



HERSTMONCEUX AND WARTLING PARISH NEWS

February 2021

50p



This Month

Rev Richard writes the letter from the Rectory; Rev Peter's Green Page; Melinda's Famous Hymns column covers "Father Hear The Prayer We Offer", plus the regular columns and news from around the parishes



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From the Rectory

St Valentine.

The year was 270AD Claudius, the reigning Roman emperor of the time, was a warlord, intent only upon preserving his empire and routing his enemies. Christianity was not on his like list. His primary interests were military, and he would stoop to nothing to ensure that his mighty army remained loyal to him.

It was Claudius's maniacal grip on the military that led him to install a very foolish policy empire-wide. Claudius had a problem on his hands when it came to the army. Believe it or not, his men would actually prefer to get married and stay home with their wives and families rather than risk their lives and sacrifice for their country! Military recruiting was suffering because of the petulant affection between man and wife. Love was getting in the way of patriotism! Claudius would have none of it. Being the man with the big stick, he could make laws and enforce them, too.

So he did. Claudius passed a law forbidding anyone to get married. Obviously, this was an outrage. Was he serious? No marriage?

Living in this anti-Christian and anti-marriage climate, was Valentine. Valentine was a Christian priest in Rome. He knew from the Bible that marriage was good and honoured by God. He knew that marriage was lawful according to the Christian faith, so he took it upon himself to perform Christian marriages—contrary to the law. As a priest, he performed secret marriages for couples who desired to be married bravely defying the anti-marriage edict. It wasn't just marriages that Valentine was working on. He was also trying to protect persecuted Christians who were being chased down and haunted by the aggressive Roman leaders. Christians knew that they could flee to Valentine to find protection.

Valentine was taking a huge risk. Not only was it absolutely forbidden to marry or to perform marriages, but it was also a criminal offense to aid or abet Christians—especially ones whom the Roman Empire had on their hit list! Valentine was enmeshed in what the Roman Empire considered high treason and traitorous activity. Although he was being loyal to his faith, he was flying in the face of Roman law. The Roman government hunted him down and locked him up in prison. Now, Valentine—protector of Christians and performer of marriages—was himself suffering for his love and devotion to God.

It got worse. Valentine, true to his bold character, tried to convert Emperor Claudius to Christianity. This had gone too far. Claudius demanded that Valentine recant his faith and submit to the cruel and godless tyranny of Rome. Valentine staunchly refused. The Roman Prefect condemned him to torture and death. He was beaten violently, then beheaded. Valentine was martyred for his faith.

According to legend (and probably false), Valentine himself fell in love during his time of imprisonment. The daughter of the prison guard met Valentine and fell head over

heels in love. As the story goes, their romance was the prototypical saga of steadfast love, broken only by the tragic death of Valentine. He wrote a note to her, allegedly penned on February 14, the day before he was beheaded. He signed the note, "Love from your Valentine." Henceforth, we have the first Valentine's Day card.

Although the story of Valentine's Day is shrouded in mystery, buried in tradition, and (thanks to commercialism) stripped of its significance, we can bring some of the truth back. The truth is, love can't be squelched, outlawed, or stamped out. (Written by Daniel Threlfall, from Share Faith Magazine)

Dear Friends,

I love good romance and I think traditional marriage as defined by the Bible is by far the best place for romance to blossom flourish and even revive, but for me the significance of Valentine's life was not that he sent the first Valentine's Day card or even performed secret marriages, it was that he believed in and sought to follow the God of all conquering love, of which romantic love is just a part. This love is available for us all, at all times.

May we all be able to enjoy something good this February
Richard Steven

"This is real love--not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins".¹ John 4v10

Prayer for January

Love has its source in you, Jesus our saviour God.
It flows from you like an ocean,
into a world as unyielding as any shoreline cliff.
And like the ocean
which batters,
erodes,
and wears away
even the hardest stone
your love persists,
finds cracks and inlets,
in hardened hearts,
flows inside and works a miracle.
Who would think that water
was more powerful than granite,
love mightier than the hardest heart.

Thank you, Jesus our Saviour God, for the power of your love. Amen

(Adapted from 'Faith and Worship' website)

February Services in Herstmonceux and Wartling Parish Churches

This is the plan of services for February unless circumstances need us to change them.

7th February 2nd Sunday before Lent

- 8am Wartling Holy Communion (BCP)
Colossians 1: 15-20 John 1: 1-14.
- 10am Herstmonceux Family Service
- 6pm Zoom Service

14th February Sunday next before Lent.

- 8am Herstmonceux Holy Communion (BCP)
2 Corinthians 4: 3-6 Mark 9: 2-9
- 10am Wartling Holy Communion (CW)
2 Kings 2: 1-12. 2 Corinthians 4: 3-6. Mark 9: 2-9
- 6pm Zoom Services.

21st February 1st Sunday of Lent

- 8am Wartling Holy Communion (BCP)
1 Peter 3: 18-end. Mark 1: 9-15.
- 10am Herstmonceux Holy Communion (CW)
Genesis 9: 8-17. 1 Peter 3: 18-end. Mark 1: 9-15.
- 6pm Zoom Service

28th February 2nd Sunday of Lent.

- 8am Herstmonceux Holy Communion (BCP)
Romans 4: 13-end. Mar 8: 31-end.
- 10am Wartling Morning Prayer
Psalm 105: 1-6, 37-end. Isaiah 51: 1-11.
Galatians 3: 1-9, 23-end.
- 6pm Zoom Service

7th March 3rd Sunday of Lent.

- 8am Wartling Holy Communion (BCP)
1 Corinthians 1: 18-25. John 2: 13-22.
- 10am Herstmonceux Family Service
- 6pm Zoom Service.

If you would like to join in the zoom services please contact Richard for the link.

Liturgical Colours

If you have ever wondered what the significance of the altar colours or the colour of the stole that the priest wears is, then here is a quick guide.

The symbolism of purple, white, green, red, gold and other colours serve to underline moods appropriate to a season of the liturgical year or to highlight a special occasion.

Ordinary Time: Green

Colour: The Colours you will see on the altar and on the priest's vestments during Ordinary Time is Green. A sign of Hope or Triumph of life over death, like re-growth in springtime. When referring to the liturgical year the term "ordinary" does not mean "usual or average." Ordinary here means "not seasonal." Ordinary Time is that part of the Liturgical Year that lies outside the seasons of Lent-Easter and Advent-Christmas. In Ordinary Time, the church celebrates the mystery of Christ not in one specific aspect but in all its aspects. The readings during Ordinary Time help to instruct us on how to live out our Christian faith in our daily lives.

Kingdom Season: Red

Colour: The final four weeks of Ordinary Time is observed as the Kingdom Season with the colour Red and concludes with the Feast of Christ the King as the last Sunday of Ordinary Time and of the Liturgical Year.

Advent Season: Purple

Colour: Since Advent is a time of expectation and preparation, the colour Purple is used in the vestments and decorations. Purple is a colour that was reserved for use by royalty, and so it is used in Advent to symbolise the coming of Christ our King, as celebrated at Christmas and as we prepare for the coming of God's Kingdom. Advent begins the liturgical year four Sundays before 25 December.

Christmas Season: White and Gold

Colour: The colour of the vestments for this season is White and Gold to show our Joy. It also represents innocence and holiness. In some cases Silver is used instead of White.

Lenten Season: Purple

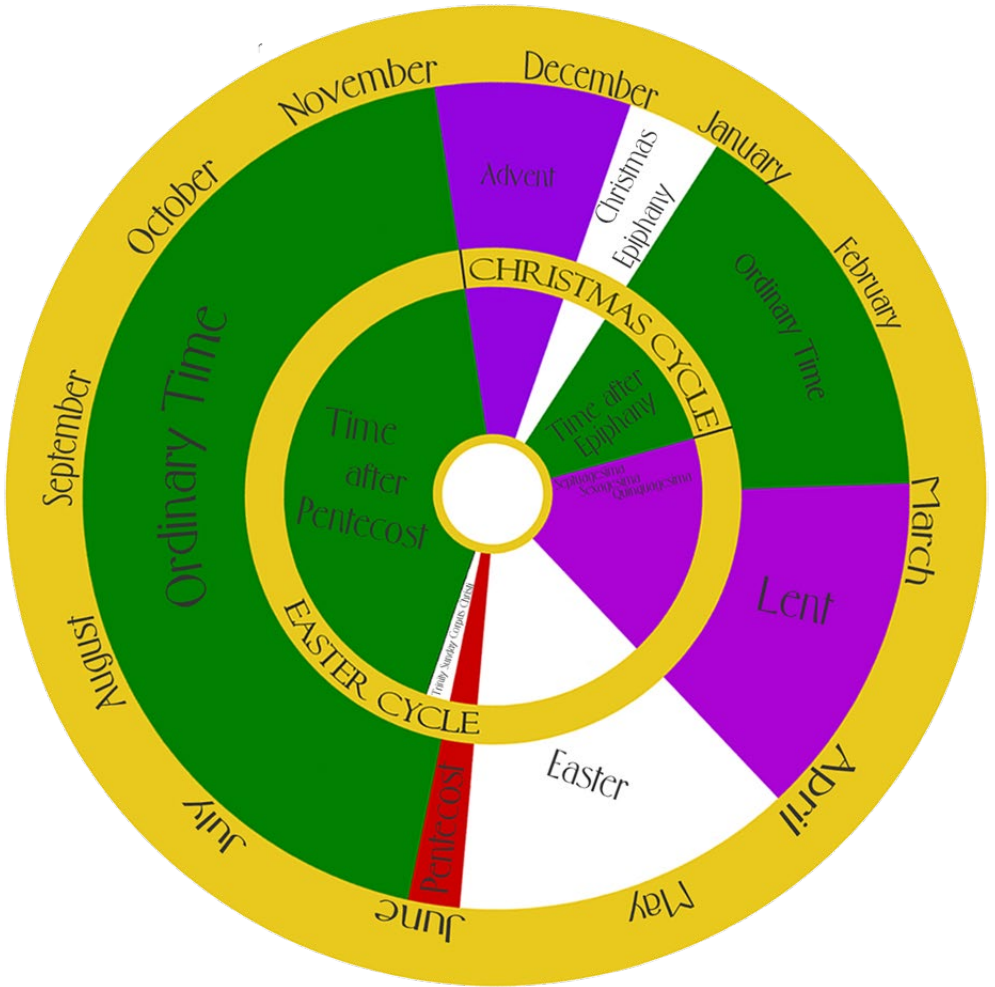
Colour: The colour used during Lent is Purple, which symbolises the efforts for penance and reflection. The Lenten Season begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Thursday of Holy Week. The Term "Lent" comes from a Middle English word that means Springtime. Like the season of Spring, Lent is a time of renewal.

Easter Season: White

Colour: The colour used during the Easter season is White, signifying the joy of Christ's resurrection. The last day of the Easter season is Pentecost Sunday, on which we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit. On this day Red is the liturgical colour, representing the Fire of the Holy Spirit. On Good Friday, Black can also be used as a symbol of death.

Feast of Martyred Saints: Red

Colour: When celebrating the feast of a martyred saint, Red is typically used.



Rev Peter

Rev Peter's Green Page

As I write this there are signs that although, due to Coronavirus, the days are very dark, there is light on the horizon with the rollout of vaccinations across society. There can be no doubt that we are going through an awful time in world history, but often in the past, when others went through awful, and seemingly apocalyptic times, normal everyday people found new ways to be. They engaged with the future, while asking themselves the question, "how will the future look when this is over?"

I took a congregation free Zoom Service from Wartling Church recently, and as I did; I was standing in a Church that dated back to the twelve hundreds. In 1348 this must have been the same question that was asked in the time of the Black Death. In 1645 it would have been asked in the time of the Great Plague, later in the time of the Smallpox Outbreak, then in the time of the Spanish Flu. It is still being asked today with the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Fear of the future is understandable, but it does seem that with the barrage of negative news that there is at the moment has turned people, quite understandably, into hyper-anxious beings. But despite all the problems many have taken issues into their own hands in order to make a difference. Rather than being told what to do by politicians or those on the violent political fringe, they became the authors of the future. They probably would not see themselves as such, but whether Marcus Rashford MBE, or those that helped others through the Herstmonceux Volunteer Scheme, they were.

The true mark of a person is how quickly they bounce back after a seeming disaster, because when things that are beyond our influence go wrong, it is impossible to go back and start a new beginning, but what we can do is to start today and make a new ending.

Rev Peter

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Famous Hymns

Father Hear the Prayer We Offer, Mrs LM Willis (1824 – 1908) & others *with thanks to Margaret Ashworth & David Hamrick*

Everyone's lives include both bright & dreary, storm & sunshine. Although some certainly receive more of one than the other, on balance we all have some times of trial. The question isn't whether we'll experience them, but how we'll respond to them.

Love Maria Whitcomb Willis was born in Hancock, New Hampshire. Her father, Henry, and Uncle John Whitcomb, were very close. They married on the same day in 1813 and built a large square house suitable for two families, each side a mirror image of the other, with the two kitchens sharing a central hearth.

Love Maria's childhood was affected by tragedies. Her father died aged 44 in 1831 in an accident while handling a horse, when she was 6. One of her two siblings died as well as three of her four neighbouring cousins. Love Maria later said: 'The cloud so suddenly gathered never quite left the household.'

These tragedies may have helped turn Love Maria towards Spiritualism. She wrote extensively, and edited, various Spiritualist journals including *Tiffany's Monthly*. Through the Spiritualist movement she met Frederick Willis, who orphaned and aged 14 had been taken in by Abba and Bronson Alcott and spent many subsequent summers with the family. He was treated as son and brother, regarded with deep affection by the famed Alcott sisters, and was possibly the inspiration for the character Theodore 'Laurie' Laurence in Louisa May Alcott's book *Little Women*.

Willis studied at Harvard Divinity School to become a minister, but was expelled because of his growing involvement in Spiritualism. He later qualified as a doctor. Around this time Love Maria's poem entitled *Prayer*, with the first line 'Father, hear the prayer I offer' was published in *Tiffany's Monthly*. The same volume contained a defence of Willis and a criticism of Harvard's action. Love Maria and Willis married the following year.

The poem first appeared as a hymn in 1857, with words slightly altered for congregational singing. Clergyman & hymn-writer Samuel Longfellow (younger brother of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow) then made major revisions, for his 1860 Book of Hymns and Tunes. For example, Mrs. Willis's original first verse was: '*Father, hear the prayer I offer; For sweet peace I do not cry, But for grace that I may ever Live my life courageously.*' Longfellow edited it to '*Father, hear the prayer we offer: Nor for ease that prayer shall be, But for strength, that we may ever Live our lives courageously.*'

Altering the "cry for peace" to a "prayer for ease" may dig deeper into our consciences, scolding those of us who take for granted the "ease" we already have, and yet pray for more. Peace we are promised (John 14:27), but "ease" is comparative. If we seek the "easy" road in life for its own sake, we'll end in destruction (Matthew 7:13). It was

the rich fool who said, "Soul, take your ease" (Luke 12:19); it was the apostles who left their quiet livelihoods to be persecuted and martyred.

A frequently-used tune is Ralph Vaughan Williams's Sussex. He collected it in November 1905 as a song called *The Royal George* from Mrs Harriet Verrall in Monk's Gate, near Horsham. He arranged it to *Father, Hear the Prayer We Offer* for the 1906 *English Hymnal* which he co-edited. (Mrs Verrall was also the source of the tune Monk's Gate which Vaughan Williams used to accompany *To Be a Pilgrim*, which I wrote about in February 2019.) However I wonder if anyone else has routinely sung it (as we did at school) to the Z-cars theme tune? Apparently that tune was based on another traditional folk song "Johnny Todd", published in 1891. Johnny Todd is a Liverpool child's rhyme and game, heard and seen played by Liverpool children. The theme tune was later adopted by various football teams, probably without any reference to the words of Love Maria's poem.

Melinda Stone

Knit and Stitch

Just to let you know that we are still not meeting but as the vaccination programme continues to roll on we will look at meeting in the near future. Until then.....keep knitting or crafting.

See you soon. Pam.

Faith Matters

Unfortunately, due to the circumstances we have been unable to meet. We are now intending to meet via Zoom for the time being.

So if you would like to join in with this please contact John King 832997 when he can arrange to send you the link. This can be with the computer, tablet or by telephone.

Boreham Street Cleanup

Ian (The Oast) is leading a band of helpers who regularly keep our area clean of litter and all sorts of rubbish.

This is a great example for helping our neighbourhood, especially at this time of the Covid Virus. I know that many are giving help to others, for instance with shopping.

If you would like to join Ian and the others, please ring him on 01323 833984.
Thank You. John King.



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Recipe Page

An Easy and Filling Vegetable Soup.

- 50g/2oz margarine or dripping.
- 225g/8 oz potatoes, peeled and diced.
- 225/8oz carrots, chopped
- 225g/8oz onions, chopped
- 225g/8oz tomatoes, halved.
- 600ml/1 pint stock
- 300ml/1/2 pint milk
- Salt
- Pepper
- Grated cheese, croutons, watercress or parsley to serve.

Melt the margarine or dripping in a saucepan and add the vegetables.

Cook gently until softened but not brown Stir in the stock and bring to the boil.

Simmer for 30 mins or until the vegetables are tender.

Sieve the soup and return to the saucepan. Stir in the milk, salt and pepper and reheat.

Serve with cheese, croutons, watercress or parsley.

Other vegetables in season can be used.



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Children's Page

The princess gazed from the castle window and large tears rolled down her cheeks. The princess was very lonely for a large wall stood all around the castle and no one from the outside world was permitted to enter.

Within the walls of the great castle everything seemed grey and empty and the princess had no one to call her friend. As she wept, she did not notice that the Great master was quietly watching her, knowing her loneliness.

He asked her, "what is the wish that is dearest to your heart"?

She replied, "If only I could visit the world outside, then perhaps I could find a friend. At that moment, the Great Master raised his hand, the walls of the castle fell away and the princess stepped into a beautiful land where birds sang, trees grew tall and green and the sun shone in a clear blue sky.



The Great Master said to her, remember if you want a friend you must first be one.

The princess explored her new country and remembered what the master had said. She tried to be kind, loving and welcoming to all.

When people were rude or unkind she tried to find a way to change their hearts. She made many friends and was lonely no more.

We all need friends and that is important, we need to look after our friends and be kind and understanding to them. We are very lucky because we have one really special friend whose name is Jesus he is always with us, he will help when we find it difficult to be the friend we should be, he is our special friend.

Jesus needed friends to help him, just as we do. So, he gathered a team around him to help him. They were called his disciples.

I am Thankful for Friends



Campaign for Change

There is no need to have anyone on the planet, homeless, hungry or thirsty, but there are many in that place.

Here, in Britain, nearly 800 rough sleepers died on the streets last year. And there are 253,000 living in temporary housing, 2.4 million children are living with families struggling to feed themselves.

There are 227,000 families facing eviction for rent arrears.

Where will they go? Would it not be better to stop building market housing, or rented housing, that most can't afford?

If we need 3 million homes, tell the developers what to build, not what they can sell. We are seeing a greater number of people with depression, mental health issues and a breakdown of family life. Often because they pay 60% of their income on renting or a mortgage.

The numbers of children who don't live with both parents is a dreadful state of affairs. While we have a market driven economy this will continue.

We should be taking the advantage of the technology we have available, and work towards a more stable way of life.

New developments see people over crowded while being isolated.

New developments should not be for renting or selling on the market. But under a new created Trust, families could become owners, but they can only be sold back to the Trust, hence real affordable homes.

One would need a management to control any bad behaviour, but one would be told the rules before taking the property. Visit www.campaign-for-change.co.uk for some ideas.

Yours
Sincerely
Laurence Keeley,
lvkeeley45@gmail.com

The Wartling & Herstmonceux Local History Group

A Message for 2021

We produced two new books last year, but due to Covid, our sales have been very slow. We are holding back on any further publications, as we currently only have two outlets, Lime Cross Nursery and the Herstmonceux Post Office, and we haven't been able to attend any fairs in the Summer or at Christmas time during the last year, consequently our sales are well down at the present time. We also decided not to produce a calendar for this year.

But, all of our current publications can be purchased directly from us. We have two more books in the pipeline (more or less, ready for publication). These books cover all the listed buildings within the Wartling and Herstmonceux Parishes. So please keep an eye on the Parish news, or visit our webpage on the Wartling Parish website. We are now hoping to publish these towards the end of 2021.

To date we have produced 18 books, 9 calendars, and 15 postcards, 6 Christmas cards, as well as a number of other fund-raising items (including framed photographs, promotional booklets, etc.). All have sold very well.



Please help to support us, as all the proceeds from the sale of these items will be split between the Wartling and Herstmonceux Churches Building and Maintenance Funds, Help For Heroes, Cancer Research UK, and The British Heart Foundation.

The aims of the Local History Group are to research and promote the local history of the area, and to continue to produce our books.

Please, all Keep Well and Keep Safe. Hope to see you all again in the near future.

Alan Brown and Vivien Bowles
The Wartling and Herstmonceux Local History Group

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Herstmonceux Free Church News

Our Sunday services are continuing but due to the current situation we are meeting online, via zoom.

We are praying for all the Herstmonceux community and welcome requests from any of you who would like prayer for a particular issue. You are also very welcome to join our zoom service. To make a prayer request or for details of how to join us, please contact Sylvia (07909 644762).

For further information see our website: www.herstmonceuxfreechurch.org.uk or contact our Family and Community Worker, Sylvia Catt 07909 644762, or John and Helen Ford 01323 832266.

**RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)
HERSTMONCEUX LOCAL MEETING**

We meet at 10.45 on the first and third Sunday of every month. Join us for a quiet hour of worship and reflection at the Friends' Meeting House, West End, Herstmonceux BN27 4NR or call 01323 844269 for more details.
www.quaker.org.uk

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Contact Sarah Honeysett, via email on hwp parishnews@outlook.com

PARISH NEWS

Please send text copy email (together with your name and phone number) to Miss Katherine Blake, theparishnews@hotmail.com (c/o Parish News). Deadline is midday on the 15th of the month prior to publication.

N.B. due to new arrangements no copy can be accepted later.

PARISH NEWS SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you would like a copy of the Parish News delivered to your door each month for the discounted rate of £5:50 for the year, then please contact Chris Edwards on 01323 833207 or email hwp parishnews_subscriptions@hotmail.com

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