

Hullbridge, Rawreth, Rettendon Churches Newsletter May/June - 2021

www.facebook.com/groups/hrr.churches

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A Season to be Thankful

It feels as though things are seriously getting better.

It's sunny and warm and that alone has cheered lots of people up.

It's St Mark's day – not that I have a favourite book of the bible but if I *did* have one it would be St Mark's gospel ... not that I do you understand. Anyway today I was able to preach about Mark, the way that he writes and his message.

I also have a week to look forward to. Tomorrow Sea Mist (our 27-foot tub of a sailing boat) goes back into the water after the winter and we will be taking a few days off to potter about in the Blackwater to make sure she is ready for more adventures over the summer.

And lockdown is being eased ... What a time to be alive!

But as I look at the news, especially from India at the moment, with an eyewatering rate of new Covid infections, shortage of oxygen for hospitals and a low vaccine rate, I realise how much I have to be thankful for and how I tend to take it all for granted. What did I do to *deserve* to be born in Britain rather than India?

Gratitude is so important but (I speak for myself here) so easily forgotten. Gratitude keeps things in perspective, acknowledging the wonderful things that I have and putting that in the wider context of God's creation. This is more than saying

"thankyou" (remember those 'thankyou' letters you were made to write after a birthday or Christmas?!) this is an attitude of mind, a way of living.

It brings joy and puts a smile on our faces. It shapes the way we act – how are we going to show we are grateful? And practical gratitude means that we can look at all we have without guilt even as we see those who aren't blessed as we are. They deserve the good things in life every bit as much as I do.

The Church of England is suggesting that as part of our practical gratitude for the vaccine we are receiving that we make a contribution to support poorer countries who have not yet had the vaccine or have a very low vaccination rate. They suggest that we support two charities, both of whom support such countries; Vaccinaid (www.vaccinaid.org) and Christian Aid (www.christianaid.org.uk). You can also make a donation to them through our churches.

But there is so much more to be thankful for too. The church itself and the message of Jesus Christ is life transforming and part of our worship is to be generous in response to God's generosity that we see in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. That is why the offertory (including the collection) is at the heart of our Eucharistic (Holy Communion) worship. If you can't get to church you can give online through our website (www.hrr-churches.org.uk/donations).

In a very different way our churches (both locally and as a diocese) are in great need of funds. We really need to increase income and/or reduce costs (which basically means Vicars). But, if we are going to give, let's not do it out of desperation (to avoid going broke) but out of gratitude to God for all that he has given to us through His Church.

All the very best

Richard

Priest in charge of Hullbridge, Rawreth and Rettendon

Church Services

We hold Morning Prayer each weekday morning and compline each weekday evening.

Morning Prayer - 8.00am

Compline/Night Prayer - 8.00pm

you can join us by joining our Facebook group www.facebook.com/groups/HRR.Churches.

Our Eucharist/Holy Communion services are on Sunday mornings. These are held at the following times:

St Thomas Hullbridge 9.30am

St Nicholas Rawreth. 10.00am

All Saints Rettendon 11.15am

These services are live streamed and once again you can join us by joining our Facebook group - www.facebook.com/groups/HRR.Churches.

You can now download the order of service for Eucharist/Holy Communion that we will be using from our webpage: hrr-churches.org.uk/prayer-and-reflection/

You will also find the Collects and Readings there for each Sunday too.

Bereavement Group at St Nicholas

The Bereavement Group will meet in St Nicholas Church on 27th May and 24th June at 1.30 pm. All are welcome.

For more information contact Pat on 07790 460026 or Helen on 07880 728560.

Rawreth Ladies Club Meetings

The meetings have been suspended due to Covid-19 for information as to when they will re-open contact Sue Merton Tel: 01268 561703.

Rawreth District Council

For up-to-date information, contacts and telephone numbers visit their website: www.rawrethparishcouncil.co.uk/ or contact the Clerk Hayley Bloomfield

Tel 07773 952455. or e-mail clerk.rawrethparishcouncil@btinternet.com

Rawreth Village Hall Bookings

For Village Hall bookings contact Dave Collins Tel: 01268 734933 or e-mail daveicollins40@gmail.com

Rettendon and Battlesbridge Newsletter

"The Rettendon and Battlesbridge Newsletter can be found on the following link each month:-

<https://e-voice.org.uk/retbatnews/newsletters/>

If you would like to be added to the email list for reminders please contact the compiler, Barbara Wright, on RetBatNews@gmail.com or telephone 01245 321554."

We are still producing a newsletter per month, but it may be only on line and not paper copy. We do send paper copies out if people ask, but have to ask for postage costs.

Your faithfully
Barbara Wright

Rettendon and Battlesbridge Newsletter

Website: <https://e-voice.org.uk/retbatnews/>

HRR Churches Newsletter

If you know of someone who would like a copy of our Newsletter please forward their e-mail address to me christine@davidholmes.plus.com and I will send them a copy.

Likewise if you do not wish to receive a copy of the Newsletter please forward your email address to me and I will take you off the circulation list.

Christine



13 April 2021

Dear Friends,

I hope you are all keeping well.

We have just welcomed all the children back to school for the start of the summer term, and it is lovely to see them all.

This Thursday we are fortunate to have the 2 Johns delivering training and workshops to all pupils and staff. I would like to thank the Friends of St Nicholas Primary School for funding this for us.

Next week we are looking forward to holding parent consultations with our parents, remotely again, this will be a new way of working for us all! I think over the past year we have all got better at staying in touch remotely.

I look forward to writing again soon.

Mrs S. Willis
Executive Headteacher

Rettendon Primary School
Main Road, Rettendon Common, Chelmsford

We were thrilled to finally get our whole school community back on site by the end of the Spring Term, just in time for an Easter break. Our heartfelt thanks and admiration goes to all our parents and pupils for such hard work at home under incredibly unusual, and at times very stressful, circumstances. Hopefully, we will not be revisiting that, as a whole a school, for a long time!

It has been great to see the children get straight back in to their learning and enjoying some on-site activities with outdoor learning and PE as the sun has begun to show its face again. The site has been full of the babble of voices and laughter again – it's a real joy for all the staff.

Once further lifting of measures takes place, we look forward to restarting some of the other activities and extra-curricular activities that the children love and start to mix our children across the school once more – gardening, music, singing team sports and so much more.

Thanks for all the kind thoughts and comments over the past months.

Phil Andrews
Deputy Headteacher

Doris Kay

It is with great sadness I write that Doris died on 25th February. Her funeral was held at St Nicholas on 1st April where, due to covid 19 restrictions, it was a family and close friends occasion by invitation only.

Doris was a very kind person and she will be fondly remembered by all who knew her and by her friends at St Nicholas.

Christine

Appreciating the Psalms – a series of reflections

Psalm 23

- 1 The Lord is my shepherd;
therefore can I lack nothing.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.
- 3 He shall refresh my soul
and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
- 4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil; for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You spread a table before me
in the presence of those who trouble me;
you have anointed my head with oil
and my cup shall be full.
- 6 Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

This lovely psalm is so familiar to us that it's hard to see what we could find in it that is new. But the danger with familiarity is that it does breed contempt – in other words we say the words so often or sing them in one of the well-known hymns at so many weddings and funerals that they can lose their power.

So I want to use some suggestions from people who actually have experience of the ways of sheep in the middle east.



Firstly there's a difference between sheep and goats – sheep are led, whereas goats have to be driven.

This is how God is portrayed in this psalm. God leads me beside still waters, God leads me in right paths. So God leads, and we are invited to follow. God cannot force us, or make us go where he wants – for we humans can



be just as stubborn as sheep (and possibly at times just as stupid!) – so God invites us, and we need to be attentive to God’s calling us to follow his lead.

But following God’s lead means being ready to walk in the paths that God leads us onto. Psalm 23 talks about ‘paths of righteousness’ but in the NRSV version it uses the more accurate ‘right paths’. Again, shepherds know what this means, as a Palestinian priest explained to me on some occasion. If you are confronted with a hill, you have two choices of how to go up it. You can do it the hard way – that is straight up – or you can do it the easier way, in a zig-zag sort of route that gives a gentler walk. If you look hard at the sides of the Judean hills, you will see lots of tracks doing exactly that – zig-zagging gently around the hillsides. These are the paths of righteousness, or the right paths – they are actually the round paths, i.e. paths around hills, following the contours. These are the paths made and followed by the shepherds as they lead their sheep – they know the safe routes –and the safe paths to lead their sheep along. So too God leads us on safe paths, and if we follow God we will find the safe route, which in the psalm is a metaphor for finding paths of salvation – paths which lead us in the right way, the way that God calls us, the way God wills for us.

And the psalm sets out the consequence for us if we follow this lead along the right paths. Firstly they take us by still waters – again that is an image of safety, for the still waters are the calm waters, which compare with the dangerous waters which can come flooding down the wadis – the dried up river valleys between the hills –in a great deluge in the spring, and can wash every thing before them. It is in the still waters – still, safe, waters that God restores our souls.

Secondly God provides for us on our journey – God provides us with a walking staff to support us, to check the path as we walk, to fend off dangerous creatures. Even when we are in a situation so dangerous that we are risking death, God protects us.

And lastly, God invites us to share in his banquet at his table. Even in the presence of enemies, God anoints us and sets us apart as God’s chosen ones, he cleanses us to be ready to share in that heavenly banquet at the table to which he invites us, and to feast at his table in heaven.

It all sounds so simple and so beautiful – and so indeed it is. God leads us, God protects us, God restores us, God cleanses us, God nourishes us, God provides a home for us. And what does it require of us in return?

That too is blindingly simple – all we have to do is to follow him where he leads us. But oh – how hard that actually is – to set aside our own stubbornness, our own wilfulness, our own selfishness – all those things that make us try to walk in our own paths because we think we know where we are going and can do it of our own will and in our own way. Our own wilfulness leads us on the difficult paths, the dangerous paths, the risky paths – it leads us into the flooded valley, up the steep and unstable hillside, into the valley of darkness and death.

The choice is ours – how ready are we to make that choice? To follow our own will, or to align our will with God, to listen to God, to hear God’s voice, and to follow where God leads us. We are – hopefully – a little brighter than sheep – and if they have the sense to trust and follow their shepherd – perhaps we should be capable of doing the same.

Revd. Brenda Wallace
Associate Priest, Hullbridge, Rawreth and Rettendon

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In Memory of Doris Kay

We all loved Doris - what a joy it has been to have known her. Queen of the kitchen and never happier than when having a chat over a cuppa with a slice of cake - she was a friend to us all. When I heard that Doris had died I had an immediate image of her walking through heaven calling a cheerie 'hello' to all her friends and inevitably, finding a kettle and settling down for a cup of tea and a catch up chat.

God bless you Doris, we will remember you with much love and affection.

Heather Love

“Have you and your family become interested in gardening lately.

Do you need some helpful advice?

Or perhaps just some useful tips from other amateur gardeners.

RETTENDON HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

have free membership this year so now is the time to join us and find out what we do. Although there may be restrictions we have planned a full itinerary of shows, talks, plant sales and coach trips.

If you would like to join us please contact

Beryl on 01268 766221, John on 01268 562371 or Barbara on 01245 321554,

or email RetHSsec@gmail.com.

Our website is <https://e-voice.org.uk/rethortsoc/>”

Riverside Primary School, Ferry Road, Hullbridge

It was lovely to welcome all our children back into school on 8th March. Having been working from home for eight weeks, they returned back to school full of enthusiasm and readiness to learn. It has been such a pleasure to see full classrooms and hear laughter in the playground again.

Since returning, the children have taken part in a number of activities. These include Red Nose day which took place on 19th March. Children were invited to come to school wearing red to celebrate this fundraiser and as a result the school raised £270 for Comic Relief; a fantastic achievement.

As part of their topic Spring watch, our Middle school were fortunate to be able to hear a talk on plants and what they need to survive via Zoom from Lizzie Holt of Essex Wildlife trust. The children really enjoyed listening to Lizzie and sharing what they had already learnt as well as learning new things.

As the restrictions have eased, some of our after school clubs have been able to resume. These include Drama, Minecraft, Football, Lego and Arts and Crafts. These have been well attended and appreciated by those taking part. In addition, some of our children have been able to benefit from receiving lessons on playing the recorder, which they have taken part in with enthusiasm.

Rev Richard has continued to provide spiritual guidance by filming his weekly assemblies for the children and continuing to share Bible stories and lessons from the Christian faith and we look forward to hearing from Rev Susan when she is able to return to us.

Over the last few weeks, the children have continued to promote the school's values and we continue to be proud of each and every one of them. We are also very grateful to our parents, who continue to support us. Finally, I would like to thank the wider community for their continued support during these unusual times.

Mrs C Smith
Headteacher