

The Grapevine

The periodical newsletter from
Lyminge Parish Church

Spring 2011

Time to Think.....

A thought for Lent

The season of Lent is approaching again, and I feel that we should make something of it.

But just what is Lent supposed to be all about? The story of Jonah came to mind this morning.

God sent Jonah to Ninevah.

Ninevah was a wondrous place. It was almost literally a mountain of gold and glitter. It was a busy place. People were running everywhere, here and there; buying this and that, in fact, doing pretty much whatever they pleased. If it were today, we can picture the roads bumper to bumper with silver Mercedes and stretch black limos. They had the best of everything, the finest clothes, the fanciest cars (well, the finest gold covered chariots anyway... the first - four-hoof drive!). I am sure they thought they were the Kings of the World!

But then, God had a message for them.....

RETURN TO GOD

And what did the people of Ninevah do when they heard this message?

THEY ACTUALLY LISTENED

From the mighty King all the way down to the lowliest peasant, they tore off all the clothing and jewels they thought that made them so great, and they put on sack cloth and ashes. They finally came to see the reality of things.

In the sight of the true King of the universe, they were nothing but beggars.

Maybe that's what we need to do here.

Light some candles. Put on our raggiest clothes, smear some ash on our foreheads, and remind ourselves in a very real way that we are God's humble servants... ..whom he loves oh so, so dearly.

Vanessa

**“The earth is the Lord's
and all that is in it,
And we his humble servants.
Let us serve the Lord with gladness,
and come before his presence with
thanksgiving!
For the Lord is good;
his mercy is everlasting;
and his faithfulness endures from age to age.”**



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FROM THE EDITOR....



This is the first Grapevine of 2011 and the editorial team hope that you will enjoy it. We are moving towards Easter and, hopefully, the start of spring. The trees and the fields are beginning to show signs of new life, and the first lambs are now outdoors. I would like to draw your attention to the excellent church website which has been set up by Kathryn Drury.

Once again I appeal for articles for the next edition of Grapevine; if you would like to write something or have your say on something that bugs you, go ahead and write it down. Send or give your articles or thoughts to either one of the editorial team, Derek Smith or Michael Allen.

NOTES FROM THE PCC.....

The PCC continues to wrestle with the Diocesan Advisory Committee over repairs and maintenance of the church building. The position regarding the roof repairs is explained in a sheet appended to this newsletter, please take the time to read it carefully. There are other areas where the PCC thinks changes are needed. The black metal railings beside the porch are one. Their purpose is to prevent anyone going down into the ditch between the path and the church. Unfortunately the local youths who sometimes frequent the churchyard climb on them and they have begun to sag. We have been given a new set of railings, which are not only better looking but safer. The PCC has also decided that, to prevent the same youths from hanging about in the porch, metal gates will be fitted to the porch itself. These will be full height and made in an acceptable design; sadly it is proving a long winded business to get the DAC to agree to the erection of both the gates and the new railings. The Churchyard Gardening Gang continues its excellent work and will soon be starting a new season and any volunteers with a couple of hours to spare on Saturday mornings would be very welcome.

Derek Smith

CHURCH MUSIC



The Choir continues to enjoy singing at the main services in the parish, including occasional appearances at Paddlesworth for Evensong. Christmas music was thought to go generally well with the choir taking a leading part the Candlelight Carol Service, and Midnight Communion on Christmas Eve. As well, several members of the choir took part in carol singing round the village in the previous week, and sang round the wards of the William Harvey Hospital at Ashford.

Minor but significant defects with the organs at both Lyminge and Paddlesworth have been rectified. Plans for improving the Lyminge instrument are still under discussion.

Have you ever felt that you would like to sing and join a group of people who raise their voices in praise, as well as enjoying fellowship and fun? Choir practice is at 4pm on Friday afternoons for an hour and lady sopranos would be very welcome as the choir is rather short in this department. Ability to read music, although helpful, is not required!

CHURCH EVENTS



PAST.....

Lyminge Ecumenical Team New Year Party

Around forty parishioners gathered in Lyminge village hall at the end of January for a party to shake off the winter blues of cold weather, snow and ice. Bring and share food and drink was plentiful and an icebreaker-game of trying to work out the meaning of Scots words linked into the evenings theme which was Burns Night. Scottish country dancing was instructed by Linda Wilshire and was enjoyed by all.

AND IN THE FUTURE.....

Parish Retreat

Following a successful retreat last year, a retreat has been booked for **29 – 31 July** at the Oast Houses. There may be a few vacancies still available; contact Lynne Lane on 863010 to book your place.

Lyminge Day – 14 May

The LET are planning to operate a small stall on Lyminge Day to emphasise the Churches presence in the village, anyone who is willing to help would be welcome; please contact Derrick Hamer, Tricia Hawken or Derek Smith for more details.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

On 22 March at 7.30pm in the Church.

This is preceded by the Annual meeting for the election of Church Wardens at 7pm. All parishioners are eligible to vote on this.

These event notices are not intended to be comprehensive, just a reminder....

For full information on future events and services, please refer to the Weekly Contact sheets in the Church and to the Monthly Lyminge Newsletter

AUTHORISED LAY MINISTRY TRAINING

Authorised Lay Ministry is provided for those people as training who feel a call to assist in the ministry of the church. After thinking deeply about it, I decided to enrol in the course which started of a foundation in several sections.

The first section dealt with Discipleship and Ministry. We were helped to identify our personal journey of faith, our calling to ministry, our learning style, Reflective Observation, and our ministry potential, whether we would be suitable as a Prophet, Apostle, Pastor, Evangelist or Teacher.

I found that I was more suited as a Pastor.

Other sections included Testing and Trusting, Gospel and Ministry, Kingdom and Church, Discipleship and Life and finally Context and Connections.

At the end of this I part of the course, I felt better equipped to embark upon my chosen path which was as a Worship Leader.

The training for this second part was quite extensive and lasted from January to June.

It covered Ministry and Worship, The Worship Context, Worship rooted in Scripture, The Anglican Past and development of Liturgy, Meeting People where they are, Leading Worship – The Person and Practice, Planning for Worship, Preparing a talk or presentation for worship, (This last item I did not find easy!) Using and Creating Worship Space, Music and Worship, All Age Worship,

Creating and Leading 'Ministry of the Word' services, Leading Contemplative Worship and a personal Creed of Worship Leader.

Finally, the Highlight of the ALM's year of training was the ALM Ministry Update at the University of Kent on 13th March. The Archbishop of Canterbury gave an address on Shared Calling, Shared Discipleship and Shared Ministry. An interesting and stimulating talk emphasizing that we are all called to exercise our various talents.

After a break for coffee, this was followed by questions to the Archbishop, some of them very challenging, which he answered with authority and compassion.

The morning was an inspiration to the ALMs in training and encouragement to them and existing ALMs.

I found the course variously interesting, challenging, encouraging, inspiring and enabling.

Would I do it again – Yes.

Would I recommend it to others wishing to use their talents for the service of God – Yes !!

Derrick Hamer

FROM THE ARCHIVES

An article by the late L..G J.Layberry appeared in the Parish Magazine for April 1988. We feel that it is worth repeating since it reflects the ongoing life of our church in the village through time. An edited version is appended.

FULL CIRCLE

At 10 a.m on 17th March 1988, an interment took place in the churchyard - the double funeral of Elizabeth and Mary Pilchard, mother and daughter. The unusual thing was that they were born in the years 1704 and 1763. Elizabeth was thirty-one at the time of her death; she was born in the reign of Charles II and lived through the reigns of William & Mary and Queen Anne. The Union of England and Scotland took place in the year of her death. She was of a well-to-do family, for the grave was quite near to the church door and the tombstone expensive. It is safe to assume that this young woman's death caused widespread grief in the village and much sympathy for her young daughter Mary, aged five.

Mary's childhood among her relatives must have caused her to think frequently of the mother that she had known for such a short time. Following the death of Queen Anne, her life spanned the reigns of George 1st, George 2nd, and as her life drew near to its close, the accession of the young King George III. In middle life the news of the two Jacobite rebellions of 1715 and 1745 would have filtered down to the village and she would have got used to (and possibly tired of!) Britain's first prime minister, Sir Robert Walpole. She died in 1763 at the age of 64 and was never married, why, we do not know..

One assumes that she was buried beside her long dead mother at her own request, thus achieving the nearness that eluded them in life. Mother and daughter lay side by side, it seemed, in perpetuity. A matching tombstone was erected and the churchyard slumbered on, century after century, until the twentieth century. In its early years the then Rector of Lyminge planted an avenue of lime trees from the church door to the old rectory garden gate. One of these was set between and to the rear of the two headstones and for another eighty years the mother and daughter continued to sleep side by side...until the great storm of October 1987, when the Lime was uprooted together with unidentifiable bones from the two skeletons. These were reverently collected and placed in a miniature coffin. The Rector decided that they should be re-interred with proper funeral rites. Mary Pilcher had presumably asked that her body be laid as close to her mother as possible. The storm wrecked that arrangement, but because of it, the bones of Elizabeth and Mary are now mingled far more closely than man could have achieved. Mother and daughter now rest in peace and absolute proximity, not for 200 years, but for eternity. The pages of history which these women adorned and of which, for a short time, we had a glimpse have now been sealed again.

MISSION AVIATION FELLOWSHIP (MAF)

'We don't have a transportation problem here' the local church leader said recently, 'Because there is nowhere further than five days walk from the nearest road'. Obviously he had no worries about possible cuts to public transport services in rural areas! But this illustrates that there are parts of the world that are extremely isolated and where the facilities that we take for granted are simply not available.

It was the realisation of this that sparked the vision of pilots & engineers soon after the end of WWII to provide an aviation service for missions and churches in remote areas of the world. Beginning with teams from the UK & the USA, Mission Aviation Fellowship was formed to bring physical & spiritual help to vulnerable people. The UK branch of MAF started operations in the South Sudan in 1950 with just one 8-seat biplane – the de Havilland Rapide - but in 60 years the work has developed far beyond the remarkable efforts of the early pioneers. Increased resources and new technology mean that MAF aircraft are now a welcome sight in many remote areas of the world. Around 130 aircraft are currently in service for MAF, operating in 35 countries and flying for over 1000 different mission, church & humanitarian organisations. Several Lyminge residents have been involved in MAF's work through its offices in Folkestone & Ashford as well as having worked with MAF in Africa.

It has been calculated that, right around the clock and every day of the year, there is now an MAF aircraft taking off or landing every three minutes. This is naturally far more than back in the 1950's but MAF's pilots, engineers and other staff still share the same vision of the early pioneers – to bring help to some of the earth's most deprived communities.

David Staveley

SOME BE-ATTITUDES

Blessed are those who can laugh at themselves; they will have endless amusement.

Blessed are those who can tell a mountain from a molehill; they will be spared a lot of trouble.

Blessed are those who know when to shut up and listen; they will learn new things thereby.

Blessed are those who are intelligent enough not to take themselves seriously; they will be appreciated by those around them.

Blessed are those who are attentive to the call of others without thinking themselves indispensable; they will be the sowers of joy.

Happy are you if you know how to take small things seriously and large things calmly; you will go far in life.

Happy are you if you can admire a smile and forget a frown; your path will be sunlit.

Happy are you if you can keep quiet and smile, even when someone cuts you off in mid-sentence, when someone contradicts you, when someone treads on your toes; the Gospel is beginning to penetrate your heart.

Blessed above all are you if you can recognise the Lord in everyone you meet; you have true light and wisdom.

PRAYER

SPOT

A Prayer for Lent



God of Love,
At this time of Lent,
purify my desires to serve you.
Free me from temptation to judge others,
or place myself above others.
Through your love and your grace,
may I be less and less absorbed with myself,
and more and more full of the desire
to follow you, and in living my life
according to your example.

Amen



"It's the only way we can cope with all the couples who want to get married on the same day as William and Kate."

THE CHURCH ROOF – A WATER TIGHT SOLUTION?

The Deliberations in Abeyance Where Does Common Sense Fit In?

A lot of water has flowed under the bridge since the last update but fortunately very little through the roof. After two architect reports both financed by the Diocese, and despite the first stating that the lead remaining on the roof was 'tired', in May of last year the PCC's formal application for a faculty to replace the lead on the Nave roof with Sarnafil, a modern lead look-a-like, was passed from the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) to the Commissary General with the following comment:-

"The Committee does NOT RECOMMEND the above proposals for approval for the following principal reasons:-

The DAC believes that the remaining lead is capable of continuing good use, without detriment to the church; that the roofing felt over the areas where lead was stripped should be augmented so as to make it weather-tight in the medium term; that the current alarm system should be augmented to make the roof more secure; that the roof should be inspected at the next Quinquennial Inspection to consider its weather-tightness; and that the wholesale replacement with Sarnafil would be contrary to the principles of conservation of historic buildings and should be strongly resisted for that reason and as an unhappy precedent."

The Commissary General considered that as the principles involved were fundamental, the PCC and the Diocese should brief Counsel to represent their respective views. This potentially very expensive process (£50,000) was considered by the PCC as too expensive and could leave the PCC open to the accusation of misuse of the Charity's money should the petition fail (it had the support of the Parish Council and Shepway District Council (SDC) but not English Heritage) which, despite the SDC's overruling decision again objected, this time to the DAC). In November 2010 the PCC formally withdrew the application.

So where does that leave the Trustees now?

The PCC is an independent charity located between a rock and a hard place.

On the one hand to comply with the DAC recommendations will :-

- cost a similar amount, to again scaffold the building to augment the roofing felt, as it did to put up the original in 2008, (<£9,000 due to inflation)
- still leave the roof in an unsatisfactory state ultimately requiring a permanent solution; this will get more expensive as time goes on,
- leave the roof with 'tired' lead which will ultimately have to be removed. The lead roof repairers state that to marry it with new lead will neither comply with British Standards nor the latest recommendation of the Lead Sheet Association, To recover the roof with lead would cost £150,000+.
- still leave the roof vulnerable to theft of the remaining lead even if the alarm system is upgraded, as no alarm on its own is totally proof against the determined thief, and the maximum insurance payout for lead theft would be only £5,000 (this applies to all churches)

On the other hand, the members of the PCC as trustees of an independent charity have, under the guiding instructions issued by the Archbishop's Council and the Charity Commission, both a duty of prudence and a duty of care.

Under Duty of Prudence, trustees must:-

- ensure the PCC is and will remain solvent,
- use charitable funds and assets wisely, and only to further the purposes and interests of the PCC,
- avoid undertaking activities that might place the PCC's property, funds, assets or reputation at undue risk. Careful discernment is required when stepping out 'in faith'.

Under Duty of Care, trustees must:-

- exercise reasonable care and skill, using personal knowledge and experience to ensure the PCC is well run and efficient,
- take special care when investing funds, or borrowing funds for the PCC to use, seeking professional advice where appropriate,
- consider getting external professional advice on all matters where there may be material risk to the charity, or where the trustees may be in breach of their duties.

The fourth and final aim of our charity, quoted from the Charities Register is:

TO FACILITATE THIS (the first three aims) IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE MAINTAIN THE FABRIC OF THE CHURCH BUILDING.

This Grade 1 listed building is a living church which has changed over the centuries and is still evolving to serve the needs of the congregation. Alternative solutions have been suggested, to use copper or stainless steel, both of which unless painted to look like lead will alter the visual impact of the Nave roof, and as such these proposals are considered to be unsatisfactory. As a result of the Church of England bureaucracy, the time the PCC has had to spend on this matter has been grossly out of proportion to that given to the three main aims of the charity, and still a satisfactory solution has to be reached. Members of the community are contributing regularly to a fabric fund to repair the roof, but to spend this money as recommended, in the view of many, is totally irresponsible. Let us pray that the authorities have a change of heart and that common sense be allowed to prevail.

Philip Hawken , PCC Hon Treasurer