on either 19th, 20 or 21st March, (this year it was 20th March) and marks the first day of Nowruz, the Iranian New Year. Then my erstwhile colleagues would be celebrating. In fact, the Iranians start to mark the New Year exactly at the time when the Equinox falls, which is usually around one O'clock in the morning. This year in fact, in Tehran it fell at 1.07.28 a.m.

Some of you will have recently heard me relate how for me Springtime goes far deeper than simply marking a change in season. With the beauty that the season brings; in the form of the many different types of flowers and blossom that burst into life after the drabness of Winter, birds hatching their chicks, new born lambs appearing in the fields, or other wildlife returning from hibernation or a winter sojourn in sunnier climes, to me Springtime rather embodies the resurrection.

Nowruz, is itself, a celebration of new life, and in Iranian homes and offices one of their New Year traditions, is to set up a household table, the Haft Sin, on which must be placed seven items beginning with the Farsi, letter 'S', Farsi being the Persian Language.

Whilst both culturally and religiously I may differ greatly from my colleagues, our mutual appreciation of what Spring brings, is very similar.

Graham Dorkins

Risen Christ,
you filled your disciples
with boldness and fresh hope:
strengthen us to proclaim
your risen life
and fill us with your peace,
to the Glory of God the Father.
Amen

Prayer from the Church of England.

An overview as we approach Pentecost.

Pentecost

The subject of Pentecost is a complicated one, as are many of the truths of scripture. To understand it is important to see the history in scripture and the underlining truths that they imply that apply to us today.

First, in Genesis 1v2 "The Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters" and then again in Genesis 2v7 "the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into him - and the man became a living being, complete in body and spirit". Then in Joel 2vs28-32 there is the prophecy that God will "pour out my Spirit upon all mankind"

The New Testament in Acts 2v2 describes the day of Pentecost "a sound came from heaven like a rushing violent wind - and there appeared to them tongues resembling fire, which were being distributed and they rested on each one of them [as each person received the Holy Spirit]".

The difference in these three passages is obvious but what do they mean? Beginning with Genesis, God's creation is a combination of spirit and matter. The saying goes that 'like produces like' therefore God (Spirit) and creation are the unified fact of creation. The creation of humans is again a combination of 'the world' [the dust of the earth] and God's Spirit. Therefore, all are made in God's image. Joel states that God wants all of his creation to be aware of, and involved with, God's Spirit. No one is excluded. Somewhere along the road, though,



there were problems and Jesus, the embodiment of the Spirit of God, came to demonstrate that it was possible to walk with God and fulfil his will, to be a spiritual person. Then came the most mysterious and puzzling event. Having died a criminal's death

after a perfect life example of what God wanted from the beginning, God seems to start all over again. But it was a continuing of His will and His spiritual presence in His creation. Pentecost points back to the beginning, reminds us that God fulfilled his will for mankind and demonstrates the eternal and universal dimension of his Spirit when it is dynamically involved with his creation. The message given in the tongues resembling fire is that every nation is included in His desire to bless all creation because the Spirit enabled the gathered people to speak in other languages. The sound of a rushing violent wind tells us that although God's Spirit cannot be seen, he can be felt. The reality of all this is God loves his creation, and wants us to walk with him growing in spiritual understanding and experience. His spiritual presence remains, and our mission is to continue to be in tune with that Spirit, to appreciate He is alive in each of us, and is at the deepest part of our being.

(All quotations are from the Amplified Bible, 2015)

Douglas Turton

The Diocese of Madagascar is twinned with the Diocese of Canterbury.

This article gives some insight into the challenges of daily life there.

Do go to the web links and find out more. Maybe reflect on what you could do to help.

A view of Madagascar

The multi-faceted landscape of Madagascar reflects the lives of its people. On the one hand they remain an agricultural-based society, and on the other they cannot avoid the fact that they live in a global society. Indeed, technology produced in other parts of the world is bringing great benefits. Take the use of planes and drones to deliver medicine to remote areas, the tech-hub businesses in the capital Antananarivo ('Tana'), and the future promise of 3D-printed school buildings.

All of this rises above the fact that a very high percentage of people in Madagascar do not have a job as such, 75% live on less than \$1.90 a day, and eke a living from subsistence farming.

With a growing population this means a continuous fight to save the country from the devastation of forest loss and ever-reducing habitat for the animals, birds and other living creatures. Three-quarters of children live in severe

poverty, and are often sent out to labour at a very young age, instead of attending school.

Weather systems are intense and have a role to play in the economy of the country.



Madagascar experiences frequent cyclones and devastating floods, particularly in the north – ruining the rudimentary infrastructure, making travel and commerce very difficult and exacerbating poverty; in the south much of the landscape is a virtual desert for most of the year, and many people have become semi-nomadic due to their inability to grow crops, sustain cattle or even find enough water for themselves. As if that were not enough, plagues of locusts, serious diseases, corrupt politicians and poor law and order in remote areas, add to the challenges.

Fortunately, the Malagasy are very resilient; despite having so little in life, they are often very cheerful and accepting of the difficulties they face. They are also keen to help themselves, so any assistance is gratefully received and embraced with both arms. Assistance comes in the form of international aid, religious organisations, individuals and non-government organisations (NGOs).

Over a decade ago, a link was formed between Blean Church and a dynamic priest named Rev Olivier,

(Continued on page 9)



L: The Bishop of Antsirana, R: his Chaplain.

Fixing the pick up truck.

A view of Madagascar contd....

(Continued from page 8)

who lives in Ambatondrazaka, just south of Lac Alaotra in the north of Madagascar. This link has been in existence for some 14 years now and ranges from exchanging prayers and messages of support, to visits, funding for education, disaster relief and much more. The personal interaction and plentiful exchange of photographs and information by email, has enriched this experience significantly. Blean church community has held regular fundraising events – including monthly Madagascar lunches, and everyone agrees that the continued enthusiastic interest is mainly due to the development of trust and personal relationships between individuals in Madagascar and the people of Blean.

My personal interest has been further enriched and fulfilled by expanding my knowledge of the country and people of Madagascar, especially through association with NGOs such as Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, Blue Ventures - a truly multi-faceted organisation working in the coastal regions of south and west Madagascar, Anglo-Malagasy Society meetings and a long-lasting friendship with Dr Herizo Andrianandrasana who is a legend in community-based conservation in Madagascar.



If anyone wishes to look at further information concerning some of the organisations working in Madagascar, here are a few links which you may find of interest:

<http://wildlife.durrell.org/conservation/regions/madagascar/>

https://discover.blueventures.org/madagascar-health-environment/#section_1

<http://www.anglo-malagasy-society.co.uk>

Mike Swain

Photos in this article were taken during a visit in 2015 by Rocyn & Sarah Williams



A not untypical sight in Madagascar

Getting to know you

Each month a member of a different Church will answer 5 questions

—

A way of getting to know people across the Benefice.

Getting to know you

Hello, my name is Valerie Jeffries and I am a member of the Church Choir of St Mary of Charity in the Benefice of Faversham.

How long have you lived in Faversham, have you ever lived anywhere else?

I was born in London but brought up in the Medway Towns; University at Leeds, then Whitstable, Leicester, and Faversham for the last 30 years.

How did you come to your faith?

I was confirmed in Rochester Cathedral but had lapsed from faith through student years and on to 2001 when I went to Kenya as a VSO volunteer.

Volunteers bound for Africa were told that most Africans were Christian, it was a large part of life, and that we would miss a lot that we needed for integration if we didn't go to church.

So I did, felt more at home in the Anglican church than in other aspects of Kenyan life.

My daughter had become a convinced Christian and was confirmed as a student, and with a push from both sides I found myself a Christian too.

What do you like most about your home church?

My home church is where I stand with fellow Christians to sing, and that's powerful belonging.

What's your favourite hymn or chorus?

'O come, all ye faithful' is my favourite hymn.

What is your favourite bit of the Bible and why?

The opening of St John's Gospel as read in the festival of Nine Lessons and Carols is one of my favourite Bible passage, and another is the closing verses, 21: 24 & 25. I find they illuminate Christ's becoming human as well as divine.

From the "potting shed"

Keeping Contact lurches on and things start to get a bit easier. We continue to need to be cautious, but we remain optimistic too.

This means that activities will begin to resume. As this happens a good place for people to see what is going on around the Benefice and the Town could be Keeping Contact.

Sadly, as my wife has learned, I did not come with the telepathy option installed. So if you want people to know about events it helps to share that information.

Thanks to our contributors who have made the effort and they are much appreciated.

- **Copy date for the June editon is 09:00 24th May.**
- **Word [.doc] files please, 450 words is about a page—please manage your creative flow to that.**
- **Please do not send odd formats. PDF and JPEG files are especially difficult to work with. Do please try and avoid them.**

Contributions to BeneficeofFaversham+Curator@gmail.com

HOPE Faversham Youth



[hope.faversham_youth](https://www.instagram.com/hope.faversham_youth)

hopefavershamyouth@gmail.com

As lockdown restrictions ease this term we are planning to meet outside, we will meet at the carpark at the Recreation Ground from 7-8pm and in June and July we hope to meet from 7-9pm.

If the weather is inclement, we will be meeting at the Baptist Church, using the main entrance on St Mary's Road.

Our Biblical focus will be on Romans 12.9-21 looking at how practically we are to love one another.

Please be praying for us, and for good weather on Wednesday evenings.

Sarah Williams

The BIG Benefice Triple Quiz

Well, where to start? The title—there were three levels of questions that gave the wise, the really clever and the lucky guessers a real chance of scoring. You had to be there to really grasp it.

A really big thank you to Mike and Sue for their efforts. Very clever, well designed, well organised and presented. Did the inventors of Zoom ever imagine that this is what it would be used for?

I now truly realise the profundity of my ignorance across a comprehensive range of subjects. The quiz did rather sort the "ultra smart" out from the "thought I was better than that" brigade.

We now know that Jason and Debbie are the Benefice "Smarty Pants".

Seriously it was an amusing couple of hours and Church Funds benefited. I realise I have not sent my donation yet.

Look out for the next edition.

Four Churches - One Town

Contact details for Benefice Clergy

Vicar	Revd. Simon Rowlands	0179 553 2592 happyvicar@gmail.com
Community & Mission Priest	Revd. Dan Corcoran	0796 333 2221 danchadc@gmail.com BeneficeofFaver-

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

- * FavershamChurches@gmail.com
- * 0179 553 0553
- * *During the Covid 19 epidemic the office is not manned, but your emails and calls will be responded to as quickly as possible.*

Contacts for individual churches in the Benefice of Faversham

St. Catherine, Preston next Faversham		fb.me/4favstc
Wardens	Hilary Tulett Rodney Foord	BeneficeofFaversham+wardenscp@gmail.com
St. Mary Magdalene w St. Lawrence, Davington		fb.me/4favstmml
Warden	Maureen Gregory	BeneficeofFaversham+wardensmm@gmail.com
St. Mary of Charity, Faversham		fb.me/4favstmoc
Warden	Miranda Ford	BeneficeofFaversham+wardensmoc@gmail.com
St. Peter & St. Paul, Ospringe		fb.me/4favstpp
Wardens	Phil Larter Jason O'Hagan	BeneficeofFaversham+wardenspsp@gmail.com

Keeping Contact — the news sheet

Keeping Contact is the news sheet of the Benefice of Faversham. It shares details of services, news and activities of the member churches in the Benefice and around the town of Faversham.

It is available free from your Church or downloaded from various sites.

Paper copies are available on request to your Church Warden.

Suitable items for inclusion in the magazine or the diary may be submitted to

BeneficeofFaversham+Contact@Gmail.com

