



Ashford Parish Herald

Issue 2 (2018)



From The Team Rector

This is my first comment in the Herald and I wanted to start by saying THANK YOU! As I said at the recent APCM there is so much that happens in the life of the parish it is difficult sometimes to see the impact that we make to our community because much

of what we do affects individuals and often individuals on the fringe or outside our worshipping communities.

I know that our work makes a huge difference in these people's lives. Activities such as Food Bank, Winter Night Shelter, Debt Centre and looking forward Make Lunch, Ignite and school Chaplaincies require a massive effort on the time and energy of our worshipping communities - so thank you - you make all these activities possible.

I also know that there is much that goes on that I have not mentioned. Those things we do locally to improve the lives of our neighbours - hospitality, social events, care home visits, outings in the minibus etc. these too take much energy and thank you again.

What strikes me is the amount we ourselves grow in our faith and enjoyment at being a Christian when we volunteer to support an activity or befriend an individual. I am a firm believer that when we give love we receive so much more in return. If something feels burdensome or is affecting your walk with God, then stop doing it - the church does not want people diminished by what we do. The phrase 'a cheerful giver' still rings true today.

I hope you are enjoying our new Herald! Communication is often mentioned in meetings from APCM to local leadership teams as something we can work on - I have to say that we listen to you - as well as our web and social media communications we are

trying to expand our direct email contact and introducing this regular paper based (also available online!) news sheet.

I hope that as more of us are aware of what goes on in the parish we might be more willing to attend or support something that is outside our local area and so have that opportunity to grow our circle of friends as we all further our walk with Jesus.

John MacKenzie

Team Rector

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Ascension

Ashford Deanery invite you to a service to celebrate Ascension Day and the start of the Novena – Nine Days of Prayer

Preacher: Nathan Wilson, Team Missioner for Ashford Town Parish

Thursday 10th May, 7.30pm
at
Little Chart Church, Swan Lane, Little Chart, Ashford, Kent TN27 OPT

Please stay for light refreshments after the service

All Welcome




 **Pentecost 2018**

The John Wallis C of E Academy, Millbank Road, Ashford, Kent. TN23 3HG

Date: Sunday 20th May / Time: 10.30am

The Venerable Darren Miller, The Archdeacon of Ashford will be preaching.
This is a joint parish wide event

All are welcome






Mission Update

Novena

The Novena of prayer has been happening in Canterbury Diocese for the past 6 years. It is the time between Ascension Day when we remember Jesus returning to Heaven and Pentecost when we remember the coming of

the Holy Spirit on the first disciples.

This year for the first time the Novena is tied into Thy Kingdom Come the initiative from Archbishops Justin and John to encourage Christians throughout the world to pray Thy Kingdom Come in their situation, location and social groups.

For these 9 days we are encouraged to spend time in prayer and to help us do this the diocese produce Pocket Prayer Guides which are available in all our churches. These feature a picture, a Bible text and some questions to ponder. They also have produced Daily Waitings which include liturgy and a reflection to be used in conjunction with the Pocket Prayers.

As a Town Parish we are offering Prayer in a different Church each day at both 8.30am and 8.30pm, you can find out where here. Please do come and join us as many times as you can, regardless of where you usually worship. If you are unable to make these times of prayer, please do spend time yourself praying and using the Pocket Prayers as a guide.

There is also specific material for families that can be downloaded here for use at home.

We will be book-ending our Novena with 2 times of corporate Worship. On Ascension Day we will be joining in across our Deanery with a service at Little Chart Church at 7.30pm and on Pentecost Sunday at 10.30am we will worship together as a Town at The John Wallis Academy.

Please do join in with this time of prayer wherever you may be, with others or by yourself as we pray Thy Kingdom Come.

The Natural Evangelism Course

Our mission as Christians is to share with others the good news about Jesus. Much of the time we are with people we know, and the opportunities we have are 1-1, however sharing our faith isn't always easy. In the Natural Evangelism Course we are going to think about

what evangelism is, how we might do it and what pitfalls to avoid! The course runs on Wednesday evenings for 6 weeks from 2nd May in Kennington Church Hall. Please do let me know if you would like to come, even if you cannot make every session.

Pub Talk

Going back hundreds of years the pub and the church were the focal part of many communities. The pub being the place where the local philosophers would give their opinion and robust debate would take place! The pub is often still a place for great debate and so we are launching Pub Talk an evening in the pub to talk about issues of life and faith. The first 3 of these will take place in the upstairs of the Singleton Barn at 8pm on Tuesday 8th May, 5th June and 10th July. Please do come along, bring a friend and bring a question to ask, ponder and debate!

A Chaplaincy for Ashford College

We are hoping that we will be able to start supporting Ashford College with a Chaplaincy team, weekly on a Tuesday lunchtime. They are keen for us to go in and can't wait for us to start, however we need a team to do so. If you have a couple of hours you could give; you're able to listen and not judge; and are willing to learn about youth culture (no expertise required!!) please do contact me.

Nathan Wilson

Team Missioner

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Gifts & Injuries Day

Following on from the article in the previous edition of "The Parish Herald", please continue to pray for the work that came out of the "Gifts & Injuries Day" in February. The work now continues in various local areas and we pray that God's Grace will shine through the work we started together.

Want to keep up to date on information within the parish????





www.ashfordchurches.co.uk

[@ashfordteamcofe](https://twitter.com/ashfordteamcofe)

Church Notice Boards



The Royal Maundy - 2018

Two members of our parish were honoured by being presented with the Maundy Money by HM The Queen at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle on Thursday 29th

April. Shirley Leslie and Eric Bannister were nominated for their work in the Church and Community.

The following text is their memories and reactions to the day.

Shirley Leslie

Maundy Thursday 2018 is a day that will rank very high in my list of Special Occasions. I learned back in November of last year that I had the privilege of being chosen as a recipient of the Royal Maundy so had plenty of time to consider the all-important matter of what to wear (!), but even that was not an easy task as the March weather swung from deepest winter to bright spring and back again in the days leading up to Holy Week. At last the great day arrived, dry and bright with a blustery wind and the odd vicious rain shower so the winter coat seemed appropriate.

We made the short walk from our hotel to the Castle, arriving in good time for the service. (Luckily we had allowed plenty of time as we realised just as we were approaching the outer walls that Les had left one of his two pieces of photo ID back in the room!). We were greeted at King Henry VIII gate by two friendly 'Bobbys' (carrying machine guns) and a third (without machine gun) who inspected our ID and handed us on to a succession of stewards who guided us to our seats in the chapel. We were placed in the next to back row on the north side of the main aisle from which vantage point we had an excellent view of the processions.

First came the Yeomen of the Guard, resplendent in their Tudor uniforms, complete with pikes and swords. These were followed with military precision by the College of St George and Chapel Royal procession, led by the Military Knights of Windsor, with the Choir and Clergy. Then came the Royal Almonry procession – Yeomen Warders bearing the vast silver salvers laden with Maundy purses, and finally the Queen's Procession.

The Office is a fairly traditional 'hymn sandwich' with three hymns, Bible readings and prayers.

The distribution of the 184 purses (1 male and 1 female recipient for each year of the Queen's age) was divided into two sessions following each of the two lessons.

I was number 111 so came a little way into the second session and had plenty of opportunity to observe and be absolutely prepared for my moment.

Her Majesty spoke for a few seconds with a select few of the recipients, clearly with exceptionalism; for the most part she handed the purses and moved on to the next. I imagine 184 would be quite tiring and a challenge to the royal smile, but Her Majesty did not appear to be flagging at all and the sparkling eyes and radiant smile left no doubt that she was genuinely pleased. When it came to my turn, as she handed me my purses she simply said 'For you', but in that moment – in the blinking of an eye - it really felt unique and deeply personal.

The official photos did not capture 'my' moment but here is before and after.



Eric Bannister

The other recipient of the Maundy Money this year was Eric Bannister. Speaking to Eric, he explained that he first received the notification in the post in the form of a letter from Buckingham Palace. At first he thought it was a joke, but it wasn't until people said "have you received your letter yet" that it started to dawn on him that it was true. Then he could not believe that he had been chosen and recommended for this singular honour for his service to the church and the community.

Eric continued by saying, he was so grateful to all those who selected him and it was lovely to have such good wishes from the church and parish.

On the actual day, Eric and his wife Anne were allotted front row seats in St George's Chapel, Windsor, so they had a wonderful view of all the proceedings. When HM The Queen arrived she walked straight by them and was sitting quite close.

The Almoner read from John 13:34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another".

The service, music and the singing was wonderful. There was such a feeling of love and safety and that you were among friends within the congregation.

He felt truly blessed and said the only way to describe the event was "Awesome".



Shirley and Eric, The Ashford Town Parish also offer our warmest congratulations on this honour and thank you for your service.

Shepway Singers



'English Village' music for a summer evening

St Mary's Church, Willesborough
Saturday 9 June at 7.30pm

Admission £10 at door
(to include interval drink and nibbles)

Concert in aid of Church funds

Parish Communications Group



At the March PCC meeting held at Willesborough Church, it was decided that a new Communications Team should be created to assist Phil Sibbald in the expansion of our parish communications.

The new team met for the first time on 30th April and a very productive meeting took place.

Current publications and communication processes that are in place at both Parish and Local Leadership team levels were discussed. Feedback of the meeting will be sent back to the Local Leadership Teams and the PCC.

We take very seriously the feedback we receive and it is our endeavour to make sure the parish communications are made available to everyone in print form as well as online.

As John MacKenzie said in his introduction to this edition we are trying to trying to expand our direct email contact so if you are not on any church email list, and would like to be, please email me and we can get you added to the current lists.

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If you have an article or church event you would like published in the next edition please email it to our Team Development Officer, Phil Sibbald on

phil.sibbald@ashfordchurches.co.uk

If you want something advertised sooner, email Phil and he will post it on the parish website

www.ashfordchurches.co.uk