

## **St Mary's Ticehurst and St Augustine's Flimwell**

To: Congregation members and those on our circulation list

### **VICAR'S LETTER/UPDATE as at Friday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

As I write I realise I have become immersed in *Euro 2020*, perhaps more so because England's (and Sussex' and Flimwell's) cricket seasons haven't gone brilliantly thus far. I may be un-immersed after we've played Scotland. 21 June has become 19 July, except I hope it will not be as disappointing. I continue to pray that many more of you will feel able to return to *onsite worship* in July. The PCCs have discussed our future service pattern, and July sees a move in that direction (but we're not there yet). There'll be at least some online worship, and how we do that will change when St Mary's new audio-visual-streaming equipment is installed later this year. We had a wedding on 5 June (more in September) and there's quite a few baptisms in the diary!

**WORSHIP SCHEDULE** (in St Mary's unless stated otherwise):

<u>27 June, 4th Sunday after Trinity</u>	9.30am Flimwell Communion (Contemp.) 11am Communion (Contemporary) 6.30pm Evening Prayer (1662 BCP)
<u>4 July, 5th Sunday after Trinity</u>	8am Communion (1662 BCP) 11am Morning Worship* ( <i>livestreamed also</i> )
<u>11 July, 6th after Trinity</u>	8am Communion (1662 BCP) 9.30am Flimwell Morning Prayer (Contemp.) 11am Morning Prayer (1662 BCP)
<u>18 July, 7th Sunday after Trinity</u>	<i>No 8am Communion this morning</i> <i>Pre-recorded online service, details t.b.d.*</i> 11am Communion (Contemporary)
<u>25 July, 8th Sunday after Trinity</u>	9.30am Flimwell Communion (Contemp.) 11am Communion (Contemporary) 6.30pm Evensong ( <i>Feast of James the Apostle</i> )
<u>1 Aug, 9th Sunday after Trinity</u>	8am Communion (1662 BCP) 11am Morning Worship* ( <i>livestreamed also</i> )



For now, services remain shortened, said, face-masked and 2m distanced. Coffee available after most 11am's.

\* **Livestreamed or pre-recorded worship** viewable on Facebook Page [@stMarysTicehurst](#)

Service sheets **for online worship** will be emailed out, on our [website](#) and also on [achurchnearyou](#)

**Jan Wood.** It was a shock that Jan died on 30 May - she will be greatly missed by our benefice. Do contact me before Weds if you wish to attend her funeral on Fri 25 June at 2.30pm in St Mary's. Please don't just turn up.

**ECO CHURCH UPDATE.** On Sat 12<sup>th</sup> June in St Mary's Churchyard our taking part in the 'Churches Count on Nature' saw great weather, a busy flipchart and interested visitors, including our MP Huw Merriman!

**Big events/services at St Mary's for your diary:** 15 Aug – St Mary's Patronal Festival Service at 11am.

5 Sept – Climate Sunday Service at 11am. 19 Sept – 3pm Forest Church + start of the *Great Big Green Week!*

26 Sept – 11am Harvest Festival with guest speaker + prize-giving for the *GBGW!* 4 Oct – 11am Pet Service!

**St Mary's PCC**, as well as discussing future services at its last meeting, heard about Deanery Plans and the C of E *Living in Love and Faith* project (LLF). All parishes are to produce/update their Mission Action Plan by Advent Sunday for the Deanery/Diocese; a short LLF course will be offered by the Deanery for interested parishioners.

**St Augustine Flimwell's PCC** meet on Tues 22<sup>nd</sup> June at 11am, and inter alia will consider those same two items.

**Our C of E Primary School:** I am delighted to report that Alec Synge has become Chair of Governors. The significant contribution of his first year as a Foundation Governor meant that he was an obvious welcome choice!

**Family Support Work (FSW).** Sheila Synge can be contacted (01580 860164) about picking up food and household items for FSW to serve E. Sussex. FSW's local monthly collection is on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Weds.

**CHURCH FINANCES.** Your continued giving, contactless or otherwise, is very welcome. BACS details:

Nat West Bank 60-22-15: Ticehurst PCC 71164383 or Parochial Church Council of Flimwell 35098651.

**Absence.** Penny and I will be away for a break from 16<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> July incl. (Family will be house/cat-sitting!)

God bless you all. *Ashley Evans*

Revd Ashley Evans, Vicar of Ticehurst and Flimwell

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Facebook Page - [www.facebook.com/stMarysTicehurst](https://www.facebook.com/stMarysTicehurst)

## Sermon on the Day of Pentecost (Evening Prayer) 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2021

Acts 2: 22-38 (Ezekiel 36: 22-28 and Ps 139: 1-11)

It is still the Day of Pentecost but our New Testament reading has raced on beyond the astonishing happenings at the start of Acts ch.2; namely the coming of the Holy Spirit, in a rush of violent wind filling the house where the disciples waited (Fri's gale may have been tame in comparison); seen as tongues of fire resting on each of them; heard in different tongues - languages spoken loudly enough for Jews from different nations to approach the house, and be amazed because they could hear their own language and understand what was being said about God's great deeds of power. And we get the list of them Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and ... I'll stop there as the pronunciation gets more controversial.

I've always wanted to end that key text from Acts 2 with the verse accusing the disciples of being filled new wine, or better perhaps Peter's response *we are not drunk as you suppose, it's only 9 in the morning*. Implying (obviously) that if however it was 9pm ...! Anyway the Pentecost morning Acts 2 text continues with Peter seizing the crowd's attention *Men of Judea ... let this be known to you ...* then his quote from Joel 2, *In the last days God will pour out the Holy Spirit upon all flesh*. And it is when Peter ends that quote that this evening's text from Acts 2 begins. It is almost as staggering: evidence of what the coming of the Holy Spirit had done/would do. Recalling the Simon Peter of the Gospels, and that his master Jesus had gone, compare and contrast him with the patient and powerfully blessed Peter addressing Pentecost's crowd. Jesus' promise *'I will not leave you to be alone – wait'* really was borne out.

Whatever they expected would arrive, I can't imagine they were unsurprised when it did. Those who have experienced the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, not just observed its works of amazing power, would agree. I can't imagine the disciples were unsurprised by how they felt and were acting, at how Peter was commanding the situation, confident in his addressing of the crowd. So the astonishment continues. It is not Jesus speaking, but our Acts passage this evening is definitive, the first public post-Ascension proclamation of the Church, its emergence if not its birth, telling the world of Jesus born, died, resurrected and ascended, that he is Christ, the long-awaited anointed one.

It is significant, and remains important to us the Church today, that despite the history-making transformational coming of the Holy Spirit to dwell in the disciples and the power/confidence they felt, despite the attraction of this to many Jews nearby, despite the scepticism of some who knew the group were Galileans and (probably) whose followers they were, **that despite all that**, the subject of Peter's address was Jesus, that same Jesus, although he had gone. He was still the Good News. They were Christ-ians. The message - the bringing in of more who would also believe, repent and know a change of heart, and would be baptised and receive the Holy Spirit - that message wasn't to proclaim the Spirit's power – *join us and you'll receive this amazing power with which you'll be able to do anything*. It wasn't to offer what attracted the magician Simon Magus in Acts 8 (that's where the word *simony* comes from, paying for ecclesiastical power/privilege). The message, the Good News, being preached by Peter, was Jesus, his history-shattering significance, his way to be/live, he being the one, the awaited Messiah, come to save the people of Israel and beyond, those with differing native languages, and as we see later in Acts those who were not Jews, who Paul and then Peter discovered could also be baptised in the Holy Spirit.

Our Acts passage this evening is one to study. It is definitive, formative, foundational, Trinitarian (thinking ahead to next Sunday, Trinity Sunday). Jesus has ascended but is not forgotten; he is still crucial, having been both human and divine, showing that while not divine ourselves the divine Spirit of God can dwell in us. We are then mysteriously aware that Jesus is alive, his (God's) love is in our hearts, his example and teaching of that love is to be shown/shared because the Way of Christ is to bless others with the Gospel (Good News) of salvation from sin and death. And the Holy Spirit will help us ...

A.E.