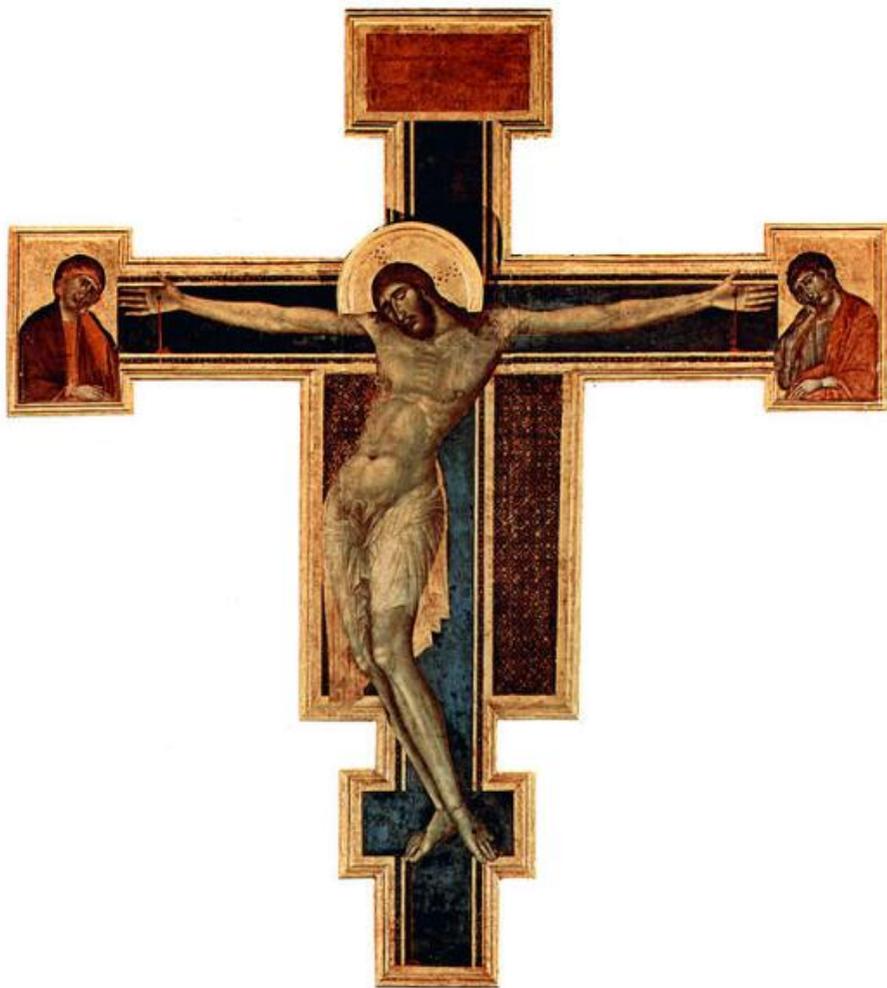


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April/May 2022

£1



Front cover— see opposite page.
Top LHS Sir Ebenezer Howard with Ukrainian Scarf—see page 23
RHS Paul Butler will soon be marking out plots again for the Fete, page 9
Below— School Report on page 8



Easter is approaching, and it looks likely to be a sombre one, with the war in Ukraine becoming increasingly deadly. The cover picture shows an Orthodox Cross, with Christ flanked by two icons of Saints. Before settling on it I had spent a long time trawling pictures from the war itself, but they were just too harrowing.



The Crucifixion was of course an act of savage barbarity, inflicted on an innocent man. There are many parallels with the present conflict. Russian soldiers appear to be just as brutal as the Roman ones who put Jesus to death. And President Putin, heartless and remote from the suffering he has caused, is in the mould of Roman Emperors who enslaved Israel and much of the then known world.



The Chief Priest who sent Jesus to Pilate is mirrored today by Patriarch Kirill of Moscow who has blessed Russian soldiers on their way to Ukraine. He has famously been pictured wearing expensive watches, the latest being an Ulysse Nardin Dual Time 42 mm model costing approximately \$16,000. Not quite what Jesus had in mind.

This shows that evil is a constant presence in mankind's affairs. We always hope that good will in the long run overcome evil, and must pray that Ukraine's suffering is not long drawn out. Eventually it will revive, unlike the reputation of Putin's and his Russia—which is irretrievably sunk. The Crucifixion of Christ was a time of absolute darkness but after three days came the Resurrection. There are many views on what actually happened on that first Easter morning but all agree that the Spirit of Jesus is with us today if we choose to be open to it.

Something good is only a few months away for St John's and St Michael's. Kathryn Alford has been selected to become initially Curate in Charge of our two Churches, from September, and next year our Vicar. We have seen her in action when she has taken services here and she will make a splendid Vicar. You can read her story on page 5. Something to look forward to!

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April

3rd 8 am HC/MP — tbc
11 am All Age Worship - Rev Laura Collingridge
Phil 3:4b-14 and John 12:1-8

10th. 8 am HC BCP - tbc **** Palm Sunday**
11 am HC - Rev Fiona Souter
Phil 2:5-11 and Luke 22:14-end 23

15th 10am Lay-led Service **** Good Friday**

17th 8 am HC/MP — Rev Edward Cardale **** Easter Day**
11 am HC — **Fr Paul Gismondi**
Acts 10:34-43 and John 20:1-18

24th. 8 am HC BCP - Rev Susan Marsh
11 am MP — Rev Iain Lane
Acts 5:27-32 and John 20:19-end

May

1st 8 am HC BCP - tba
11 am All Age Worship - Rev Sue Stilwell
Acts 9:1-6 [7-20] and John 21:1-19

8th 8 am HC BCP - Rev Susan Marsh
11 am HC - Rev Iain Lane
Acts 9:36-end and John 10:22-30

15th 8 am MP BCP - tba
11 am Morning Prayer - Rev Roger Chapman
Acts 11:1-18 and John 13:31-35

22nd 8 am HC BCP - Rev Susan Marsh
11 am HC tbc
Acts 16:9-15 and John 14:23-29

29th 8 am HC BCP - tbc
11 am HC - Rev Susan Stilwell
Acts 16:16-34 and John 17:20-end

HC BCP: Holy Communion, Book of Common Prayer MP: Morning Prayer
Please check website for updates. Readings subject to change.

New Vicar!

After a selection panel chaired by the Bishop of Hertford, and including Wardens from both Churches, Rev. Katherine Alford has accepted an offer to become our next Vicar. Currently she is an Assistant Curate in the Bishop's Hatfield Team Ministry. In September she will become Curate with Responsibility for St Michaels and All Angels (Birchwood) and St Johns (Lemsford) At the end of her curacy period, Kathryn will be licensed as Team Vicar sometime in April 2023. *Read about her reaction opposite.*

Eveline Beswarick

It is with great sadness that we report that Eveline passed away peacefully, at the age of 95, in the Lister Hospital, on Tuesday 8th March. She had spent most of her life in Stanborough, either with her parents on the Great North Road or with her husband Jack in New Road. She leaves 3 daughters, 7 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren with many fond and happy memories. A tribute to her will appear in the next issue.

Ted Webb writes:

The world is in pain
Because of Ukraine.

It's always the same
The Russians again.

If you didn't hear,
They took the Crimea
A rule based on fear.
No one shed a tear.

Together we pray
God will show us the way
To bring forward the day
When it's all gone away.

See a prayer for Ukraine on p 23.

New advertiser

We welcome another new advertiser, **Frances Gregory**. She lives nearby and is a holistic life coach. Having worked for a large corporation for many years, she has experienced stress in the workplace. She has also brought up a family and cared for ageing parents at the same time. After deciding to change direction she gained diplomas in Life Coaching, Nutrition (natural therapy) and Mindfulness, Meditation and Movement. She is passionate about helping women to improve their midlife health and wellbeing. Her advert appears on page 18. Contact her to arrange a free 30 minute consultation.

Parish Magazine copy date for
the next issue: **22nd May**

There doesn't seem a big enough word to describe how I felt when I found out I was going to be curate-in-charge and then team vicar of St John's and St Michael's, so I'll use a few words instead... I'm excited, thrilled, eager, and feel really blessed to be coming to where it feels 'right' for me to be.



I thought I'd tell you a bit about myself now, so you have a sense of who will be 'arriving' in the Autumn. I'm originally from near Stanborough school in Welwyn Garden City, so I know Lemsford well, and am looking forward exploring the beautiful local walks again, and popping into the fabulous pubs!

Although Welwyn Garden City was a great place to grow up in, I was desperate to move to a city by the end of my time at school, and I headed off to study History at Manchester University. This led to me becoming a civil servant in the Ministry of Defence and various other Government Departments for 20 plus years.

After university, Daniel (my now husband) and I moved to Bristol before returning to Welwyn in 2004 to raise our children Bill (18) and Lena (16). Eight years ago, we were joined by a chocolate brown Labrador called Molly, who has told me that she is really looking forward to trying to beg for food from a whole new set of people. Molly used to come with me on the long runs that I enjoy (sort of) going on, but she now seems happier relaxing in our old VW Campervan.

Some people know from an early age that they are being called to priesthood, but my journey to ordination came as a complete surprise. As a child I went to a wonderful church with my parents – St John's Lemsford! However, I drifted away from church and faith in my teens and declared myself an atheist in my 20s. By my 30s, I sensed something was missing in my life, but I just couldn't work out what that was. Eventually the penny dropped, and I connected this feeling with the spiritual gap in my life. In 2008, after a long period of spiritual exploration, I finally started attending St Mary's church, Welwyn and I became a Christian.





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I'll save the full story of my high-speed journey from newbie Christian to ordination for another time, but the turning point came in 2014 when I found myself taking a year long career break to work for the Diocese of St Albans. My role included listening to lots of vicars' experiences, and it was during these conversations that I began to sense some sort of calling to ministry. After trying (and failing) to ignore this seemingly ridiculous notion, I eventually entered 18 months of official exploration, followed by 3 years of part-time training for ordination on the Eastern Region Ministry Course.

For the last two years I've had a wonderful time as curate in the parish of St Etheldreda's with St Luke's, Hatfield. As part of this role, I've been fortunate enough to occasionally lead worship at St John's and St Michael's, as well as get to know the brilliant children and adults at St John's school. After my first visit to both communities last year, I went home and said to my husband 'I would just love to be vicar of those churches.' I'm so looking forward to this becoming a reality, and to getting to know you all when I arrive in the Autumn.

Kathryn

In-between times

First there was *Before Covid*. Some time—hopefully soon—will be *After Covid* (or more likely *Living with Covid*). At present we are “*In-between*”. This morning I was in church. There were people singing in the choir wearing masks, some singing without, some half up. The same was true of the congregation. I had forgotten to bring a mask, and then reflected that I hadn't worn one for the two weeks since I was last in church, except for an appointment at the doctor where signs directed me to put one on.

At my secondary school we are no longer required to wear masks, whether staff or pupils. But some pupils still prefer to wear them, some staff may still ask a student to put one on for close contact work, and staff may ask students wearing a mask to remove them in order to participate in a lesson discussion. All very “in-between”. At a national level we see restrictions being removed, with the intention of moving us towards the “After Times”. Yet as I write this the UK daily Covid case number keeps rising day by day and other countries, particularly in Asia, are seeing huge new spikes in cases. I can only conclude that the “In-between Times” will be with us for a while longer yet.



Kevin Earl

How wonderful to see the signs of Spring emerging as we are out on gate or playground duty! This lovely feeling of hope and renewal is beautifully echoed by the news that we have a new vicar appointed to St John's Church. Our warmest congratulations to Reverend Kathryn Alford who has been such a positive part of the support we have had from the Hatfield team during the interregnum.



I will be retiring at the end of the academic year and the process for appointing a new Head is underway, with several visits from potential applicants. I am always so proud to show people around and for them to meet our fantastic children and staff, and to experience the nurturing, values led vision that we have here at St John's.

Life is finally resuming some normality and we are out of bubbles and embracing our face to face Collective Worships, both at church and in our own assembly hall. It is so special to be back worshipping on a Wednesday morning in our beautiful church. Thanks again to 'the team' for online services during our times of bubbles and restrictions.

We have just celebrated the 150th anniversary of the first day of St John's school in 1872 with a lovely assembly led by **Andy Chapman** from the local history society, Rev **Edward Cardale**, and me acting as the original headmistress, Mrs Seaman. (*Also see page 16 on*) The children were shocked to hear that some children then didn't have shoes so couldn't come to school in winter – unthinkable to our well shod children today! We thoroughly enjoyed our journey back to 1872.

Firmly back in the 21st Century, Class 4 enjoyed a STEM workshop programming robot cars to follow a coded journey on a track. They also had another workshop led by **Paul Butler** with the K'Nex challenge of building a moving bridge. The children worked well in pairs to fulfil it. (*Pictures inside front cover*) We are busy preparing for Science Week from 14th March and our older children are visiting Stanborough School to do some science experiments and computing during the week. Science is fun!

We are, like the St John's congregation, gearing ourselves up for the fete and looking forward to working together again after a 2 year break. We hope to see the parish turn out en masse to support us!

Wishing you all a very Happy Easter.

Mandy

This year's fete will be the first time we've been able to hold it since 2019, and we've missed you all.



Besides our traditional maypole dancing, coconut shy and crockery smash, we have some new activities to try your hand at. Why not bounce on our bungee trampoline or test your robin hood skills on the archery range. We also have a few new musical offerings this year, which we hope you'll enjoy. Our friends from the Herts Fire Service, will be with us for part of the afternoon if you want to clamber over a fire engine or try on the kit, or maybe you'd like to admire a couple of classic Morgan cars?

An afternoon out wouldn't be complete without a little refreshment so try a Pimms or local real ale in our beer tent, maybe something non-alcoholic instead or a local gin. Having quenched your thirst how about something from our BBQ (meat or vegan), paella, a cake or just a simple ice cream.

The event is run completely with volunteers from the school and church communities of St John's Lemsford and all proceeds go to support local charities, and school and church activities. For a complete insight to the event, timings, and attractions check out our website:

www.lemsfordfete.co.uk

As a responsible event we encourage our guests to help us reduce our impacts on the environment. We do this by recycling as much as we can, and have plenty of facilities around the site to do this. We will also be selling products in either recyclable or compostable containers. We won't be selling bottled water, but will happily fill up any water bottles you bring along, as often as you want.

Whilst we hope that the dreaded Covid will not take hold again, we will have facilities and rules in place to stop it recurring. Whilst you can bring your favourite teddy bear please DON'T bring your dog along unless they are a registered guide or assistance dog.

We aim to provide a great afternoon out for family and friends to gather and spend time together, hope you can come along and join us.

Paul, Fete Chair

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The spring miracle of new life is spreading out before our eyes across the countryside – daffodils blooming, buds bursting on the trees, the days lengthening. And while we continue our journey through the quiet weeks of preparation that we call Lent, we can now start to see the joy of Easter ahead of us and the *greatest* miracle of new life - Jesus' resurrection.



Come and find out more about God's never-ending, death-defying, life-giving love for each of us at our Easter events.

First of all, we have been enjoying getting back to our **all-age worship** on the first Sunday of each month. We'd love to see you at I I am for a family-friendly service of music, prayer and Bible teaching – everyone is welcome.

We'll be celebrating **Mothering Sunday** at an all-age Holy Communion service on **Sunday 27th March**. It's about mothers of course, but also about everyone who loves and cares, at home, at school, in our community. Our service will have room for all ages to worship together.

And then on **Palm Sunday 10th April** there'll be another **Church@4 event**, an informal and relaxed get-together with Bible stories, games, craft, music and worship, as we explore what happened that first Easter week in Jerusalem. And don't forget we'll be offering food too!

Our **Easter Sunday celebration on Sunday 17th April** will welcome all ages and will end with a very traditional Easter Egg Hunt! And lastly, we invite you to join the **Easter Monday pilgrimage** to St Albans Abbey. We'll be leaving from St John's Church at 10am on Easter Monday on foot, for a wonderful celebration at the Abbey in the afternoon. Have a look at what's planned on the Diocese website: <https://www.easterisnow.faith/easter-monday-pilgrimage>

Oh and I mustn't forget, we'll be at the **Lemsford Fete** too on **May 2nd**, with fun (and free) things for little ones and some space for a bit of time out!

If you'd like more information about any of these activities, please do get in touch with Jo at children@stjohnschurchlemsford.org



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Gill's Funeral took place at St John's on 1st February, led by Sue Stilwell with an Address by Edward Cardale. A full Church testified to her many lasting friendships.



Gill grew up in Banstead, Surrey, with her parents Doris and Cecil. Following Grammar school, in September 1957, she arrived at Manchester University to study Economics and the British Constitution. Regrettably a bout of Asian flu meant that she was unable to complete her degree and she went to secretarial college in London. She started her working life at ICI HQ on Millbank, London as a PA to the Directors.

In 1963 she met her future husband, Douglas, also an only child, at a Valentine party organised by the English-Speaking Union, and they married a year later at Banstead Church. She spent all her married life in WGC, where Jonathan and Jenny were born at the then recently opened QE2 Hospital.

She later worked at ICI Plastics Division in Welwyn Garden and after its closure went on to work for local architects. She always wanted to work at the houses of Parliament and was even offered a job but sadly had to turn it down due to elderly, poorly parents at the time

She served on many committees including the School PTA's, the Local Fine Arts Society, Horticultural and National Trust Associations and Probus to name but a few.

She thoroughly enjoyed being a grandma. She loved it as the boys grew up, hearing their news, plans for the future, having lengthy discussions on historical facts, current affairs and the world at large!

Gill and Douglas attended the Free Church in WGC, where both their children were christened. After Douglas' sad early death in 1987 she transferred to St John's Lemsford. Edward recalled how Gill appraised his sermons and how pleased he was when she approved !

She will be much missed in her familiar pew.

In 2014 the Government set up an Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, (IICSA) following widespread concern raised by the Jimmy Savile case. The Church of England was included because in the last seventy years or so 390 people within it had been convicted of sexual offences against children. Between 2003 and 2018, the main insurer of the Church of England (Ecclesiastical Insurance) had to deal with 217 claims relating to child sexual abuse. IICSA reported in October 2020 that the C of E had failed to protect children and young people from sexual predators.



Archbishop Justin Welby said “we have got to learn to put action behind the words because ‘sorry’ is pretty cheap”. As a result, recommendations in the report were accepted and major changes implemented. A National Safeguarding Team was created together with Diocesan Safeguarding Teams, including one in St Albans. At Parish level Safeguarding Officers (PSOs) were named—I am the one for St John’s.

Bishop Alan of St Albans said, “Sadly, occasionally some adults may attempt to infiltrate any organisation to abuse children or young people. We need to create and maintain a culture of informed vigilance to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults”.

Accordingly at parish level individuals who might come into contact with children have had to undergo training as well as checks every three years by the DBS – Disclosure and Barring Service. These requirements were initially laid on Sunday Club teachers, but have been extended, for example to Parochial Church Council members. Today 30 people holding different service posts in our church are going through Basic Awareness training. This is supplemented by a written safeguarding policy which is posted in the porch and the Annexe for all to read.

In St Johns safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of us all with its focus on prevention. When people come to our church, we want them to feel that they have come to a safe place where they can worship God reverently, joyfully, and in fellowship with others. If you have any concerns, do speak to me or to Jo Brooks who is my deputy. If you notice any signs of abuse, do not try to resolve it yourself; report it immediately to me or to Jo.



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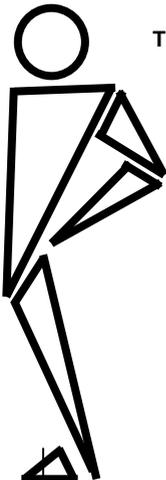
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Friday March 4th, 2022 was an important day for St John's School, Lemsford as it was exactly 150 years since the first School assembly took place in 1872. A special assembly marked the start of St John's 150 years celebrations. Friday assembly has always been important as parents are invited and birthdays and achievements are celebrated.

Mandy started the assembly by lighting a candle that spelt out 150 and asked the oldest child in the school and the youngest child in the school to come up and blow out the candles. The School then sang 'Happy Birthday St John's'. *See pictures inside back cover.*

What followed was a succession of achievement awards that I doubt would have been seen in 1872. The closest ceremony to this would have been an end of term prize giving which would have been based on academic achievement. Each class chose a child who had worked hard that week and was followed by awards for sporting and artistic achievements outside school. There were also awards for individuals who had excelled in schoolwork, including handwriting, for a class one pupil maybe a throwback to 1872 when possibly one of the categories on prize day would have been handwriting. The difference was in 1872 it would have been a solemn occasion whereas in 2022 it was a happy affair. In part, down to the way Mandy talks to the children; her genuine enthusiasm was infectious and if the BBC is looking for a new presenter, they should look no further than the Head Teacher at St John's.

The 1872 assembly started with Mandy playing the part of Mary Seaman dressed in a wonderful outfit. Our Vicar from 1872, the Rev. Burnside, was played by the ex-vicar of St John's, Rev. Edward dressed in an austere black cassock with leather belt. I played the part of the first teacher, Walter Seaman, husband of the first headmistress, Mary Seaman. With my 'demob' suit from the 1990s, dress shirt from 1980s and black tie, I wanted to look like a strict Victorian teacher, although looking in the mirror it was more Stan Laurel of Laurel and Hardy fame! A special touch by Mandy was to show a report book from 1872 with entries from the hand of Mary Seaman and she read the register from an original register from that period.

There is a full script at www.lemsfordvillage.co.uk/Articles.html and find St Johns School Assembly 4 March 2022 icon.

Mary Seaman (Mandy) started off the assembly: “Good Morning Children. Welcome to St John’s School, Lemsford on the 4th March in the year of our Lord 1872. I will call out your name and you will answer ‘Yes Miss’ and stand up, to show yourself to the school. I would like to introduce you to your teacher Mr Seaman who you will address as ‘Sir’ or Mr Seaman.”

There were 77 children in the hall; the first to be called out was Susannah Bracey, her father was an agricultural labourer. I explained to the children that the fathers of most of the children on that first day were agriculture labourers which meant low pay poor, hungry and cold. They lived locally in houses owned by the estate which did not have mod cons. Life was miserable and very hard day to day. It is known that many children were from poor families, and they must have often been very hungry. In 1875, two children were caned for eating another child’s dinner.

We then called out names of children whose parents had interesting occupations like Miss Bunnage. Elizabeth’s father was dead, and her mother Emma was 50. To make ends meet, she worked as a straw platter. Straw platting in 1872 was a common occupation for many females. It was a cottage industry and brought in much needed cash.

Thomas Channer: Thomas’ father was John, aged 57 and married to Anne 37. He was a groom. He would have probably worked at Brocket Hall which was owned Francis, 7th Earl Cowper who may not have resided at Brocket Hall. Lord Francis Cowper, who at that time owned the Panshanger and Brocket Estates, had a school built in 1872, which he supported financially until 1903.

Walter Dawson: Walter Dawson was the nephew of James Dawson aged 59, the land steward of the Brocket Estate, married to Lizzie aged 67. Land stewards managed all the activities associated with making the estate profitable, including record and account keeping and managing contracts.

Ebenezer Fox: Henry Fox aged 26, married to Mary aged 30, worked as a flagman on the railways. A flagman was an employee of the railroad who was assigned to protect contractors or anyone performing work on a railroad



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John Garret: John Garret's father was George Garret was a miller, aged 35, married to Mary aged 37. They lived at Lemsford Mill.

Mandy continued: "Children, I would like to introduce The Vicar, the Rev. W. Burnside, who will open the school each morning with prayers, and be himself responsible for the teaching of scripture to the older pupils. Rev. Edward read scripture (Mandy asked what scripture was and had many strange answers) and we sang 'All things bright and beautiful'.

Thomas Horn: Thomas' father was William James Horn, aged 33, who was born at Handside, Hatfield, the son of William Cooper Horn and Mary Ann Woodhouse. The 1881 census shows that William James Horn was then farming 600 acres in Handside.

George Lawrence: George's father was James, aged 39, married to Mary aged 40. Beer retailer in the village in the Long and Short.

Alfred Redd: Alfred's father was William, aged 49, a farm bailiff; his mother was Mary aged 45. Mary had 10 children. The farm bailiff collected rent, taxes and supervising both farm operations and labourers.

Rev. Edward ended the assembly with thanksgiving service and a prayer.

I was asked to take a class on a tour of the village. After a lesson showing the children images of the village from the website, we walked down to the Long and Short going past the old blacksmith's opposite the Roebuck Inn (http://www.lemsfordhistory.co.uk/Article_lost_Pubs.html). We stood on the iron pathway looking at the Mill water wheel and ended up outside the Long and Short. On the way back, the landlord of the Sun Inn kindly offered to show us the interior The children seemed very excited to go into a pub.

Our next stop was the Mill. We asked the Ramblers Walking Holidays, current occupiers of the Mill, if we could go inside. They agreed and the children had the rare experience of seeing the water wheel close up and the turbine that powers the offices. Back to school to end a special day for the children who were interested, enthusiastic and polite. They were a credit to Mandy and her staff after 150 years the children of Lemsford are in safe hands.

Do you have a memory of St John's School? Please email me at info@lemsfordhistory.co.uk



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Slugs and snails (gastropods) have never had a good press. Jabba the Hutt, the gangster character in *Star Wars*, had the body of a slug to emphasise his unpleasantness. Much earlier Psalm 58, which curses wicked people, says in verse 8 “Let them be as a snail which melts away in its slime as it goes along”. (Worth reading in full, by the way, as it is so relevant today with Putin going berserk).



Also they are the scourge of gardeners everywhere. My collection of hostas are particularly prone to their munching and I have been known to go out with a torch at night to pick them off one by one. Slug pellets are a sort of solution but the effective varieties have been banned for some years.

But all that is about to change. The Royal Horticultural Society has said that they should be rebranded to help shed their negative image. RHS principal entomologist Andrew Salisbury writing in the *Guardian* called the molluscs "garden visitors" and said they were "misunderstood". The species play a key role in ecosystems and are in need of "positive PR". Only nine of the 44 known species in the UK are likely to be a threat to garden plants and produce, he added.

"Even the plant-nibbling species can play a vital role in recycling dead plant material and animal waste, and acting as a food source for hedgehogs, frogs, birds, beetles and predatory flies. Our gardens would be a duller and messier place without them".

The shift is one of a series of moves to persuade gardeners to embrace a messier, more nature-friendly approach to managing their lawns and flowerbeds. The charity's horticulturalists have urged gardeners to avoid watering their lawns or mowing them too often to save water and preserve habitats for nature. Readers may recall that I am quite keen on this approach to lawns, but it may take a while before I surrender my hostas to slugs and snails, sorry—garden visitors..

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We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.
We pray for those with power over war or peace,
for wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their
decisions.
Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk
and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.
We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.
Amen
Archbishops Justin Welby, Stephen Cottrell

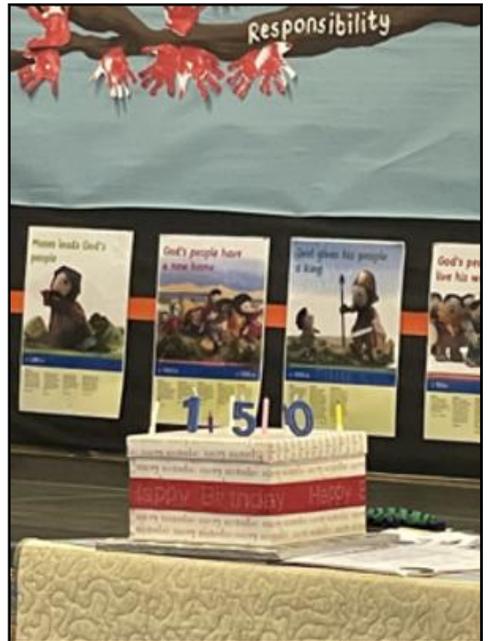
And finallySome weak garden visitor jokes:

A snail assaulted a slug and was arrested and brought to trial. The trial judge asked the slug to tell the court what happened. She replied, "I can't remember, your Honour, everything happened so fast."

A snail bought a Tesla Model S. he took off at a very high speed. As he sped past a famous restaurant the chef exclaimed, "Look at that S car go."

French like to eat snails so much because they can't stand fast food.

A man was watching a film in a cinema when he noticed something that looked like a snail seated next to him. Surprised, he asked the snail what it was doing watching a film. The snail responded, "I liked the book."





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