

News

30p

letter



September 2021



Calendar for

September

3 Fri S Gregory the Great 11am

5 Twenty Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday Mass at 10am with Evening Prayer at 5pm. Weekday Masses are at their usual times.

8 Wed **BIRTHDAY OF OUR LADY** Mass, 11.30am
Patronal Festival Mass, 7.30pm

12 Twenty Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday Mass at 10am with Evening Prayer at 5pm. Weekday Masses are at their usual times.

14 Tue **Exaltation of the Holy Cross** Mass, 7pm
PCC follows the Mass

19 Twenty Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday Mass at 10am with Evening Prayer at 5pm. Weekday Masses are at their usual times.

21 Tue **Saint Matthew the Apostle** Mass, 7pm

26 Twenty Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday Mass at 10am with Evening Prayer at 5pm. Weekday Masses are at their usual times.

29 Wed **Saints Michael, Gabriel & Raphael** Mass, 11.30am

Calendar Notes

Pope St Gregory the Great sent St Augustine of Canterbury to England not to bring the Christian faith to these islands (there was, after all, a bishop from London at a Church Council in 314AD) but instead to bring order to the Faith here—and Roman order, at that! There was a Celtic custom which had a different way of calculating the date for Easter and there were various other divergences from the Universal Church and so Augustine's twin mission was to convert the pagans to Christianity and to ensure that the Christian mission was suitably universal. Augustine turned back several times but each time Gregory urged him on to his calling and reminded him constantly of the need for God's love that the whole creation experiences—and things are just the same now!

Pandemic Relaxations:

Restrained Singing now allowed

Masks must be worn

Mass returned to a rather more recognizably pre-pandemic form over the course of August.

Restrained singing is now permitted—not the “belting it out” of the completely normal, it’s true, and masks are required when singing—but still there’s a sense of steady steps.

When we sing, we send out far more droplets than when we speak. The latest variants of Covid are very very infectious and the virus is contained within droplets we breathe out. Although being double-jabbed means that many people will experience mild symptoms rather than those they would have had otherwise, it is still a very unpleasant illness with

really horrible effects which can last for years with a very high risk of hospitalization. So we need to be very careful not to be selfish. Our risk assessment is that those singing—whether in the choir or the congregation—cannot stand at least 3 metres (around 9 feet) apart from anyone else and so we are required to take further steps. In our case, the further steps include the wearing of masks by all who sing, regardless of their own preference. Those who do not wish to wear a mask must forego the pleasure of singing for the moment. The steps we have taken so far are not the final destination, they are simply steps along the road to the point where we’re doing everything as we used to.

NHS Vaccination Centre to move to our Church Hall

Representatives of the National Health Service have signed a contract to bring Swanley’s vaccination centre to St Mary’s Church Hall. For an initial term of six months, the church will hand over the hall, kitchen, the hall garden and part of the narthex so that vaccination services, including the Autumn Booster Programme, can still be delivered in Swanley. The centre has been at the Alexandra Suite but the Town Council has facilities which we lack and their regular users are now returning and needing all they have to offer. So whilst we will not be able to use our hall facilities at least our town will be able to access vaccines here.

People News

Thank you to everyone who joined with us in prayer for the funeral of **Les Newman** which took place in August. There was a very good turn-out from his family and friends although, sadly, some did get very delayed on the M25 travelling here. Those who knew Les well will not be surprised that he had prepared very carefully for the funeral and left very clear instructions—right down to including the actual versions of the music he wanted on CD! This is very helpful and means that his family wasn't trying to guess - with the added bonus in this case that he chose well.

A big thank you, too, to **everyone who turned out to help with our big clean**. More than 20 members of the congregation came and worked cheerfully and well and the result was a sparkling and glowing church. We are so very fortunate to have so many people who support us not only financially but with hard graft and we don't take for granted these generous outpourings for the Lord and His Church.

After a few hours in hospital, **Yvonne Myers** was returned home suffering from

dehydration. We do wish her well and hope the increased water drinking will restore her and then keep her in tip-top form.

To make it a hat-trick of mentions of the Conolly Clan (three mentions in three months!) **Nigel and Karen Conolly** were very disappointed that they had to cancel their planned Caribbean holiday in the autumn, which was to celebrate a rather special wedding anniversary. The cause of the cancellation, alas, is Covid and they're still trying to work out what to do to ensure they celebrate suitably. Father Dane's suggestion of a beach hut in Hastings didn't appear to win favour... Nigel is busy raising the profile of the impending lack of burial space in the town, once our churchyard is full—which may be later this year. He has already made contact with the Town Council and our MP and is helping them work together.

Congratulations to **Becky Cove** whose A-Level results have propelled her to London South Bank University where her Biomedical Science degree course will begin soon.



in association with

The Church of the Annunciation,
Chislehurst

St George,
Bickley

Saint Augustine of Canterbury,
Belvedere

A Mission Partnership serving the Lord and His holy people



A CELEBRATION OF
OUR LADY OF
WALSINGHAM

Sung Mass, 12 noon

Preacher: Fr Philip Barnes,
Priest in charge of St Stephen's, Gloucester Road

Lunch, 1pm

Packed lunches can be eaten in the hall or outside - tea & coffee will be available.

Quiet Hour, 2pm

The Hour begins with a reflection from Sister Carol Elizabeth SSM

Healing Liturgies & Benediction, 3pm

including sprinkling, prayers for healing and anointing

Home-time or a cuppa & chat, 3.45pm

SATURDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2021



Patronal Festival



THE BIRTHDAY OF OUR LADY

**7.30pm,
Wednesday
8th September**
followed by refreshments

Social Events on Pause

The Church's function and mission is to bring the love of God to as many people as possible and to ensure that all know they are loved children of One Heavenly Father and a beloved part of His creation.

The Church isn't the building, but the gathered people of God who are brought together to worship and praise Him.

In order to bring about a close working relationship, the Church does many things which are part of its overall mission but not its purpose.

One of these aspects of our common life is a programme of social events. These are not our purpose, they are part of living **in** community and living **as** community.

For the moment, because the hall and kitchen will be beyond our use, our social events programme will pause: this doesn't mean it won't ever be back (though, of course, it won't be back exactly as it was before the pandemic because we've lost too many people for that to happen) but it does mean that we won't be following our usual pattern for at least six months from now.

Eventually, things will be sorted according to a new normal and this period will seem to have passed by quickly—it's just while we're in it that it seems so long.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC)
will meet on
Tuesday 14th September 2021
Wednesday 8th December 2021
via Zoom at 7.30pm



All are welcome to join the 100 Club: you pay £1 a week and each month three lucky numbers are drawn: the first wins £70, the second £40 and the third £20. The draws are done on the first Sunday of the month and you have to be up to date to be in that month's draw. This is a way of supporting the church and also having the prospect of a welcome win every now and then! If you'd like to know more, talk to Sandra Merrick.

In this series for 2021, we're examining ways in which we can show our love for our neighbours.

Our Scriptural focuses are:

Listen without interrupting
Proverbs 18:13

Speak without accusing
James 1:19-20

Give without sparing
Proverbs 21:26

Pray without ceasing
Colossians 1:9

Answer without arguing
Proverbs 17:1

Share without pretending
Ephesians 4:15-16

Enjoy without complaint
Philippians 2:14

Trust without wavering
1 Corinthians 13:7

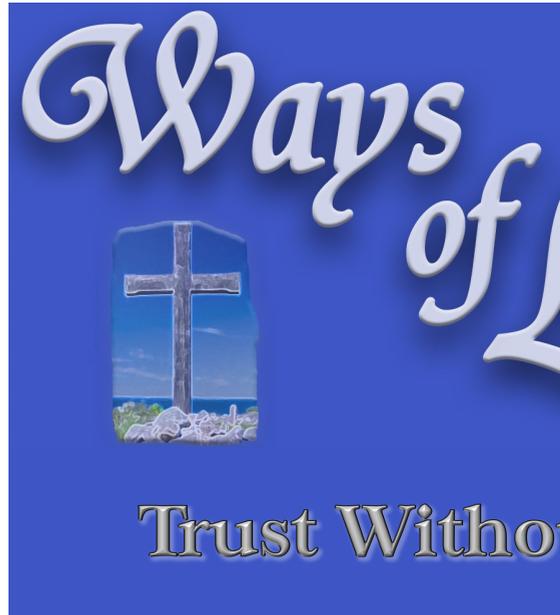
Forgive without punishing
Colossians 3:13

Promise without forgetting
Proverbs 13:12

1 Corinthians 13: 7

“ Love is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes.”

1Corinthians is often used as a source for readings at weddings. St Paul's discourse on the nature of love sets the bar very high because love isn't



a feeling but the hard work of bearing with someone who is quite possibly not behaving as we would like, or judging us for our behaviour in a way which we don't find comfortable.

A key part of love is trust.

What is trust? The dictionary says it's a "firm belief in the reliability, truth or ability of something or someone." This kind of firm belief can take a long time to truly appreciate and to rely on but it can be lost in an instant. And it's the sort of loss which—very sadly—can often not be rebuilt, no matter how much those involved make the effort to restore so they can learn to trust again.

Loving Without Wavering

So, when our Ways of Loving series has “Trust Without Wavering” as one of its themes, isn’t that just impossible?

Well, yes. And no. (Don’t forget as members of the Church of England, it’s always Yes AND No.....)

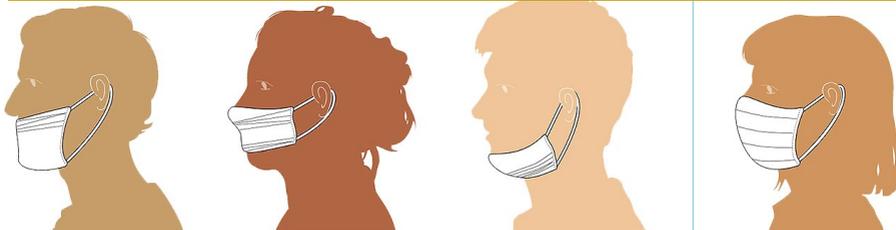
Our trust in the goodness of God must be full and permanent. Our trust that God can provide good things for us (God’s Good Providence) must be a firm foundation of our faith. The trust that He always sends us people upon whom we can rely is important. The fact that most of the people we deal with are genuinely good people who earnestly desire our

flourishing is vital, too. What all this adds up to is that our trust without wavering is a trust in the big things of life. It isn’t a guarantee that we will never be let down, nor is it a kind of empty-headed naivety which assumes that no matter how many times we’re proved wrong, we still have to return and pretend that nothing has happened.

St Paul’s writings on love are tough because real love is not easy, it’s tough.

There are times we make wrong choices. Their effect is to make others lose trust in us. We need to recognize that we have caused this and we need to make sure we don’t try to ‘guilt-trip’ others into forgiving us. That’s hard, because it means living with the bad consequences of our own actions and properly understanding how others have been badly affected by us. At times like this, it is important to recognize that God always gives us a way back to Him when we properly repent. And repentance here means working not to make the same mistakes again. That hard work of seeing that we are guilty of a lack of love, seeing how not to repeat it and wanting to avoid it, is tough!

Face-coverings are Expected for all Services in Churches They are mandatory for all who wish to sing at St Mary's



A face-covering is expected at Public Worship unless you are exempt.

A face-covering, or mask, must be sealed above the nose, below the mouth and the sides.

A visor may be worn by someone who is exempt but is not a substitute for a face-covering for anyone who is not exempt.

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The Future of the Churchyard

It has been clear for many years that the Churchyard is rapidly reaching the point where it is full.

We had thought that would be any time from 2023-25. Sadly, in the last 18 months we have used three years' worth of burial spaces and that means we are looking at having only 6 or 7 seven more spaces (at the time of writing.)

So what happens when the Churchyard is full?

This process is called the closure of the churchyard but don't worry! That doesn't mean it can't be visited, it just means that no new spaces are available for the burial of coffins. Existing reservations and the re-opening of existing plots are all honoured. We will also be ensuring that burials of ashes can still happen here.

In law, once the closure has been agreed by the Privy Council, responsibility for the churchyard maintenance passes from the parish church to the local council and it also up to the local council to decide what to do about further burial capacity in the town.

Within six months of his arrival, Father Dane began discussions about the lack of space in the churchyard with representatives of both Swanley Town Council and Sevenoaks District Council and each of them considered possible ways forward. As reported in our People News column, Nigel Conolly has provided renewed impetus to this process and further steps are now being taken. For the moment, the closest places for interments are Kemnal Park Cemetery and Bluebell Cemetery which are both privately owned and Greatness Cemetery owned and run by Sevenoaks Town Council.

Churchyards are governed by church law and the only people with the right to be buried in a churchyard are those living within the parish boundaries of an individual church: so residents of St Mary's Swanley are not entitled to burial at St Paul's Swanley Village or All Souls' Crockenhill (to take two local examples) so although there may be space in a churchyard, that doesn't mean anyone from outside the parish can automatically be buried there or interred there by right.

Without Covid, we probably would not have used up the spaces so quickly, but now we are facing the closure of St Mary's Churchyard to new interments, it's time to begin a new chapter in the life of the town as we seek to create a new burial space, available to all and with sufficient capacity for a long future.

Scam Warning

From Kent Trading Standards

A scam has returned in which someone emails or rings you and tells you have won a big prize on the People's Postcode Lottery. Criminals will try to get financial details from you, or even use fake headed notepaper.

Don't be taken in!

To contact the People's Postcode Lottery and check, telephone 0808 109 8765 or email info@postcodelottery.co.uk.

If you believe that you have been a victim of this scam, then please report it to Action Fraud at www.actionfraud.police.uk or by calling 0300 123 2040.

Remember the **ABC**:
Never ASSUME
Never BELIEVE
Always CONFIRM.

Mission Partnership

One of the great benefits of our Mission Partnership is that we can do things which separately it would either be difficult to do, or not nearly so rewarding.

The Walsingham Celebration Day is a case in point: because we are promoting this across our four parishes and beyond, we're able to draw on the resources of more than our own people. The result is that the event can be bigger than

anything we could put on ourselves and broader, too.

The workload and costs of events like this can be shared and the ideas can contribute to a real sense of trying new things and embedding what we love.

We are so grateful to our partner parishes of the Annunciation Chislehurst, St George's Bickley and St Augustine's Belvedere.

Protecting Children & Vulnerable Adults

As discussed earlier in this Newsletter: when it is lost, trust is very difficult to get back.

The Church of England nationally has lost trust with many people because of its handling of abuse cases over a very long period.

Regaining that trust is the difficult challenge with which parishes are now faced because we have to prove that we are not only worthy of trust but we have faced honestly the difficulties of the past.

A key part of this winning back trust is making sure that we're trained properly so that we know what to do if we're faced with difficult situations—and what's more we know what went wrong in the past so that we can make a different future.

Training is available online but there will also be face-to-face training in October at the Annunciation Chislehurst. Further details from Father Dane but however you choose to be trained, please make sure you're up to date.



Flowers and our sponsorships in general are back up and running. The posters are now on what used to be the prayer board by the door from the church into the narthex. You can sign up to celebrate good things of both past and present. The flower ladies are always happy to hear if you have particular favourite colours or flowers and they try to incorporate those preferences into any sponsored arrangements if they can.



Next Walsingham Pilgrimage: 2022

We're usually preparing to set off for Walsingham at the moment but, sadly, this year we're not. We hope all will be back to normal next year, but for a taste of Walsingham come along on Saturday 4th September: for full details see the poster in this Newsletter.

Anniversaries in September

- 1 Clara Kemp, Louisa Purkiss,
Albert Weeks, Daisy Baldwin,
Alice Best
- 3 Olive Walker,
Elizabeth Wapshott
- 4 Cecil Marshall
- 5 George Hult, May Fisher,
Andrea Hanson
- 6 Mary Allen
- 7 Joyce Ley, Tom Wood
- 8 Harold Lee, Pr
- 9 Emma Read, Charles Lowder, Pr
Frank Pond, Pr
- 10 Nora Sharp, Stanley Stagg
Noel Poore, Glenn Ashby, Snr
- 11 Kenneth West
- 12 Charles Shaw, Pr
- 13 Bernard Clements OSB, Pr
Alfred Batts, May Rosser
- 14 Rosina Mangan
- 15 Charles Watkins, Amy Palmer
- 16 Colin Parker, Ellen Eatwell
Gordon Edwards, Rose Firmager
- 17 Arthur Lucas
- 18 Ruby Pearce
- 19 Henry Weir
- 20 Ernest Parker, Laura Starr
Doris Lamy
- 21 Constance Parker
- 22 Ronald Gwyther, Pr
- 23 Robert Wall, Stan Last
- 24 Janet Good
- 25 Alice Wilkinson
- 26 Alice Knight
- 27 Frederick Lipscomb, Pr
Robert Cassine, Elsie Salter,
Marion Phipps, Connie Beard,
Margaret Kemp, Jim Fordham,
Leslie Beighton
- 29 Amy Howgego, Harry Finn
- 30 Emily Blenkinsopp
James Wrighton, Lilian Jennings

Funerals in August

10th August

Frederick Webb

St Mary's Church & Churchyard

20th August

Leslie Newman

St Mary's Church & Churchyard

REST ETERNAL
GRANT TO THEM,
O LORD, AND LET
LIGHT PERPETUAL
SHINE UPON THEM.

*“May they
rest in peace
and rise in glory.”*

St Mary's is glad that the numbers
who can now attend funeral
services has been relaxed.

When fewer than 60 people are
present in church, masks do not
need to be worn but for any act of
public worship where more than
60 people are in church,
masks are compulsory.

This is to ensure that we are
keeping everyone—especially the
most vulnerable—safe.



**ST MARY THE VIRGIN,
SWANLEY**

is in the

**Diocese of
Rochester**

the **Archdeaconry of
Rochester**

and the **Deanery of
Dartford**

We are a

Forward in Faith
parish under the care of

The Right Reverend

Norman Banks

Bishop of Richborough

The right to present a priest
to be our Vicar when there is
a vacancy is held by the
parish patron, the Guild of
All Souls.

Hall Hire

No hirings for the foreseeable
future.

Baptisms

There is no charge for Baptism.

Here at S Mary's we baptize
those who live in our parish -
and will even baptize those from
outside with their parish priest's
permission.

Who's Who

Vicar

Father Dane Batley-Gladden
Saint Mary's Vicarage,
London Road,
Swanley, BR8 7AQ.
01322 662201
vicar@swanleyparish.org.uk

Churchwardens

Kevin Merrick
(also PCC Vice Chair)

Christine Parkes

Hon Secretary

Holly Attwood

Hon Treasurer

Sandra Merrick

Hall Lettings

None at present

Servers

Kevin Merrick

Organist

Doug Blew

Choir

Ann Parkes

Safeguarding Officer

(Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection)
Toni Roast

Weekly Mass Booklets

Bob Jones

Finding Us



**St
Mary's**

St Mary's Church car park is available to those attending our church services.

Giving to Church

WE ARE COMPLETELY DEPENDENT ON YOUR GIVING. Although services are returning to normal our bills are as sky-high as ever: electricity, gas, water rates etc. On top of that we must still pay for our priest.

Online, you can go to www.justgiving.com/stmarys-swanley to give by credit or debit card. *You can enhance your donation with Gift Aid if you wish.*

To offer your usual donation by standing order or BACS please contact Fr Dane and he'll arrange for you to receive the appropriate form/information.

Thank you for all you do.

Our Week

Sunday

10am
Parish Mass

12 noon
*Holy Baptism
(or at Mass)*

5pm
Evening Prayer

Monday
No Mass

Tuesday
Mass, 7pm

Wednesday
Mass, 11.30am

Thursday
Mass, 10am

Friday
Mass, 11am

Saturday
Mass, 10am



Our website:

www.swanleyparish.org.uk
*where you will find a lot of
information, news & much more!*

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