



POTTEN END
& NETTLEDEN CHURCH



NEWSLETTER

JULY/AUGUST 2020



EDITORIAL

Welcome to the third and fingers-crossed possibly the last of our 'online lockdown' issue of the Newsletter. Due to the on-going situation we are still unable to get this issue printed and distributed, but we hope that you will still get the same enjoyment from reading it. However, fingers crossed we will re-launch our printed edition for September.

Holidays may be difficult right now, but if you can't venture abroad, we hope that you will at least be able to enjoy the freedom of actually visiting family and friends once again, without the use of technology.

During this unprecedented time we have seen the community come together showing various acts of kindness to one another and offering help especially to those who are vulnerable in our Village. Our 'Live' streamed services are continuing to be extremely popular, even as far away as Zakynthos, a small Greek island in the Ionian Sea. Once again we must publically thank Joe and his family for working so hard to keep our church 'at the heart of the Village'. We are pleased that the church is now open for private prayertwo days a week and that pubic worship is now allowed, although on a smaller scale. We will however, continue to stream our services for the foreseeable future, which is great news for those still unable to get to church.

Our Village Shop - Cedars' and Rumbler's Farm are continuing to do a remarkable job in keeping the community supplied with essential food items and at last, our three public houses - The Plough, Martin's Pond and The Alford are open for business again. Cheers!

In this issue there is the usual contributions from Book Review, Fred's Tips from the Potting Shed, French Connections and Swiss Roly with another tasty Village recipe - this months offering being a delicious Prawn Saganaki. There is also various items of news regarding how our public worship will look and how we are moving forward here at Holy Trinity, during the coming months.

Finally, thank you to our regular contributors, who throughout this 'lockdown' period have still submitted their articles. We really appreciate their support as well as you our readers.

PRAYER BOX

When the church is open for private and corporate prayer you are most welcome to write your own personnal prayer and place it in the box in the porch. Next to the box are some slips of paper, pens and hand sanitiser or you can write it at home and drop it in.



The prayers are then collected and Rev Joe will then confidentially pray upon them at a special time once a week.

If you would ever like to be guided in a time of private prayer or would like suggestions as to how to pray, please get in contact with Rev Joe who can help facilitate this.



FROM Rev. JOE ROBERTS

Team Vicar of Holy Trinity, Potten End and Director of Schools' Ministry (Associate Priest) for St Peter's Berkhamsted.

To open or not to open? That is the question.

It has been a point of consideration for no doubt many business owners as well as places of worship over this last month. While we are still not back to how things were before the lockdown (as an aside - do we want this to be case?!) there has been many changes and easing over such a short period of time recently, that it is asking us to seriously reflect on whether this is something that the church should be joining in with.

Our church buildings can now open up for not just private prayer but also for public worship. Yet with this comes a whole raft of guidelines and procedures that make coming back look somewhat different than it was previous. A booking system due to limiting numbers, hand sanitising station upon entry, trace and trace, social distance seating, no singing, non-contact sharing of the Peace and perhaps soon, a requirement to wear masks. In all honesty with all this and with all the risk assessing that I've had to complete, there has been times when I've thought are we just better off waiting? We're reaching more people online through our live streaming than who would probably turn up within the four walls of church, so that if an expression of our faith is not now simply about physically gathering together then shouldn't we just hold off or consider not even opening back up?

All this was brought to the forefront of my mind when I sat down to reflect upon the gospel reading for our first Sunday public worship back in church last week. It was the well-known parable of the sower (Matthew 13.1-9 & 18-23). Does the seed being sown mirror our church opening back up? The seed that falls on the path becoming all exposed could easily reflect a lack of planning and complete disregard to guidelines. Falling on the rocky ground there's no depth for the seed to grow. Perhaps it's just too soon to open up - too much a risk, the ground hasn't been prepared. Falling among the thorns - there is growth, an opening up, but the plants get choked. There's just too many rules and regulations that stifle any sense of sacredness. Finally, the seed sown on good soil - everything is exactly right, we're prepared, responsible and ready. Growth, new life and flourishing can come from what has been perhaps a barren, difficult and uncertain time.

Now where you think our seeds are falling at Holy Trinity, I will leave for you to ponder, but it does hit home the serious point of the importance of making sure that the ground is well prepared and ready before any sowing can take place. For the conditions ideally have to be just right. I do honestly believe that they are for Holy Trinity and while I might decry the large amount of paperwork, it is the right thing to do at this time.

It has been wonderful seeing our engagement as a church in the community and beyond during the lockdown. It has really brought home our identity as living, active and outward Christians. The outpouring of people's faith to others, to our world, to God, during this difficult time has been so profound and is worth giving thanks for. However, I fully understand the important place of our church building in the heart of so many in this community. As Miranda so beautifully mentioned in her last sermon, "For the past 150 years Holy Trinity has been at the heart of Potten End, physically, spiritually and emotionally. The pews are imbued with the prayers and worship, joy and sorrow, laughter and tears of generations." With this in mind, to keep its doors closed when we are able to be open seems to be cruel and wrong. ➡



FROM Rev. JOE ROBERTS cont'd

As the parable of the sower alludes to, sometimes the soil of life is far from perfect for seed to take hold. There are times when it might be rocky, barren, dry, messy, exposed and swamped. And with everything that has been and is currently going on, it might be that our own fields of body and mind are not fallow and far from perfect for growth. But God the divine gardener is always out there, in every kind of weather. God is

always sowing the seed of faith, fellowship, love and reconciliation, that we should at least try to put down roots. Our church, whether within its four-walls or our online community, is a place where you can be who are, where you can lay your burdens down and abide in the eternal peace of God. So, as we ease out of lockdown and navigate whatever this new normal is shaping to be, let us all strive to reach our potential, to grow into who God is calling us to be - as an individual, as a Christian, as a church, as a community, as a member of the human race.

To open or not to open? That question is simply answered by Jesus: 'Let anyone with ears listen!'

Every blessing, Joe.

STAYING CONNECTED WITH HOLY TRINITY

Staying connected in worship, prayer and support at Holy Trinity...

Together in worship:

Sunday	10.30am & 6pm, Service of the Word (1st Sunday of the month Holy Communion)
Monday	8am, Morning Prayer
Tuesday	5.30am, Evening Prayer
Wednesday	6.30pm, BCP Evening Prayer (1st Wednesday of the month BCP Holy Communion)
Thursday	5.30am, Evening Prayer
Friday	8am, Morning Prayer

Public worship has begun again at Holy Trinity. For more information please visit: www.holytrinitypottenend.org.uk/public-worship.

All services are live streamed on our Facebook page or via Zoom and are available to view on our website.

'Offline' worship resources and support are available from Rev Joe.

Together in prayer:

Prayer resources and support can be obtained from Rev Joe.

Visit our website for various resources to aid you in you and your family in their prayer life. Visit www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer to undertake your own Daily Prayer.

Together in support:

Keep praying for each other. Reach out to one another by all safe means possible.

Contact Rev Joe if you are lonely, would like a chat or a time of prayer. Let us not be alone.





BOOK REVIEW

THEY WERE SISTERS by Dorothy Whipple

The three sisters, Lucy, Charlotte and Vera, had three brothers, too, but they left early to live abroad. So it fell to Lucy, whose mother had died, to

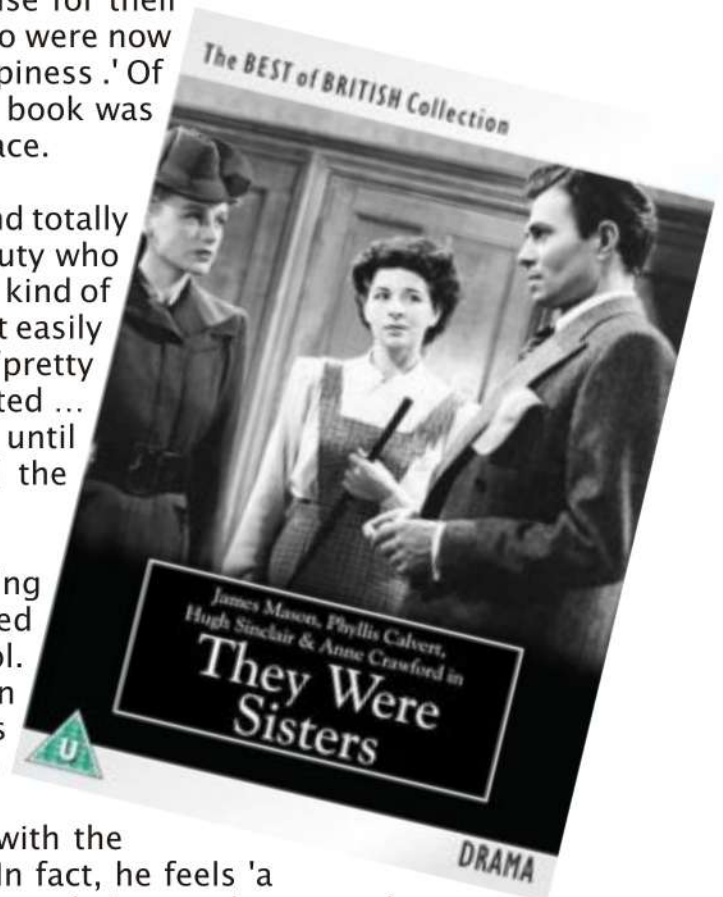
abandon ideas of university and keep house for their father and bring up the younger sisters who were now 'her responsibility, her anxiety and her happiness.' Of course, in the nineteen thirties, when this book was written, such ideas of duty were commonplace.

Duty aside, Lucy is selfless, unassuming, and totally loving. Vera is the beauty, the kind of beauty who makes people stop and stare, moreover the kind of beauty who feels entitled to the favours that easily come her way. Charlotte, it turns out, is 'pretty enough'. She is also 'amenable, warm hearted ... with a delighted childlike gaiety'. That is until she falls in love with Geoffrey Leigh and the gaiety stops.

Oh my goodness, Geoffrey Leigh! On reading about Charlotte's marriage I wondered whether this was a case of coercive control. Then I decided that Geoffrey is just plain cruel. His cruelty, and his control, extends to his children - you will be appalled at the episode with the dog. Even Margaret, his much loved oldest child, was threatened with the withdrawal of his love from an early age. In fact, he feels 'a pride in his domination of another human being ... he must be important if what he did had such disastrous consequences.' Charlotte is frequently offered a lifeline from various sources - her sisters, her daughter's headmistress - but such is Geoffrey's power, together with the social mores of the time, that poor Charlotte becomes broken, a tragic victim.

And what of Vera? Eternally dissatisfied, superficial, living a life that could only happen in the days when there was plenty of domestic help, Vera has champagne parties, admirers, and hot-house flowers. Each seems to be valued more than her husband and children.

Much of this novel is concerned with Lucy's totally altruistic and ultimately fruitless attempts to help her sisters. Eventually she becomes responsible for her sisters' children, too, as she was once responsible for them. As I read I became totally absorbed - for a novel that is not plot-driven it is quite a page-turner. Dorothy Whipple once wrote 'I don't like having to concoct plots, I like doing people.' 'Doing people' is her skill: this novel may be dated in its assumption that domestic service and private incomes are the norm, but the characters make for a really good read.





FRED'S TIPS FROM THE POTTING SHED

Make the most of your garden this Summer - whether you want to dine alfresco, grow your own veg or enjoy the many health-giving benefits of the great outdoors. If, like me, you have spent lots of time gardening this year, do spend time with your feet up enjoying what should be the hottest months of the year. In your spare moments, there's are still jobs to do and looking ahead, you can also start preparing for the autumn veg patch and start to sow flowers for next Spring.

Top 5 jobs for July and August

1. Sow salads little and often-in short runs every fortnight is ideal to ensure a continuous crop.
2. Plant out sprouts, winter cabbage and sprouting broccoli. Remember to cover with netting to avoid disappointment-pigeons have no sense of morality!
3. Feed tomato plants weekly with a high potash feed such as Tomorite. Keep pinching off side shoots as soon as they appear.
4. Deadhead bedding plants and repeat flowering perennials, to ensure continuous flowering.
5. Keep all fruit well watered, especially during dry spells. Also raise the height of your blades when mowing if the weather remains hot.

Collect and store seeds

Collect and store seed of flowers that you want to grow again next year. Store the seed in paper bags or envelopes, labelled with the plant name and harvest date, in a cool dry place.

Fred's garden humour

Shortly after the lockdown, when shops were re-opening, a local man was heard to ask someone carrying a B&Q bag ...“is there a big queue in B&Q ? ”
“Yes, replied to local.. and there's also a big B !”

I stood in my garden early yesterday morning wondering where the sun had gone - then it dawned on me.

It turns out my front lawn is chicken proof -it's impeccable.

What is the gardener's favourite novel? War and peas.

As a young lad I wasn't that interested in gardening, but I planted a few seeds, and it grew on me.

What's a gardeners favourite Beatles song? Lettuce Be.

I've started planting my herbs in alphabetical order. People ask me how I find the time. I tell them “its next to the sage!”

Why doesn't Elton John like iceberg lettuce? He's more of a Rocket Man.

What's small, red and whispers? A hoarse radish.

And finally...

I used to make lots of money clearing leaves from local gardens. I was raking it in!!



VILLAGE RECIPE

PRAWN SAGANAKI

For those of us who can't go to Greece this year, here's how to bring the Mamma Mia/Shirley Valentine flavour to Potten End. I first tasted this lovely dish sitting at a Taverna by the water's edge in Corfu, just one bay down from The Durrell's house. Happy days!

Serves 4-6

Ingredients:

600g large raw peeled prawns, heads off, tails on.

(I buy mine frozen and ready to go from Costco)

400g tin of chopped tomatoes

300g feta cheese, coarsely crumbled or diced

1 tbsp of tomato puree

1 large onion, finely chopped

4 garlic cloves, crushed

1 vegetable stock cube

2 tsp of oregano

1 tsp of sweet smoked paprika

1 tsp of dried chilli flakes (optional)

1 tbsp of olive oil

salt and pepper to taste

Parsley or basil to sprinkle over.

Method:

In a deep frying pan, heat up the olive oil and gently fry the onion till translucent. Add the garlic, oregano, paprika, dried chilli flakes and stir for a minute or two.

Add chopped tomatoes, vegetable stock cube diluted in 200ml of water and the tomato puree. Let it simmer for 20 min.

Add prawns, feta cheese and cook while stirring gently until the prawns turn pink (Note if the feta cheese is not very creamy you could add a tbsp of cream). When ready, sprinkle with chopped parsley or basil.



Serving suggestion:

Prawn Saganaki goes well with rice or orzo pasta, washed down with a bottle of greek wine from Estate Argyros 2017 Santorini (available from Costco). Or there's always Retsina if you're hardy enough!

Enjoy

Swiss Roly

STAY HOME - STAY SAFE!



FRENCH CONNECTION

FRANCE UNBOUND - WELL, MOST OF IT

Yesterday morning took an unexpected turn. I settled down to write, when Christiane, one of three lady animatrices who lead the singing during church services, dropped by to see Carol about music for two funerals that afternoon. Since deconfinement on June 2nd, proper funerals are again permitted. But wait, the church was not prepared for social distancing. Could we help?

Difficult to say no, because I'm the only one who has the computer skills to create notices. Later, we went to the church and calculated how many people could be allowed in and how many per pew. 130, it turned out, so off I went to create the signs. Two funerals in an afternoon is a marathon. During the second, the family ignored social distancing, crushing themselves together, regardless of where they came from. Some wore masks, others didn't. As the service ended, there was the mother and father of a rainstorm, meaning that they all huddled together in the nave prior to venturing out. Decree what you like, you won't change human nature.

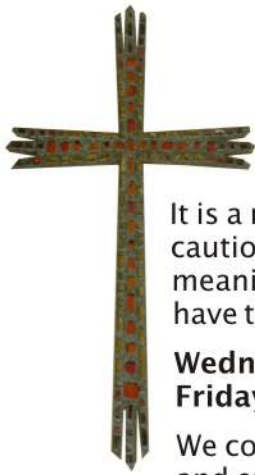
Carol managed a few words with our priest to discuss the question of marriages. Yes, they will be going ahead, but he had one that had been cancelled. The happy couple had found unhappiness after two months of lockdown and had split up. Thank God they found out before, he opined.

I rewarded my broken morning with a pint in the bar-restaurant also liberated. It serves a menu ouvrier - a lunch for workers: two entrées, a main, salad, cheese and dessert for 12€, including wine. (An English friend once asked for a bill to show his local Yorkshire restaurant.) OK, it's simple food: no choice of menu and heaven help vegetarians - they can get an omelette. Vegan? Don't bother. There's a bit less grub than there used to be, but Pascale, the patronne, has kept the price down and punter numbers up. I often try to work out her gross margin, after 10% has disappeared in iniquitous value unadded tax.

I make it about three euros. The restaurant's capacity is generally about 50 - 60, so if my calculation is right, gross margin on an average day of say 70 covers total will be about 200€, or less, from which they have to pay two staff and charges. Sometimes they serve more - 100 or 120, but even so. They make a living, but it's hard: 6.5 days per week from 8 am to 9 pm.

Nor is the clientele limited to ouvriers. Pre-confinement, the two classes from the school had lunch there too and there are always retired people. Older Breton faces are very often distinctive and full of character. A few years ago, Carol gave me a wonderful book of old Breton photos. Some of the pictures are so poignant they bring tears to your eyes. And looking across the restaurant, you see the same faces. Only the clothing is different and the faces are in colour.

My friends must now face a dilemma. Already just scraping by on margin, Pascale has had to take out 16 covers to observe social distancing rules. Theoretically, clients are supposed to take their drinks away from the bar, but the bar's seating capacity is about 12 people. She makes up for her low margins with coffee and alcohol sales, but if you can't stand at the bar with your friends, there is less inclination to buy a second round. I asked her how many meals she'd served that first day. Just 14, but she was philosophical. "It's a start," she said. "I didn't expect any more. I am just mightily relieved to be back at work." Amen to that. **Vagabond**



CHURCH OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER

It is a real joy to open the church again for private prayer. While we are continuing to be cautious about when the church will be open and, due to our services on Sunday meaning we are having to restrict what days the building is open, we are now able to have the church open for two whole days:

Wednesdays 9am-5pm.

Fridays 8am-5pm

We continue to ask that if you would like to visit please sanitise your hands upon entry and exit, write your details on the 'track and trace sheet' at the back of church, adhere to social distancing (pews are marked to identify where people can sit) and to not come in if you are feeling unwell. Please use common sense!

We are not people of fear: we are people of courage.

We are not people who protect our own safety: we are people who protect our neighbours' safety.

We are not people of greed: we are people of generosity.

We are your people God, giving and loving, wherever we are, whatever it costs

For as long as it takes wherever you call us.

Barbara Glasson, President of the Methodist Conference

PUBLIC WORSHIP AT HOLY TRINITY

With public worship resuming once again at Holy Trinity Church, as we are adhering to government guidelines we are having to limit the numbers of those attending our services and so have implemented a booking system as we really don't want to turn people away at the door.

To save on administration we have created an online portal using SignUp.com and if you would like to join us in church in person all you need to follow are 3 easy steps:

1. Visit the link to see our SignUp on SignUp.com <https://signup.com/go/YpqJmfK>.
2. Review when you would like to attend church worship and what dates/times are available.
3. Choose a spot and enter your details.

(you will NOT need to register an account or keep a password on SignUp.com and SignUp.com does not share your email address with anyone)

NOTE: By signing up to attend a service you agree to adhere to social distancing, to sanitise your hands upon entry and exit and to participate in the 'track and trace' system. Please do not come if you're feeling unwell and while we will not be providing face masks, you are very welcome to bring your own.

This is all a journey of discovery for each of us and while this is not necessarily how we would have liked to open up for public worship, this is not being done to make life harder for you but to make sure that the Church, yourself and others are, as far as possible, Covid-19 secure. We hope that you can understand this. The seven page risk assessment is available to view in the church porch!

We will continue to stream our worship (10.30am on Sundays and 6.30pm on Wednesdays) to our website and Facebook page and there is no pressure to come back to church - only do so if you feel comfortable.

Our service pattern has temporarily changed to make sure as many people can attend:

Sundays 10.30am & 6pm - Service of the Word (identical in content). First Sunday of the month will be Holy Communion.

Wednesdays 6.30pm - Book of Common Prayer Evening Prayer. First Wednesday of the month will be BCP Holy Communion.

While I ask that you try and book to attend the above services, you are welcome to join me in person when I say Morning and Evening Prayer during the week. If you are having difficulty in booking please contact me direct: vicar@holytrinitypottenend.org.uk or 01442 865217.

