

Beckley and Peasmarsh

Parish Magazine



LENT

February 2024



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From the Rector's Pen February 2024



Dear Friends,

As February dawns upon us, a month traditionally associated with the expression of love, it also marks the beginning of a sacred journey – the season of Lent.

Lent, derived from the Anglo-Saxon word *lenctan*, meaning "to lengthen," references the lengthening of daylight that comes with burgeoning Spring, but it could also symbolise, I daresay, the emergence of and "widening out" of spiritual enlightenment.

A special time of fasting, prayer and introspection, Lent invites us to delve into the depths of our spiritual selves, preparing our hearts for the profound mysteries of the Easter resurrection.

In the words of St. Augustine, "Fasting cleanses the soul, raises the mind, subjects one's flesh to the spirit, renders the heart contrite and humble". This ancient practice, rooted in the teachings of the Scriptures and commended by the great spiritual writers of the early Church, serves as a powerful means of self-discipline, redirecting our focus from worldly distractions towards a more profound connection with God.

During this holy season, let prayer too be our constant companion. In our busyness, let us carve out moments for silent reflection, communing with God in the quiet recesses of our hearts.

Embracing the traditional practices of Lent, let us enter this season with solemnity, guided by the wisdom of our forefathers in the Faith. By adopting fasting, prayer and contemplative reflection, we open ourselves to a transformative encounter with the divine. And so may this Lenten journey deepen our love for God, and prepare us to welcome the joyful day of resurrection with hearts ablaze with the light of the risen Christ.

From all of us at the Rectory, we wish you all a holy and blessed Lent.

Father Owen

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THE MINISTRY TEAM

Associate Vicar

The Rev'd. Dr. Liz Varley

Vine Cottage, Main Street, Peasmarsh TN31 6UL

Tel: 07922 012 703 e-mail: lizpssb@gmail.com

For Baptisms, Marriages, Home Communion, Funerals etc.,
please contact Sister Liz.

Retired clergy

The Rev'd. Dr. W. F. G. Dolman (Fr. Bill)

Little Bellhurst Cottage, Hobbs Lane, Beckley TN31 6TT

The Organist - Mrs Yvonne Jordan The Sexton - Mrs Sharon Piggott

The Parish Churchwardens:

Pam Colegrave, 01797 253177;

Deirdre Bull, 01797 230208 and Lawrence Wood 01797 230489

Editorial contributions to

The Rev. Dr. Liz Varley or any of the churchwardens listed above.

For advertising please contact **John Underwood** Tel: 01797 230340

To have the magazine delivered to your inbox
please send an e-mail to **Mrs Alex Smith:** boatwrightsmith@aol.com

Rector of the Benefice of Brede with Udimore and Beckley & Peasmarsh:

The Rev'd. Dr. Owen Edwards, The Rectory, Brede Hill, TN31 6HG

Telephone: 01424 882201, rector@stgeorgesbrede.org.uk

FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION ON YOUR PARISH

The Parish of Beckley & Peasmarsh
has both a [website](#) and [Facebook](#) pages for
up-to-the minute information... why not take a look at them?



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Sister Liz (centre) with Fr. Owen & Anna Edwards

Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Varley was licensed by Bishop Martin on January 16th to be Associate Vicar of Brede with Udimore and Beckley and Peasmarsch.

Liz now lives at Vine Cottage in Peasmarsch (on Main Street, next-door-but-one to the Horse and Cart) and can be reached by email at: lizpsb@gmail.com and by telephone at 07922-012703.

Liz was first licensed as a Reader in 1981 (well before women could be priests in the Church of England) and worked for the British Council of Churches, the Durham Diocese and the Newcastle Diocese before being ordained in 1996.

She is new to this Diocese having served as a priest in Durham, London, Ripon & Leeds, St. Edmundsbury & Ipswich, Bangor and Portsmouth, and spent eight months in 2021 as a housekeeping volunteer at Iona Abbey.

Liz is looking forward very much to getting to know this beautiful part of the country and to becoming part of the church family here as she settles into the Ministry Team.

REFLECTIONS



You can tell that winter's here because it is the season of power cuts (you will notice that I haven't used that dreadful American term, power outage). We've had our first two power cuts since Christmas, apart from the cuts of a few seconds that happen from time to time, presumable while the engineers play with the switches during their coffee breaks at the power station at the weekend.

It makes us realise how much we depend on a reliable electricity supply and we should thank the engineers who provide it so seamlessly most of the time. I have discovered that I have been put on a priority list and get a warning phone call when a power cut occurs. All very well, but my modern landline phone and answering machine rely on the power supply to work so I never get the calls! I always wonder what I am meant to do when I get the message. Should I go for a run to keep warm, or go and find a sweater to wear and wait? The unfortunate friends who phone me during such cuts can hear the phone ringing but no one answers because the phone bell doesn't work at my end: very frustrating for them.

Sometimes power cuts can't be avoided, if power lines are brought down by falling trees or similar disasters like lorries with high loads carelessly driving into the lines, but having no electricity means that there is no heating, as the central heating pump relies on electricity, as does the boiler itself. And the electric cooker is out of use.

It is years since we had an old solid fuel Rayburn cooker, which meant clearing out the ash every morning and bringing in the anthracite, or special Rayburn coal, from the concrete coal bunker. Not even the bunker has survived the changes.

During the last power cut you would have seen me outside the kitchen door, with the ancient Volcano camping kettle which we used on the beach when we were children, to make a cup of tea after our chilly swims in the wonderful polluted sea water - by the sewage outfall, which has been in the news recently. You fed fuel into the Volcano at the bottom, (scrunched up newspaper) to boil the water. The Daily Mail and The Times were the best fuels, although my father got cross once when he couldn't find his newspaper, only to discover that we, the children, had used it to boil the water for his tea outside the rented chalet at St

Leonards on Sea, by the swimming pool, while our mother had walked to the shopping parade to buy some Shippam's fish paste, usually salmon and shrimp, for the sandwiches. I always wonder why salmon and shrimp were joined in holy matrimony in the little jars. I made the happy discovery that that fish paste was still on sale in the shops, more than seventy years later. What a life of luxury we had by the sea with our paste sandwiches.

But a power cut does mean that there is no television for the duration, which turns out to be no hardship. I discovered that the batteries were still in the kitchen radio, so I was not entirely isolated from the outside world.

As evening fell, I discovered a biscuit tin in the cupboard under the stairs, with a stash of candles that had been there for over fifty years. They were put in the candlesticks (unemployed for years) and gave a gentle warming light in the room, enough light to get around in comfort. I discovered that, however many candles I had, there was not quite enough light to make reading possible. Does this mean that our Victorian ancestors, without radio or television for amusement, couldn't read their books or papers by candlelight at night?

When we were children, when there were more frequent Beckley power cuts, we had a large Aladdin oil lamp with a white asbestos element, which gave a bright light so that we could see what we were eating at our evening meal, although the kitchen did smell of paraffin. It reminded me that my two aunts, Rose and Kate, who lived in a little bungalow behind the Wheatsheaf Pub in West Wickham, had chosen not to have that dangerous new invention, electricity, in their home, cooking on a coal fired range, with a paraffin heater in the kitchen - but that's another story.

Fr. Bill

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STALLS – COFFEE – BOOKS – FELLOWSHIP

Please contact us if you would like to run a stall
Kate Joyner katejmjoyner@gmail.com or 01797 260775

**Guest stall on Tuesday 6th February 2024 will be run by
Carol Bruce / Chris Emson on behalf of Chichester Diocesan Family Welfare**

Guest stall on Tuesday 5th March will be run by Marion Goddard on behalf of Beckley W.I.

The Friends Committee Registered Charity No: 802014

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PARISH CHURCH SERVICES & EVENTS

In addition to our Churches being open every day for private prayer and contemplation, we have regular Sunday Services and extra activities and services on certain dates in the Liturgical calendar.

There is an 8.00am Communion Service according to the Book of Common Prayer every Sunday morning at Beckley Church. 10.00am Communion Services usually alternate each Sunday between Beckley and Peasmarsh Church, with the first service of each month in Peasmarsh.

Services in Church - February 2024:

Sunday 4th February 2024	8am	Holy Communion, Beckley BCP
SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE LENT	10am	Holy Communion, Peasmarsh
Sunday 11th February	8am	Holy Communion, Beckley BCP
SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE LENT	10am	Holy Communion, Beckley
Friday 16th February	3.30pm	Teatime Lent Course Vine Cottage, TN31 6UL
Sunday 18th February	8am	Holy Communion, Beckley BCP
FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT	10am	Holy Eucharist, Peasmarsh
Friday 23rd February	3.30pm	Teatime Lent Course Vine Cottage, TN31 6UL
Sunday 25th February	8am	Holy Communion, Beckley BCP
SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT	10am	Holy Communion, Beckley

Families with children, however small, will always receive a friendly welcome at any of our 10 o'clock services. There are activities and people on hand to keep young ones occupied in the Children's areas.

STEWARDS / GREETERS

4th February	Lawrence Wood
11th February	Pam Colegrave
18th February	Ted Tuddenham
25th February	Deirdre Bull

REFRESHMENTS

4th February	Elizabeth Wood
11th February	Jane Pearson
18th February	Alex Boatwright-Smith
25th February	Pam Colegrave

INTERCESSIONS

4th February	Ted Tuddenham
11th February	Peter Koder
18th February	John Underwood
25th February	Fr. Dick Dengate

BECKLEY & PEASMARSH PARISH MAGAZINES:

Editorial contributions to: Rev'd Dr. Liz Varley, any of the churchwardens listed on page 7 or e-mail Alex: boatwrightsmith@aol.com

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PRINTED MAGAZINES: We charge £1 per copy (available from the Churches) or £10 for a 12-month subscription, with the magazine delivered to your door. If you have opted for a subscription, you can also receive the online version of the magazine direct to your e-mail inbox as well.

Please contact Deirdre Bull (johnbull113@btinternet.com) to be added to Peasmarsh deliveries or Sue Hancock for Beckley (01797 260525).

Pay for your subscription by handing cash to your delivery person or by BACS:
Acct Name: Parish Magazine Account Sort code: 60-18-09 Acct No. 59128887

FIRST READING

4th February	Lovat Bonnet	Proverbs 8:1, vv 22-31
11th February	Roger Evans	2 Kings 2, vv1-12
18th February	Zai Koder	Genesis 9, vv 8-17
25th February	John Wright	Genesis 17, vv 1-7 & 15-16

SECOND READING

4th February	Deirdre Bull	Colossians 1, vv 15-20
11th February	Diane Marsh	2 Corinthians 4, vv 3-6
18th February	David Noble	1 Peter 3, vv 18-end
25th February	Lynda Wright	Romans 4, vv 13-end

GOSPEL READINGS

4th February	John 1, verses 1-14
11th February	Mark 9, verses 2-9
18th February	Mark 1, verses 9-15
25th February	Mark 8, verses 31-end

Please pray for:

- Our community and for all the people who live in our villages;
- Those in positions of authority throughout the world that they may use wise judgement in all they say and do;
- Those forced to 'sleep rough' during these tough winter months;
- The people in war-torn countries - and for all who are working to promote peace and support displaced persons;
- Those sick in body, mind or spirit; the recently deceased and all those who mourn their passing.

If there is somebody you would like to be included in our prayers, please speak to Sister Liz or one of the Church Wardens. See page 5 for their contact details.

BECKLEY VILLAGE LUNCH CLUB

The Lunch Club welcomed one or two new faces this month and this is obviously the place to be on the second Thursday of the month. Over a glass (or two!) of wine, one can mingle and meet friends and acquaintances (or meet new ones) before sitting down to the real business – elegant dining.

Talking of which, this month's special was a traditional Cottage Pie, served with a macedoine of garden peas and sweetcorn. The spicy chocolate sponge with oodles of crème anglaise (or was it creamy custard?) and coffee or tea which followed, concluded another New Year feast provided by the kitchens at The Rose & Crown.

The wines on offer this month, unsparingly served by our own sommelier, Mr Keith Ford, were a South Australian Red and a New Zealand Chardonnay. Our antipodean growers have had a good run and we are seeking to explore other continents – suggestions welcome!

We again thank all our donors to another successful raffle – hands up if you didn't win a prize.

Our quizmaster gave a tuneful rendition of an advertising jingle for a product from yesteryear. It went "you'll wonder where the yellow went if you brush your teeth with _____?" Got it? And there were a few more where that came from. Answers on a postcard or, if you want to confirm your reservation for next month's lunch on Thursday, 8th February 2024, please e-mail kbhedley@btinternet.com or phone 01797 260720.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Keith Hedley

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Lent 2024

It's an early Easter this year, and Ash Wednesday will be here soon - 14th February. Why not join one (or both) of our Lent Courses?

The Wednesday Group will continue to meet at Brede Rectory at 12 noon, preceded by the 11am Mass.

There will also be a Friday Teatime Group meeting at Vine Cottage over tea and crumpets at 3.30 p.m. on Fridays February 16th and

23rd and March 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd to enjoy reading

"The Gospel in the Willows" by Leslie J. Francis.

All are welcome.

Further details from Fr. Owen and Sister Liz.

Peasmarsh Neighbourhood Development Plan Notice Referendum

Rother District Council will soon be conducting the referendum for the Peasmarsh Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Voting will take place at:

Peasmarsh Memorial Hall
Thursday February 29 from 07:00 to 22:00

It is important that you vote!

If you know that you will not be able to vote in person on that day you can register for a postal vote here:

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote>



Beckley Bowls Club

We are looking for new members, so if you would like to try your hand at the game of bowls please give us a call on 01797 260537 - to speak to our Club Captain Nigel Pearson who will be very pleased to answer any questions you may have and to introduce you to the game!

Please give it a try!

It's good fun!

Beckley Bowls Club

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For more info
please visit our
Website

beckleybowlsclub.com

The Friends of Peasmarsh Parish Church



Charity Registration Number 1010751

Fundraisers for the preservation of the Church.

website: [friendsofpeasmarsh](http://friendsofpeasmarsh.com)

To join or help please contact:

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The Friends of All Saints' Church invite you to join us...

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If you would like to know more,
please contact Michael Hancock
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Peasmarsh Flower Arrangers

On a rather chilly January morning we met as usual in Peasmarsh Village Memorial Hall at 10.30am to start on our 'All in Green' arrangements.

It is amazing just how many shades of green we managed to put into our arrangements. In fact I gave up counting. It has made us more aware of the colour itself so perhaps more notice will be taken of this beautiful and so very varied colour.

Perhaps you have used just greenery as an arrangement. Not just foliage as there are green flowers as well of course.

This coming month our meeting will be on 14th February in Peasmarsh Memorial Hall from 10.30am – 12 noon as usual. The theme may take some thought and a trip onto GOOGLE for ideas? 'Cat woman wins Global Raspberry Award 2005' What design could you do? Well there's a challenge if ever I had one!

Why not call in to see what we did come up with and join in for refreshments and a chat

Deirdre Bull 01797 230 208 or 07826 723 409





Minutes This year I have been given access to the minutes from the original village centre in Beckley that was known as the Public Room & Library. It was opened in 1905 and stood on land opposite Coombe House in Main Street. I will reproduce snippets here throughout the year.

23/08/1905 A public meeting was held at the Parish

Room at 5 o'clock, and was well attended. The Rev. Canon Poole presided. The main objective of the meeting was the election of a Committee of Management. The chairman explained that the site had been given by W. Christie Esq to the Rector and Churchwardens and it was unanimously agreed that the Rector and Churchwardens would always be *ex. officio* members of the Committee. It was agreed that the minimum subscription be one shilling per quarter and that all subscriptions should be payable in advance. Mrs Mary Vincett was appointed caretaker, her remuneration to be 4/- per week.

20/09/1905 At this meeting it was resolved that the room be open from 10 o'clock in the morning to 10 at night. Carried unanimously. It was resolved on a proposal of Mr Body and seconded by Mr Harvey, that the caretaker be instructed to light lamps at what is known as "lighting up time" for vehicles. Carried unanimously. It was resolved that the following daily newspapers should be provided: The Daily Chronicle, The Morning Post, The Daily News and the Daily Mail. It was unanimously agreed that ladies be admitted as members. Applications for use of the room to be made to the Hon Sec, who together with the chairman were appointed a Sub-Committee to deal with the letting of the room. It was resolved that smoking be allowed, at all times, in the main room. The question of taking books from the library was discussed, but the discussion was postponed. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded to all those ladies and gentlemen who have assisted in providing the Parish Room and Library.

Food at The Hub For anyone struggling with the cost of food there is a community supermarket at The Hub on Rye Hill on Friday 9th and 23rd Feb between 10.30-11.30 offering £20 worth of food for just £5. It is run by the Repton Trust. The Rye Food Bank is open every Wednesday at the Baptist Church, Cinque Ports Street between 12-3pm. Everyone welcome. The Food Bank can be contacted 07526 349 847. email: ryefoodbank@gmail.com.

The Farmers & Craft Market will be back at the Village Hall on 25th February. The stalls will be many and varied: bread, cheese, local produce, as well as crafts. Our WI will be serving refreshments featuring amazing bacon rolls and cakes. All proceeds help maintain our Village Hall. Free entry. 10-12.30pm.

Horticultural Society subs are now due. Details can be found on their website www.beckleyhorticulturalsociety.org. or email the membership secretary katejmjoyner@gmail.com. It's just £5 for the year or £8 for a family. There are shows, interesting talks and trips lined up for 2024 so get your schedule early!

The Flexibus is a great service that allows you to pre-book your local bus trips. FlexiBus is a flexible, on-demand rideshare service, for areas with limited or no regular bus service. Residents can book a FlexiBus journey to their nearest town, train station, hospital and other key destinations. FlexiBus links people to our improved conventional bus services. Further details are on ESCC website or ring 01273 078203.

Community Speedwatch Can you spare an hour a month to help with speed watch? The team are in need of a couple of extra helpers due to some members moving away. The purpose is to educate drivers rather than to penalise them. Please contact the coordinator: tal814@live.co.uk

The Beckley History Society Subscription renewal date is 1 April 24. The Committee have decided to increase the annual subscription to £4. A very modest price for lots of interesting information. Visitors will remain at £3 per meeting. Dates for 2024: 22nd March - AGM and 'The Industrial Revolution' Andrew Hitchings. 31st May - 'Hops & Hop Picking', Pat Argar. 29th November - 'Beckley in 1875' Bernard Baverstock. For more details contact 01797 260213 or email: mary260213@aol.com

Beckley Preschool was founded in 1973 and has been educating and preparing village children for school ever since. If you are interested in a place for your child, Beckley Preschool have some vacancies for children from the age of 2. For enquiries please email info@beckleypreschool.co.uk The school is open term time only on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9am - 3pm.

Beckley W.I. If you would like to find out more about the exciting activities the WI have lined up or to become a member please contact: office.beckleywi@gmail.com. They meet up on the second Monday of the month in the village hall @ 7.30pm.

1st Beckley Brownies & Guides needs your help! Adult volunteers are needed to enable girl guiding to continue in Beckley. Could you lend a hand? Find out more from Carlyn (Jay) email: jaybeckleybrownies@gmail.com

Beckley Village Centre rooms are available for private parties and meetings in addition to regular weekly activities. Offers of help to: becklevillage@btinternet.com. Phone Mary Howse 01797 260213 for bookings and Lauren Dobson 01797 260364 for everything else!

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The Growing Network hope to see you at their coffee morning on 3rd February, 11.00-12.30 in Beckley Village Hall. These get togethers are always interesting as we never know who or what will turn up! Everyone is welcome, you don't have to be a grower to come and get free fresh food and plants.

Yoga Class 7th February sees a new evening yoga class start in the village hall. £7 per session with Lolly. 7-8pm no need to book.

The Beckley Fund Grant applications are welcome from local groups as the fund is keen to support our community. The fund is small at present and donations are always welcome no matter how small. Contact: Mary Howse 01797 260213 mary260213@aol.com

Parish Council. Monthly meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month in the Committee Room at the Village Hall, 7.30pm. Do come along. Agendas etc. available to view on their website or the two noticeboards - one at the Four Oaks end of the village and one opposite the Rose & Crown pub. www.beckleyparishcouncil.org.uk

Our Village Library is in the phonebox opposite the school. It is full of books for residents to swap and read.

Beckley Parish Council Are you passionate about our community? Do you want to make a real difference? Join us and become an integral part of our parish council! We are seeking dedicated individuals to fill two crucial positions. Applicants need to be 18+ years old, live in or within 3 miles of the boundary of Beckley or have worked in Beckley for at least 6 of the last 12 months; be on the electoral roll. No experience needed - full training will be given. You will have an opportunity to shape the future of our community, collaborate with like-minded individuals, make a tangible impact on local initiatives and decisions, engage with all community members, contribute ideas and drive positive change and gain valuable leadership and governance experience. What is expected? A few hours a month to attend Parish Council meetings and research planning requests. Give as much time as you want and can. We welcome applicants from all backgrounds and encourage all community members to apply. To apply, please send an email to clerk@beckleyparishcouncil.org.uk Or if you would like to chat about the position feel free to call me Natasha Vadorin (chair) on 07904 837 751.

Beckley Bowls Club are looking for new members www.beckleybowlsclub.com for details.. Visitors/viewers most welcome to home matches.

Rye & District Association Monthly Flyer



ALL are welcome to our events. Walks start at 10am and are 5 to 6 miles, £3 only. Talks start at 2pm at Brede Village Hall, entry including refreshments, £5 each or £10 for non-members. Do come along, we are a friendly group!

Thursday 8th February: WALK Meet at the Broad Oak, Broad Oak for a five-mile stroll around woodland and pastures followed by lunch back at the pub.

Thursday 15th February: TALK, 'Bound for Botany Bay: Transportation of convicts to Australia' by Haydon Luke

Haydon will explore the concept and reality of transportation to Australia, by telling the stories of local men who experienced it - some as transportees, one as a young Hastings seaman, in 1830. According to Wikipedia, almost 20% of modern Australians, in addition to 2 million Britons, are descended from transported convicts. Haydon is an excellent speaker, and lives in Fairlight.



Thursday 25th April: OUTING, The Wanstone Project. We are very fortunate to be invited by National Trust White Cliffs, to view 'Conservation in action at Wanstone & Fan Bay'. There will be optional trips, to the Fan Bay Deep Shelter and the South Foreland Lighthouse, for those who so wish. This outing will involve quite an amount of walking, essentially on tracks

and across fields. **Cost per person: £32.00.**

If you wish to join our association or just come along, contact Membership Secretary Dee Williams, 07760 115 413, or Louise Hull, 07791 383 323.

John Wright

GOOD SERMONS

(Some jokes, some comparisons, an admission of failure and a plea for help).

Before I write a short article on sermons, I have to declare an interest. For familial reasons I have a predilection for short sermons. This is because my paternal grandfather died as a direct result of a sermon that over-ran its time. It is a long and sad story but not, I think, of sufficient interest to be worth repeating to anyone outside my family. I would not mention it at all but for the fact that my admitted bias should be declared.

Thinking about sermons puts me in mind of the tale about a young curate who was honoured by a visiting bishop. When the curate asked the question, "My Lord, what would you like me to preach about?". The bishop's answer was, "About God and about six minutes!"

What is long and what is short? Move out of the church environment where we talk of sermon and congregation to the wider world of speaker and audience- for that is essentially what it is - we can make some comparisons. 'Long' is when the audience is 'lost' to the speaker. It is not purely a matter of time, though any speaker should have an eye to the clock. (The late vicar of Salehurst used to limit himself to 3 ½ minutes and had a very well attended church). Three examples come to mind: The first is the comedian, Ken Dodd. Ken Dodd was a bit like Marmite, which one either loved or hated. I found him very funny and a part of his skill was quickly to adapt to his audience. When he held them in the palm of his hand he could go on long, long over his advertised time and he made a joke of it. Another example, perhaps closer to that of a sermon, was a talk I heard by the late Lord Denning. It went on for nearly two hours and nobody stirred. He 'held' his audience with a clever mixture of complex law made simple and jokes. Sometimes the jokes were about himself and self-deprecatory but not always. One of them that stays in mind was his comment, "When I was a judge I used to deal in justice. Now I'm on the Court of Appeal, the odds are two to one against!" Another great speaker was Donald Soper, later Lord Soper, a leading Methodist. He used to preach at the Tower of London and at Speakers Corner in Hyde Park. One of his sermons was on the subject of pacifism. On arrival Soper found his 'pitch' was occupied and without more ado, he shoved the other speaker off the wall which led me to doubt his sincerity on pacifism but not his excellence as a speaker!

Can we learn from these great speakers? Certainly. All of them appeared to be talking 'off the cuff' but in every case the speech is prepared and 'honed'. I did not realise this at the time of delivery, but certainly in the case of Denning I heard the same speech twice and it was much the same. Another great speaker, probably the best that I have heard, though in this case not in person, was Winston Churchill. His wartime speeches which I heard over the radio (which we then

called the wireless) were rehearsed again and again so that every word and cadence was perfect. Of course, he had great events to talk about but even 80 odd years later they still have the power to raise the hairs on the back of my neck or bring a tear to the eye. But the lesson is that even the 'greats' have to prepare and prune. That is, to take a long speech and so prune it down that it becomes a short one. If they have to prune, we lesser mortals have to be doubly careful.

So long and short should, within reason, be measured by audience interest (or participation?). 'Within reason' because a sermon on a Sunday morning has often to be followed by folk preparing for a family lunch. But if time is not the main criterion, what then? Content matter, interest and the skill of the speaker. Who is to judge the skill of the speaker? Well, the congregation or the audience, obviously. But, and this is a big BUT, a major part of a speaker's skill is to judge whether the audience/congregation is 'held'. For those who have done much public speaking this will be well known - it is almost like telepathy and it is a skill that some almost inherit, some can develop and some never do. To anyone who stands before others whether to deliver a sermon, a stand-up comic sketch or any public speaking I counsel them to hear Robbie Burns:

"O wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us
To see oursels as others see us
t wad frae monie a blunder free us!.."

Of good sermons one of the best - and shortest, was that given in Peasmarsh by a fellow of Sydney Sussex College, Cambridge who hold the advowson (the right to appoint the incumbent of Peasmarsh). The essence of this sermon that I still remember although it is probably 20 years ago, was "There are those who believe, those who want to believe and those who want to want to believe". Was the sermon suited to the congregation?

This article is written by one who has only delivered one sermon but lots of lectures. It was at once a modest success and a total disaster. Just before Remembrance Day it had occurred to me that there was no sense in 'remembering' an event that had taken place years before the cognitive capacity of most of the congregation. The essence of remembering is to recall something from the back of memory to the front. Accordingly, I argued that what was needed was some instruction on the impact of war, its horrors and deprivation.

Fr Christopher (our last full-time vicar of Peasmarsh and Beckley) agreed and said, "Right, you are doing the sermon next Sunday". Hoisted by my own petard I could hardly escape. In order to explain to children what war meant I determined to use that wondrous gift that all children have - their imagination. Such a pity we lose it with age! The longest and most serious battle of World War 2, the possible loss of which was the only thing that Churchill said had scared him: the Battle of the Atlantic. So, tapping into the children's imagination I tried to trace the life of a U-boat from the builder's yard in Hambourg, through the Kiel Canal to the proving ground, out into the Atlantic where it sank a cargo ship. From there we

went to the food shortage caused by the U-boat here in England. I demonstrated this by having specimen war time rations for the children to see. The effect? The children were wide eyed and followed every word. One of them, now grown up, reminded me of it only last week. The adults? I think they thought in terms of a straitjacket, two large men in white coats and off to Hellingly! It was such a flop with the adults I can only remember it with embarrassment! But to the children? Perhaps a success in that it caused them to think AND REMEMBER some aspects of war and why we were, and are - so thankful to those who gave their lives for us ?

Was the sermon good or bad? Some years ago, in my professional life I had both to deliver lectures and appoint speakers. In order to ascertain whether the speakers were worth their coin I would follow this up with a questionnaire which, amongst other things, asked whether (a) the topic was relevant and (b) was well handled?

Not surprisingly but not very logically, there was a strong correlation between relevance and the speaker's performance. From this one can infer that a poor speaker can get away with it if the topic is relevant. But, of course, the opposite is true. Perhaps this direct approach is probably not well suited to the Church/congregation environment? How then is a preacher to ascertain whether his or her sermon is relevant to the congregation and well done? This is not an easy question to answer, especially in the South of England. Why? Because in the North people are much more inclined to be blunt: thus in the North "Eh, lad thar missed t'point and went on a bit" translates to "A good sermon vicar" followed by the person moving off to another church or to no church at all. Thus it becomes necessary for a preacher to develop those antennae that 'hear the unspoken word'. "O wad some Pow'r..."

So far I have written this article from the viewpoint of the congregation but what about the viewpoint of the preacher? If he or she has those developed antennae to know what the congregation is feeling all well and good, but if not, are we to allow the preacher to go on in blind ignorance, losing the congregation without knowing why? This is far more cruel than the North Country blunt approach even though it would seem bad mannered to criticise. If the preacher does not have those antennae to hear the unspoken word and remembering Winston Churchill's comment, "We all like to know but none of us likes to be told" we, the congregation have a duty to help by being more overt and honest about our feelings.

My message therefore is help the preacher. This needs some courage from members of the congregation but also some courage from the preacher to face the truth.



Bridge Drive

Tuesday 16th April 2024 at 1.45pm

in support of

The Friends of Peasmarsh Parish Church

The Friends of Peasmarsh Parish Church are delighted to be arranging another Bridge Drive inside the church after its success last year.

Holding the event in mid-April rather than March will hopefully result in warm Spring weather. However, there is now significant extra heating in the church! This year, as well as supporting general maintenance, special attention will be given to a new pathway around the stable building housing the kitchen and toilet facilities.

As in previous years, a home-made tea and well sponsored raffle are included, together with the Chicago bridge.

Tuesday 16th April 2024 at 1.45pm

Venue: The Church of St. Peter & St Paul, Peasmarsh

Tickets: £12.50 per person for bridge and tea

Please bring with you a bridge table and tablecloth, playing cards & pencils

For more information e-mail: lovatbonnet@gmail.com

PLEASE COMPLETE & EMAIL OR RETURN THIS FORM WITH YOUR CHEQUE - YOU CAN ALSO PAY BY BACS

I would like to reserve a table at £50 per table Your Name:.....

Names of those playing with you:

Your Address:

Contact Telephone Number:..... e-mail:.....

PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO FOPPC (Friends of Peasmarsh Parish Church)
and send to Lovat Bonnet, Cleves, Starvecrow Lane, Peasmarsh TN31 6XN

BACS PAYMENTS:

Account Name: Friends of Peasmarsh Parish Church, Sort Code: 30-90-28, Account No. 01877799
Please make the reference "Bridge" and your surname.



Coffee Morning Raising Funds for Marie Curie

We are holding a Coffee Morning on Friday 8th March in Peasmarsch Village Memorial Hall from 10am-12 noon, in aid of this wonderful charity, which gives exceptional support to those on palliative care and their families.

There will be a Raffle and a Cake Stall. If you can help in any way please contact Hilary Pankhurst, telephone 07484 128 435 or Sue Cavilla 07506 554 072.

Most importantly though, do come along and join in, bringing your family and friends for coffee or tea and a chat.

Marie Curie Needs Your Help

Once again Jempson's have kindly agreed to allow collections to take place at the entrance to their store in **Peasmarsch** for the Marie Curie Daffodil Appeal. Collections will take place on Friday 1st and Saturday 2nd March (9am to 4pm on each day). If you can spare just **one hour** to collect for Marie Curie and support this very worthwhile cause, please get in touch with Sue Cavilla, 01797 230431.

I am starting to organise a collection rota at Jempsons Supermarket in **Rye** also on Friday 1st and Saturday 2nd March and would be pleased if anyone could give just one hour of their time to help fundraise for this very worthy cause. Please phone 01797 230 208 or 07826 723 409. Leave your name and a short message and I will return your call.

One hour out of a day is a small gift to give to such a worthwhile charity

Many thanks.

Deirdre Bull



Hospices to Holland

Haven't thought of a New Year's Resolution yet? Or maybe you have and are searching for the perfect challenge? Well look no further! Embark on a challenge of a lifetime in June 2024 and take part in a cycling adventure from East Sussex to Amsterdam, in support of our Hospice! St Michael's Hospice and St Wilfrid's Hospice (Eastbourne) are teaming up on this exciting ride along the picturesque south coast before crossing the channel to embark on an unforgettable cycling experience through four different countries. As they make their way through France, Belgium and Holland, there will be the opportunity to explore and appreciate the diverse European countryside. Expect to pedal past stunning beaches, picturesque waterways, and idyllic tree-lined canals adorned with charming windmills.

To reserve your spot, please visit the Hospices to Holland website www.hospicestoholland.co.uk or speak to the Fundraising team at fundraising@stmichaelsospice.com or by calling 01424 456396.

An Evening with Jo Brand and Friends

St Michael's Hospice is thrilled to announce that the hilarious Jo Brand, the beloved Hastings-born comedy sensation, is set to grace the stage for an unforgettable evening on Sunday 21st April 2024. An Evening with Jo Brand and Friends promises to be an unmissable event, all in support of the invaluable work St Michael's Hospice does to support the community of Hastings and Rother with dying, death and loss. Hurry because seats are very limited, so don't miss out! Tickets are on sale from the White Rock Theatre Box Office, visit www.whiterocktheatre.org.uk



BECKLEY TREFOIL GROUP

This was our first official meeting in the hall since October (apart from the fun afternoon wreath making in December). January is the time for the A.G.M. which took place with the Committee enrolling two new members. The Officers agreed to continue in their roles as Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. As usual tea and biscuits were served with lots of chat and catching up after the Christmas break. Discussions then took place on what we as a group were going to do for our Star Challenge during the year. The meeting concluded at 4pm with the singing of Taps.

Our next meeting is in the hall on 19th February at 2pm, which coincides with Thinking Day on 22nd February when we will be thinking and remembering Guides and Brownies around the world.

Jean Masters

The Friends of All Saints Church, Beckley would welcome anyone willing to join either the main committee or our fete committee as we start the 2024 programme.

Please contact Mike Hancock on 01797 260525. thank you.

Maureen Lindsay Baker

Maureen died peacefully at home on Wednesday 20th December. She will always be remembered for the big part she played in the life both of our Churches where she was a Warden at various times. She will mostly be remembered for the amazing displays she created at Flower Festivals; many children were fascinated by her woodland arrangements complete with animals and waterfalls. She also decorated Beckley Church at Christmas and Easter. She had a very strong faith and was generous with her time, always ready to help other people. She was an enthusiastic member of our Local Trefoil Guild and many Brownies and Guides enjoyed cookouts and camping in her fields. She let local groups swim every week in her pool for a small donation which was given to charity. She loved horses and was an enthusiastic supporter of Riding for the Disabled which was held in her grounds for many years. Maureen's Funeral is being held at 2.15pm on Friday 16th February at Hastings Crematorium. There will be a Wake at the Rose and Crown from 3.30pm.

Pam Colegrave

Easter, a wonderful time to remember loved ones, both family and friends.

Easter Sunday this year falls on Sunday 31st March. If you would like to have a Lily in remembrance of a loved one

forming part of the church flower arrangements in St. Peter & St. Paul, Peasmarsch, Sue Cavilla at White Brook, School Lane, has kindly agreed to collect the names and monies. Please leave these in a sealed envelope marked 'Easter Lily' - by Friday 15th March.

The cost of the lilies will be £5 a stem. Names will be displayed in the church and read out at the 10am Service, which this Easter will be held at St Peter & St Paul, Peasmarsch. You are warmly invited. If you have any queries please contact me on 01797 230 208 or 07826 723 409.

*Easter Lily
Dedications*



Deirdre Bull

Peasmarsh Memorial Hall February 2024

Saturday 3rd February Attic & Collectors Fair in conjunction with Rye Crafters at Peasmarsh Memorial Hall 10am to 4pm - everyone welcome. Contact Mike Preston michael.preston45@gmail.com or 07447 583894 for more details or to book a table (£10 per table or £15 for 2) All day snack bar available for light lunches or snacks and home made cakes.

Monday 5th February is the **Lunch Club** - Morning coffee 11.30am, lunch from noon and entertainment 1-2pm. Cost £8.00 for two courses plus tea/coffee. **Booking essential** For more information, or to enquire about transport contact: sosi.kaskanian@hohcharity.co.uk Telephone: 07968 833 3097.

Wednesday 7th February Parish Council meeting 7.30pm. All Peasmarsh residents are welcome to attend.

Friday 9th February Film Club This month 'Living' with Bill Nighy New members welcome - contact Terry Betteridge 07533 193 801 betterid@aol.com for more details including this year's programme.

Wednesday 14th February Flower Arranging - this month's theme is "Cat woman wins Global Raspberry Award 2005"! What design would you do? Come along and join in the fun. New members always welcome. Contact Deirdre Bull 01797 230208 email johnbull113@btinternet.com

Monday 19th February 7-8.30pm **Sound Healing** - More details from sarahstephensonvoice@gmail.com

Saturday 24th February 9.30 - 4.30 **Rye Creative Stitchers** contact brenda9marsh@hotmail.com

Monday 26th February 13.15 - 15.15 **Sewing Group**. All welcome Celia 0777 818 1346 email celiapollington@aol.com

Yoga Classes with Jojo every **Monday - Thursday**. More info direct: jojo@yogacreative.co.uk

Thursday 29th February From 7am - 10pm **Polling station** for Neighbourhood Planning Referendum - see page 15 for more info.

web: peasmarshmh.org.uk email: bookings.peasmarshmh@gmail.com
Telephone 01797 230511

Cookery Corner

Super Cheese Biscuits

The cheese straws that you buy in shops never seem to have enough cheese in them - they're more like salty cardboard! So here's a really tasty recipe for lovely crumbly cheese biscuits, which takes only ten minutes to prepare and five minutes in the oven. They certainly passed the taste test with the expert food critics in church...

Ingredients

4 ozs plain flour
4 ozs butter or margarine
4 ozs mature cheddar cheese
½ teaspoon mustard powder.



Method

Put all the ingredients into a bowl, then knead until you have a soft dough. Don't work it too hard. Some cooks suggest adding a little water so the ingredients mix more easily. Don't do this. It makes the biscuits too hard. Roll out the mixture on a floured pastry board until it's about 5mm or ¼ inch thick and cut into discs. Normal pastry cutters are far too large. You want round discs about the size of 50p coins. I spent a long time trying to find suitable cutters. My plastic egg cups didn't have sharp enough edges to cut cleanly. I looked in the kitchen drawer and found the silver serviette ring with plain edges which was my Christening present when I was a baby. That proved to be an excellent cutter. It gave perfectly even shapes. Place on a greased baking tray and pop them in the oven at about 170°C. In my oven they only took five minutes or so to cook. They are ready when they are pale gold. Don't overcook because the cheese turns them bitter. They won't last long in the biscuit tin as everyone loves them.

The World Day of Prayer

This is an annual, worldwide and ecumenical Service, which starts in Australia and travels around the world, this year throughout **Friday 1st March 2024**.

Our local Service will take place at 10.30am at St. Mary's Centre, Lion Street, Rye, TN31 7LB, currently the home of Rye Methodist Church. The Service is prepared several years in advance, and this year has been prepared by the Christian women of Palestine; an ideal opportunity for all men and women to come and pray for this troubled land.

If anyone would be interested in joining the choir to lead the hymns, there will be a rehearsal at 9.30am on Friday 23rd February at St. Mary's Centre. Peasmarch & District Ladies Choir will be attending. All are welcome to attend the Service.

A Saint for February

POLYCARP, BISHOP OF SMYRNA 23 February



Honoured as one of the first Christian martyrs, Polycarp had been Bishop of Smyrna on the Adriatic coast of Asia Minor for over forty years when the persecution of Christians began.

He was arrested and given the option to renounce his faith and so save his life. His response was: "I have been Christ's servant for eighty-six years and he has done me no harm. Can I now blaspheme my King and my Saviour?" He was immediately burnt at the stake.

His remains were gathered together and buried outside the city; thus began the practice of celebrating the Eucharist over his burial place on the anniversary of his death, a practice which also grew over the martyrs' tombs in the Roman catacombs. Polycarp died in the year 155.

1st March 2024

World Day of Prayer

**I beg you, bear with
one another in love**

Palestine

This year, the World Day of Prayer Service nearest to our villages will be taking place at St Mary's Centre (now home of Rye Methodist Church), Lion St, Rye TN31 7LB

at 10:30am
on Friday, 1st March 2024.

For more details, please see
page 26.

NORTHIAM CONSERVATION SOCIETY

PRESENTS

MAMMA MIA!

— HERE WE GO AGAIN —

SING-ALONG

Saturday 10th February, 6.30pm
Northiam Village Hall

Fancy dress optional!



TICKETS IN ADVANCE | £7.50 Adults £4 Children (inc glass of wine/ soft drink & popcorn)
Contact Jeff Colton Tel: 07793 964391 or northiamconservation@gmail.com