

PEACE  
ON  
EARTH

*Good News*    *Parish Magazine*    *December 2020*

*High Downs Parish*

*Serving the villages of Eastling, Otterden, Stalisfield and Throwley*

for current and past editions go to: <http://www.goodnews.rf.gd>



## **CHRISTMAS 2020**

### **Stalisfield, St. Mary's**

We will be holding the following service at St Mary's Church and would be delighted for you to come and celebrate.

**Midnight Mass**  
**Thursday 24th December,**  
**11.30pm**

Covid safeguards will be in place for the safety of all and, for this reason, seating in the church is limited. We would ask that you inform Jean West if you would like to attend the service by leaving a message on 01233 712270 or email: [matchstick23@btinternet.com](mailto:matchstick23@btinternet.com)

Please include in the message how many you will be and your phone number in case of cancellation.

All services are subject to current

## **A Candlelit Carol Service**

will be held on  
**20th December at 5pm,**  
at our beautiful church  
**St Michael and All Angels,**  
**Throwley.**

The Throwley Choir will sing for us (sadly congregations are not allowed to sing at this time) and there will be Christmas readings. Please would you let me ([gaynoremoss@hotmail.com](mailto:gaynoremoss@hotmail.com)) know if you will be joining us and how many people are in your group. This will help us work out how to arrange the seating to keep everyone safe.

We look forward to welcoming you all.

**Also on**  
**Christmas Day at**  
**10.00am**  
**for Family Communion**

Covid-19 government guidelines



## **EASTLING CAROLS IN THE CAR PARK**

**Christmas Eve at 4.30pm**

Come and join us in the church car park on Christmas Eve for a service of Carols and Readings in the open air.

Our first ever outdoor carol service means everyone can sing the carols providing we all stay in our family bubbles, and keep to the 2m social distance at all times.

If you would like to attend please email [eastlingparish@gmail.com](mailto:eastlingparish@gmail.com) with your name, address and the number in your bubble by Midnight on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER. You will receive an email back by Monday 21<sup>st</sup> December if we can allocate places. Words for the carols and service order will be emailed to you to use on your device when you attend, printed sheets will also be available.

Please pray for good weather

Bring your own torches and wrap up warm.





## Christmas 2020 or not?

I am writing in a week when there has been quite a bit of talk of Christmas. Will the infection rate be down enough to allow families to meet up for Christmas? What will the Government be allowing whilst trying to balance what is happening with Covid?

This same week we have been wrestling with what we might or might not be able to do as Churches. Our buildings are currently closed during the second lockdown - will December bring a re-opening? How do we plan Christmas Services in this uncertain time? Will we still be unable to sing? What does that mean for carols? How do we keep safe this Christmas Time?

Our friend Hans Hentschel sent me this painting this week:

The banner over the road reads: **Risk Area**

Hans made the comment:

*Christmas is coming - No risk, no faith...*

Christmas 2020 will still happen in one way or another. December 25<sup>th</sup> is Christmas Day and is the day we remember the birth of Jesus Christ. Whilst God was in control, the whole venture was not without risk surely. A difficult journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem in late pregnancy, no place to stay, a baby born in an area where the animals were kept - what happened to those sterile trays midwives use today? - the angels appearing to the shepherds - those smelly shepherds coming to visit - wise men from the East with their gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh, returning home a different way so Herod didn't know where Jesus was - the family then fleeing to Egypt to protect the baby.



So whilst I continue to pray for a healing from this Covid pandemic, we can still remember what Christmas is truly about.

The gift of that baby boy to the world, God's gift to us and somehow remembering that this Christmas seems more poignant than ever.

God bless you this Christmas time,  
*Steve Lillicrap, Rector.*

### *Prayer Pointers*

### *December 2020*



**Mondays** - Looking ahead to the lives of all babies born this year.

**Tuesdays** - Looking ahead to the Covid - 19 vaccination programme worldwide.

**Wednesdays** - Looking ahead to businesses as we leave the EU.

**Thursdays** - Looking ahead to serving God in 2021.

**Fridays** - Looking ahead to the unemployed having work again.

**Saturdays** - Looking ahead to families being together again.

**Sundays** - Looking ahead to glorious HOPE of our new life in Jesus.

### **Hugh Perks**

Sue, Victoria and Oliver would like to say how touched they have been by the friendship, kindness and many offers of help they have received during Hugh's long illness and since his death on 27<sup>th</sup> October.

Thank you.

Given current restrictions there will be a private cremation.

# High Downs Parish

**Rector** Reverend Canon Dr. Steve Lillicrap  
01795 522510 [highdownsvicar@gmail.com](mailto:highdownsvicar@gmail.com)

**Reader** Norman Fowler (01795 890412)  
4 Meesons Close, Eastling

**Reader** Caroline Ramshaw (07799 538809)  
4 Glebe Cottages, Eastling

## Churchwardens

**Eastling** Andrew Baxter (01795 890598)

**Administrator** Janet Payne  
E mail: [eastlingchurch@gmail.com](mailto:eastlingchurch@gmail.com)

## **Stalisfield with Otterden**

Jean West (01233 712270)

**Administrator** Sheila Moger (01233 463746)  
E mail: [samhawksnest@aol.com](mailto:samhawksnest@aol.com)

**Throwley** Gaynore Moss (01795 890995)

**Parish Office** Email: [eastlingchurch@gmail.com](mailto:eastlingchurch@gmail.com)  
[facebook.com/highdownsbenefice](https://facebook.com/highdownsbenefice)

## *From The Registers*

**Sue Gaind**

**Funeral** 7th September 2020 at Stalisfield  
**Interment of Ashes** 12th September at Stalisfield

## CONTACT THE *GOOD NEWS* EDITOR

Hilary Harlow 01795 890338

If you would like submit articles or stories, or to advertise in the January 2021 magazine, send your submission by 20th December to: [goodnewsmagazine@me.com](mailto:goodnewsmagazine@me.com).

Past and current issues of the Good News may be viewed on [ccgi.northdowns.plus.com/goodnews](http://ccgi.northdowns.plus.com/goodnews) or  
[www.goodnews.rf.gd](http://www.goodnews.rf.gd)

## Online Daily Worship Continues

As well as the services in our churches, the daily 9am Morning Prayer at Lynsted will continue and be live online on

[www.kingsdowncreekside.co.uk](http://www.kingsdowncreekside.co.uk) - also on the YouTube Channel 'Breakthrough at Lynsted'.

More information is updated weekly on St Mary's Eastling 'A Church Near You':  
<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/11982/>

## Sunday Services

### Every Sunday at Lynsted

9.00am Morning Prayer  
6pm Breakthrough

### 6th December Advent 2

2 Peter 3. 8 - 15a, Mark 1. 1 - 8

Eastling 10.30am Holy Communion by ext

### 13th December Advent 3

1 Thessalonians 5. 15 - 24 John 1. 6-8, 19-28

Throwley 10.30am Morning Prayer

### 20th December Advent 4

Romans 16. 25 - 27, Luke 1. 26 - 38

Eastling 10.30am Morning Worship

Throwley 5.00pm Carol Service

### 24th December Christmas Eve

Hebrews 1. 1-4 [5-12], John 1. 1 - 14

Eastling 4.30pm Carols in the Car Park  
Stalisfield 11.30pm Holy Communion by ext

### Christmas Day

Titus 2. 11 - 14, Luke 2. 1-14 [15-20]

Throwley 10.00am Holy Communion by ext

### 27th December Christmas 1

Galatians 4. 4 - 7, Luke 2. 15 - 21

Newnham 10.30am Holy Communion

Other December services around the Kingsdown and Creekside parish can be found at

[www.kingsdowncreekside.co.uk](http://www.kingsdowncreekside.co.uk)



## Churches Open for Private Prayer

Throwley and Eastling church buildings will continue to be open for private prayer.

St Michael and All Angels,  
Throwley  
Wednesdays and Sundays  
10am till dusk

St Mary, Eastling  
Tuesdays, Thursdays  
and Sundays  
11am - 2pm





# Volunteer of the Year runner-up Kent Fire and Rescue Service

Congratulations to Tracey Smith, who has been crowned this year's Volunteer of the Year Runner-up.

Tracey has undertaken a variety of roles since joining as a volunteer just over two years ago and has proven to be a very capable, smart, enthusiastic and committed member of the team.

A member of the Volunteer Response Team Tracey was nominated for her excellent customer support at a recent incident.

She is also recognised for the humanitarian work she carried out with Age UK during the Covid-19 pandemic, helping to deliver meals to those in need.



Tracey regularly puts herself forward for volunteer duties and is an invaluable member of the KFRS team - well done!



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## Eastling Neighbourhood Watch

### Village Warden

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or 01795 890848



### Police 101 Emergency 999

During the months of September/October there were countless reports of hare coursing, driving through seeded fields, poaching and many other problems around all local villages. The police together with many farmers and neighbourhood watch became very proactive resulting in many arrests, two I will mention:

Five persons were arrested in the Doddington area and charged with various offences one of them being in possession of an offensive weapon.

Six persons in two cars which had caused many problems were arrested in Lenham and charged with offences including breach of covid regulations.

There has been hardly any problems caused over the last few weeks so hopefully it will keep quiet but please do not hesitate to report anything suspicious even the smallest thing as it will all help to keep our villages crime free. I did notice that our old friend from Newnham Lane has been arrested in Sittingbourne for burglary. May I wish you all a merry Christmas and hopefully we can have a happy New Year. Have good month and take care, Alan.



Help feed local people in crisis

Faversham Foodbank December 2020

**URGENT !!! Thank you for your contributions.** The team at Faversham Foodbank have let us know that 45% more people asked for help from September to October and they expect a further increase in requests in the months ahead. It is dreadful to think of anyone needing help to feed themselves and their families at this time of year as many of us tuck in to a hearty Christmas dinner. The items the Foodbank is short of are listed below. Please continue to drop these off at the Carpenters Arms, during open hours, or at collection points in our local supermarkets. The Foodbank team has also asked us to thank those who have chosen to make regular financial contributions rather than provide goods.

#### Items required for December

**Shaving foam; squash, long life fruit juice; hot chocolate; sponge puddings; instant noodles; deodorant.**



## Eastling Primary School News

Unfortunately due to the second Lockdown Eastling Primary School has had to cancel/postpone a number of planned events. We were however delighted to be able to continue with our tree planting day on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November. Eastling Primary School have been working with Trees for Farm. The school had 2 boxes of tree saplings delivered to the school by The Woodland Trust. Trees for Farms had successfully secured this for our school. One of our parents Mrs Lowe worked with the school on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November to prepare an area of the field for planting. The children planted a wide range of tree saplings including silver birch, holly, oak and willow.

The school has also been able to introduce Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) to the children this term. Two wonderful parents built a mud kitchen amongst the trees on the field for all the children to enjoy. As the school is

currently divided into two bubbles the children are taking turns to utilise part of the field for OPAL and the second bubble is on the playground. On the playground the children can enjoy two new areas, a reading shed and a role play shed. The reading shed is complete with carpet, beanbags and cosy cushions.

Our infant children have started rehearsals for the nativity which this year will be recorded due to current regulations. We are also hoping to hold our annual Christingle Service in school via Zoom for the children.

We do have a few spaces available across the school for an immediate start. Any prospective parents looking for a Reception place for September 2021 are welcome to call the office on 01795 890252 to arrange a visit. For further information please visit our school website where newsletters are displayed and updated regularly. Melanie Dale, Head teacher



"Nice idea, Amelia, but I don't think that the Angel of the Lord Zooming with the shepherds would have the same dramatic effect."



## “God is with us in our pain and fear” – Bishop of London’s message of hope

The Bishop of London, Rt Revd Sarah Mullally, has said that despite this being a time of “great uncertainty and challenge” as the world struggles to “overcome a devastating pandemic that has cut short earthly lives, destroyed livelihoods, and separated us from the people and activities we enjoy,” yet still “we are not without hope.”

Speaking recently in St Paul’s Cathedral, she said: “Through word, prayer, song and symbol, we are reminded that God’s love for us can never be destroyed. God is with us in our pain and fear and will lead us to a yet more glorious day.”

Bishop Sarah also praised the ongoing work of the “real heroes and heroines at work in intensive care units, the Emergency Department, oncology and elderly care wards.”

These people have been “giving their all, and are continuing to give their all, because we are still very much in the midst of the Covid pandemic.”

“Yet,” she went on, “The hope we have in our hearts as Christians is eternal. Hope that is in Christ will not be disappointed.”



## The Shepherd

by Audrey Keen

Below a dapples sky of grey  
The shepherd walks among his sheep,  
While curlews rise above the moor  
and wild flowers sleep.

He wanders slowly through his flock  
And breathes the clean sweet air so still  
His collie dog is zestful yet  
And gallops on at will.

But the placid sheep are slow to move  
They laze and languish in the grass  
Unhurriedly they rise to feet  
As the collie canters past.

Collected thus and penned to check  
Disease of foot or fleece,  
Or wormed or cleaned and, vetted so,  
They spring on their release.

But the gentle shepherd takes his crook  
To look for lost lambs on the tor  
As the collie turns free spirited  
Through the wind on the wold heather  
moor.



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# Wags & Tales



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- ◆ Why not give your virtual Christmas get together a KSS twist and download our fun party pack
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FOR MORE INFORMATION ON OUR FESTIVE ACTIVITIES

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whisky marie rose

Country sourdough

### Mains

Kelly bronze turkey breast,  
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Koffman's roast potatoes,  
Creamed potatoes  
Cauliflower Lincolnshire poacher gratin  
Sprouts & chestnuts,  
Sandy carrots sage butter  
Braised red cabbage mulled wine spices  
Pigs in blankets, Red wine jus

### Dessert

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instruction on how to prepare your  
Christmas Day meal, that way we  
can still be with you in spirit.

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At home 2020  
Christmas Day  
box



We are itching to open and will as soon as the government allows us, in the mean time we will be offering a take away menu for collection. We will also see the launch of our Christmas shop with all those Luxuries we so very very need this Christmas, cheese, chocolate, wild bread, charcuterie and more!  
Keep updated by following us on Facebook or see our website.

Christmas Day we will be closed but are offering a lovely cook at home box, Christmas Day lunch with out the preparation - leave it to Richard (he loves it more than we do!)

Stay safe and we hope to see you soon  
Marianne, Richard & Nathan!

Please call 01795 890256 or  
email [info@theploughinnstalisfield.co.uk](mailto:info@theploughinnstalisfield.co.uk)

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## Why the world was ready for Christmas

Ever wonder why Jesus was born when He was? The Bible tells us that "when the time had fully come, God sent forth His Son..." The Jewish people had been waiting for their Messiah for centuries. Why did God send Him precisely when He did?

Many biblical scholars believe that the 'time had fully come' for Jesus because of the politics of the time. The Roman Empire's sheer size and dominance had achieved something unique in world history: the opportunity for travel from Bethlehem to Berwick on Tweed without ever crossing into 'enemy territory' or needing a 'passport'.

For the first time ever, it was possible for 'common' people to travel wide and far, and quickly spread news and ideas. And all you needed were two languages - Greek to the east of Rome, and Latin to the west and north. You could set sail from Joppa (Tel Aviv) and head for any port on the Med. And the Roman roads ran straight and true throughout the empire.

So, the Roman Empire achieved something it never intended: it helped spread news of Christianity far and wide for 400 years. After that, the Empire crumbled, and the borders shut down. Not until the 19<sup>th</sup> century would people again roam so freely. The time for Jesus to be born, and for news of Him to be able to travel, had indeed 'fully come'.

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## Journeys or lockdown this Christmas?

by Lester Amann.

Christmas is a busy time for travel, as many of us venture a great distance to see family or friends again. But this year coronavirus has changed all that. Seeing all our loved ones this Christmas will be difficult, if not impossible. Soon we may not be travelling any-where very much at all.

Have you noticed that the Christmas story is about journeys? It begins with Mary and Joseph travelling from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Then, some shepherds receive news from an angel about a special birth. They travel through the night, across dark fields and down unlit streets to search for the baby Jesus.

After this, in an eastern country some wise men see a new star, one that heralds a new king. They leave home and set out with only the star to guide them, and their faith to reassure them that Someone special is waiting at the end of their journey.

All these travellers must have wondered what really lay ahead. Nothing was fully understood, carefully planned for, or safe. They all travelled with questions and uncertainties. But God had come

unexpectedly into their lives, and suddenly they were given new roles to serve Him. Despite worldly circumstances that could have crushed them, they stood firm and trusted God all the way.

These travellers' tales tell us that God may suddenly enter into our familiar, or this year, unfamiliar circumstances. He may come in surprising ways, to prompt us into new avenues of service. At first His call on us may be uncomfortable and challenging.

If our response is anything like Joseph, Mary, the shepherds and wise men – to be obedient to His call in serving, witnessing and worshipping, we shall be greatly blessed and rewarded.

We are all on life's journey. If we travel with God, He will be faithful and lead us to His heavenly Home.



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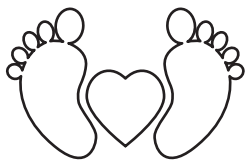
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## **Kent County Councillor's October Report**

I have been asked by several people, including the Editors of two Parish Newsletters to return to the subject of my last months report, changes to the Planning System and Swale's housing numbers.

Since then the coalition Cabinet has approved the proposals of their Local Plan Panel.

Rather than the 217 houses per year proposed under the current Plan the changes are as follows:

Out of an anticipated figure of 1,483 houses per annum Faversham is expected to provide 35% and the Rural Parishes another 10.5%. The coalition Cabinet voted almost unanimously to endorse these figures, including the vote of Liberal Democrat Leader Ben Martin who is elected to represent Faversham. Whether this was a factor in 2 of the 5 Liberal Democrat Councillors subsequently resigning from the Group I can only guess. Our own Boughton & Courtenay Borough representative Cllr Alistair Gould (Green) despite not having a vote as a Deputy Cabinet Member chose to attend the meeting and speak in favour of the proposals!

This would increase the target for Faversham and our Parishes from 217 house per year to 675, a 200% increase or more than three times as many per houses to be completed each and every year.

I note from the Minutes of the subsequent Graveney Parish Council, which I missed due to date and time clashing with another Parish Council in my Division that our local Borough Councillors were of the opinion that these numbers could be accommodated without the North Street development going ahead as they could all be built East of Faversham. Good news possibly for Sheldwich and Baddles-mere but certainly not for Boughton, Dunkirk and Graveney etc.

We must hope that the combined lobbying efforts of Kent County Council and Kent's MPs leads to Government reducing the total numbers although it is purely Swale's Borough Councillors who can allocate the numbers across Swale.

We have recently managed to get away for a few days with our dogs to the Cornish coast, our first break for twelve months. We travelled through Wiltshire, Devon and Cornwall with an almost total lack of litter! Why do our roads look so litter strewn?

After over six months of "online" meetings, sometimes up to ten hours a day it has been nice to spend one or two days a week Chairing Home to School Transport Appeals. We have given those parents who wish to the opportunity to meet and discuss with the Panel either face to face or via a web link. Far better for the parents and so much easier to arrive at a fair decision.

This will most likely be my last newsletter you will receive in 2020, a year most of us will be pleased to see the back of. Can I therefore pray that you all have a peaceful Christmas and a Covid free New Year.

Andrew Bowles KCC Member – Swale East

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# Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Luke 2 verses 22-38

God promised the Jews that when times were bad, He would send a Leader to save them. He told Simeon it would happen in his lifetime.

God told Simeon to go to the Temple.



He saw a couple with a baby.

Mary and Joseph had come to give their offerings for their first-born, Jesus, and for child birth.



Simeon held Jesus and praised God.



I can now die in peace because You have kept Your promise.



I have seen the One You have sent to save Your people and all the world!

Mary and Joseph were amazed! Simeon blessed them, but said...



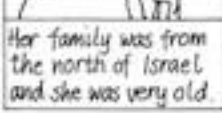
This child will show what people are really like inside and this will mean pain for you as well!



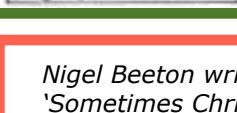
Anna the prophet was also in the Temple.



Her family was from the north of Israel and she was very old.



She spent every day praying in the Temple.



When she saw Jesus she praised God.



Anna spoke about Jesus to everyone who was waiting for God's Saviour.



## The Long Awaited Promise Wordsearch Clues

- |         |           |         |          |
|---------|-----------|---------|----------|
| temple  | baby      | Anna    | family   |
| praised | offerings | prophet | lifetime |
| peace   | inside    | couple  | Mary     |
| Jesus   | everyone  | God     | praying  |
| people  | Joseph    | waiting | Israel   |
| Saviour | leader    | world   | Anna     |

Nigel Beeton writes:

'Sometimes Christmas can be a frustrating time. This year I fear may be worse than most, stressful and difficult. But maybe we need to get our frustrations into perspective.'

### Christmas Frustration????

I said to God, upon my knees  
 "O Lord, I am so cross!  
 "That gift I sent to Aunt Denise  
 "Within the post is lost!  
 "That tree I bought for forty pounds  
 "(Well, just a penny less)  
 "Its needles lie upon the ground  
 "It looks a total mess!"

"I know," said God, "I understand,  
 "I sent my Son, you know.  
 "He came to Earth, just as I'd planned  
 "Two thousand years ago  
 "Was born within a stable bare -  
 "The cattle heard Him cry  
 "He spoke of love, men didn't care  
 "They led Him out to die."

"No gift was given with such love  
 "No higher price was paid.  
 "He left His throne of light above  
 "For sin His life to trade.  
 "But even after all these years  
 "This gift you men eschew,  
 "So Christmas is a time of tears  
 "For Me, as well as you."

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