

# St John's Church

*serving Stanborough, Lemsford, Cromer Hyde*

Virus  
special



**Parish Magazine**

*April/May 2020*

**£1**



**Spring has sprung. Top left is the result of bulb planting by the Village Association *page 19* , the others show the fruits of Mary Douglas' Working Parties *page 7***

## From the Vicarage

I don't know about you but I keep feeling as if I'm in some kind of strange movie, where in some respects all is the same and yet nothing is the same. The lockdown is making us all think hard in different ways.



The notification from the archbishops of Canterbury and York that our churches are to close for acts of public worship until further notice has been an experience we hope never to experience again. The thought of not celebrating Holy Communion with my congregations on Easter Sunday is devastating and I know it is shocking for them too. However, that does not mean that there are no services. I have started to live stream services from the Vicarage so that there will be a true interaction. In other words the church is not stopping, services will continue but we must adapt to suit our circumstance.

I am also saying daily prayer which I'm putting in the church Facebook pages and website and my own personal Facebook pages. This has proved to be very popular.

The Apostle Paul said "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." (2Timothy 1 v 7). These were addressed to Timothy, a man who had been asked to do more than he felt capable of. Paul, writing from prison, wants to encourage him and I find this rather remarkable. Paul who could have just been thinking about himself is thinking about the person who is less vulnerable than him, in so many ways. There are clear similarities to the way we find ourselves today. Many people are self-isolating in their home, unable to do much. Yet experience tells me that they will be worried as much about their friends as they are about themselves. Just like the Apostle Paul and Timothy. If you find yourself in your home and unable to go out maybe this is a chance to choose to spend just a few minutes a day with God in prayer and meditation.

Should however you find yourself in any form of need even if just to talk **please phone or email me** [revpaulseymour@gmail.com](mailto:revpaulseymour@gmail.com) 01707 271966  
Keep safe, and God Bless you. **Paul**

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**T**he national lockdown means that the Fete has been **postponed with a provisional new date of Sunday 13th September. We will though carry on with the Grand Draw on the 3rd May.** This is always an important source of funds for the School and Church, and our Charities. Ring Gina Butler on 01707 372062 to find out the many ways she has devised to get tickets to you. The prizes are as great as ever, and include a 32" TV, Round of golf for 4 at Brocket Hall, Lunch for 2 at Auberge du Lac, and a £50 voucher for Ocado.

***Your Editor writes:***

**F**irst of all, thank you for reading this Magazine in digital form. Lots of things have had to be given up because of the coronavirus, and one is printing it, because distribution would have been problematic. It will be available to all via our website, and I would be grateful if you would publicise this outlet to friends and neighbours who might miss their copy.



Being digital does have its advantages though. You may notice there are more pages than normal, and that there is colour throughout—all at no extra cost.

Digital technology is also helping Church members to follow Services held by Paul in the Vicarage, and to join in virtual coffee mornings. If you get Frank Puranik's news emails you will have got the links to these as well as up to date developments in a fast changing situation. If you do not get these emails please ask Frank and he will be delighted to add your name to the distribution list. His email is [frank@puranik.org](mailto:frank@puranik.org).

Back to this issue—I hope you find something of interest; if not do let me know as I welcome feedback.

**L**astly, I look forward to the happy days when we get back to normal. Our present troubles echo the privations of Jesus in the wilderness. He overcame them and ultimately enjoyed the triumph of Easter Day. Let us pray that we all come through our trial stronger too.

**Geoffrey**

**Website**

We have a new one, after much hard work by **Nigel Johnson**: [stjohnschurchlemsford.org](http://stjohnschurchlemsford.org). On the front page you will find links to all the services conducted by Paul since we were forced to close the Church by order of the Archbishops. These are recorded on YouTube. Scrolling down the opening page you will find lots of information and links. These include the texts of sermons preached recently at St Johns by distinguished visitors—**Jeffrey John**, Dean of St Albans, and **Harry Steele**, Church Growth Officer for the Diocese. One of the links is to the Village hub website, where you can find copies of this Magazine from 2014, thanks to the efforts of **Andy Chapman**. *See page 19 to find more about this new hub.*

**Annual Parish Meeting**

Was held on 15th March following the 11.00 Service. Happily **Jenny Roden** and **Nigel Johnson** have agreed to continue as Wardens. They are now 91 people on the Electoral Roll, maintained by **Lucy Earl**. The finances for 2019 were reported by **Gina Butler**. She said that a

large deficit had been avoided only thanks to two generous legacies, (from **Kay Richards** and **Charles Heywood**). However the outlook for 2020 was poor especially with coronavirus. (See **Kevin Earl's** appeal opposite). We were also grateful for two donations to keep the clock running and striking, from **Carol Hicks** and Herts County Council via Coucillor **Margaret Eames-Peterson**.

**Foodbank**

Although the Church is closed and so donations there are impossible you can still help. **Ian Matthews** who runs the one to which we send food, says "If anyone has food to donate, please either: bring it to New Zion Christian Fellowship (140 Cole Green Lane, WGC, AL7 3JY) on Wednesday mornings between 8 and 11am; or contact the church via [foodbank@newzioncf.net](mailto:foodbank@newzioncf.net). *We can collect from you.* We need sugar, rice, 100g coffee, cooking oil, cereals, teabags, long life milk, tinned hot dogs, tinned meatballs, sweetcorn, tinned fruit, rice pudding, & macaroni cheese.

**Parish Magazine** copy date for the next issue: **24th May**

The church finished 2019 with a deficit for the year of over £5,000 in our running income versus our running expenses. Fortunately, two generous legacies prevented us from having an overall deficit, but we cannot continue to rely on legacies to offset running deficits.



As we look ahead to 2020, we are again expecting a further deficit year, with additional stresses caused by the need to deliver some necessary building repair works. However, the new crisis sparked by Coronavirus has brought a rapid increase in uncertainty – our fundraising fete has been postponed, our services (and therefore collections) have had to stop, and income from weddings halted as a result of cancellations and postponements. In addition, we are still under pressure to pay our Parish Share, which this year is £45,248. Indeed, the Diocesan Board of Finance contacted us on 20<sup>th</sup> March urging us to keep paying them our Parish Share, even if we have to use our limited reserves or divert money which had been designated for other purposes. This is a crisis at every level.

At St John's we are grateful to all those who give regularly, whether by standing order or via regular envelope. It would now really help if regular givers could continue with those contributions. If you usually give via envelope in church then please instead post a regular cheque to our Treasurer Gina Butler, or by all means put your normal envelope with cash in it through her letterbox at 33 Great North Road, Stanborough. Alternatively, if it is more convenient for you, those envelopes can be dropped off at the vicarage, 9 Great Braitch Lane, Hatfield. Perhaps you might prefer to switch from envelope giving to standing order. If so, please contact Gina for our bank details. She is on 01707 372062.

If you pay tax in the UK and are able to Gift Aid your donations, the church will receive an additional 25% from the UK Government. It would be appreciated if you could indicate your wish to Gift Aid your donation, and add your full name, address and post code.

Lastly, do please respond to Gina's request that you purchase (or sell on) as many fete raffle tickets as possible over the next few weeks. The fete may have been postponed, but not the raffle. The tickets are printed and will be posted out to you. The prizes are ready and the draw will take place in May.

We hope we can weather this storm and look forward to normality resuming hopefully in the summer months. Many thanks **Kevin**



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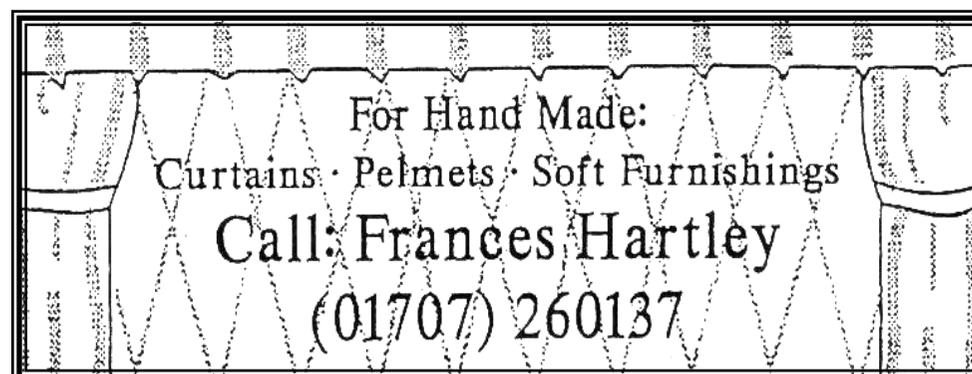
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**H**ave you noticed the daffodils around the War Memorial and along the North Border? The gardens are super for sitting in the sunshine and meditating!

This Spring we have done more cutting back of the overgrown hedge and the massive Yew Trees and now, for the first time, you can see the Cross through these Yews. With the sun on the cross this week, it has been a lovely sign of Hope. Julian



Sherriff, our neighbour at the farm across the road has helped by taking all the green waste away. I have been up to the gardens several times and I have been joined on these occasions by either my volunteers or those tending graves of loved ones in the Garden of Remembrance or the churchyard. Both groups have maintained safe distances as we either work on the garden or welcome these relatives and explain about keeping the flowers fresh (No plastic please) and the possibility of incorporating bulbs and primroses etc into the permanent bedding areas.

We have had many donations of perennial plants and bulbs, but our gardens can take more, so if you have spare flowers please contact me and we will discuss where we might use them.

**A**nd finally, I wrote out a poem for the Annual Church meeting and am wondering whether to laminate it and place it in the gardens – and maybe more in future; but this is the first:

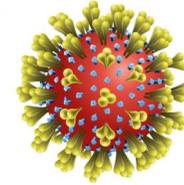
*“The Lord God planted a garden in the first white days of the world,  
And he set there an angel warden in a garment of light unfurled  
So near to the peace of heaven, that the hawk might nest with the wren,  
For there in the cool of the even God walked with the first of men.  
And I dreamed that these garden closes with the shade and their sun-  
flecked sod  
And their lilies and bowers of roses, were laid by the hand of God  
The kiss of the sun for pardon, the song of the birds for mirth,  
**One is nearer God’s heart in the garden than anywhere else on earth.**  
For he broke it for us in a garden under the olive trees  
Where the angel of strength was the warden and the soul of the world found  
ease.”*

***Dorothy Frances Gurney***

## How the virus is affecting us

### *Some experiences of our Members.*

**I**t's crazy out there, so were all in here,  
**M**aking sure the kids don't fret or fear,  
 and hoping God's love will bring us all through clear....



(On stealing from Foodbanks)

**T**hat is awful when did we become such a selfish self centred people.  
*Response* How big does this proportion of selfish people need to be to have the kind of impact we see - 1%? 5%?..."

**M**y son is one of those front-line workers within the NHS who has worked himself into the ground. He is now self-isolating as he has caught the virus from a dying patient he was trying to help. He really is unwell, and I am scared for him and helpless at the same time. I am sure he will recover\* because he is strong and determined and wants to get right back to where he wants to be – on the frontline helping others. It disappoints me when I see all those people out there just ignoring the advice – how dare you put my son and all his colleagues lives in danger through your ignorance and selfishness!! (\*happily he did)

**O**n Mothering Sunday our neighbour left a tulip in a pot on our doorstep and one for our next door neighbour on the other side knowing both of us were in the 70+ vulnerable group and children many miles away. Kindness personified.

**T**his lockdown is hard enough, but when most of your belongings are in storage it's a nightmare! .....Things could not get much worse. I have now lost my very expensive and much needed glasses!!!

**W**e are a close family but since self isolation because we are the high risk category we feel closer and appreciate them so much more. They have shopped, phoned, and contacted us electronically daily. Take Care and Stay Safe Everyone.

**I**'ve been working from home and will continue to do so for months. With Schools closed It's a full house here.

We are managing well in these strange and unprecedented times - we have a fantastically committed and positive team of staff here, with everyone pitching in and doing their bit ...and more!

We have been open for the children of key workers and have had a varying uptake. Most people are respecting the Government request to only send children if absolutely necessary, so on one day we had no children. Staff are on a rota and all is working well so far, as we have all been well enough to work



Looking back to happier times, children from Class 4 had a brilliant experience at the Hertfordshire Schools Music gala at the Royal Albert Hall on the 8th March. Joanna Nolan our music teacher and Bekah Ng, prepared the children for this amazing event and accompanied them on the day. The whole performance was based on the story of Alban and both original music and some tracks known to the children were part of the programme. What a wonderful, memorable time they all had and were, of course, an absolute credit to the school. *(Another picture in side back cover)*



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## In Memoriam

**John Cox** 7.5. 1934 -19.2. 2020.

*Edward Cardale took John's funeral on 12th March and gave a tribute, from which the following has been extracted.*



**F**or this address I am indebted to Tracey Sainter, John's daughter, for providing me with information. John was born on 27th May 1934 in Romford – and the family then moved to Kings Cross. He was one of six children. John joined the army and served in the 17th/21st Lancers regiment from 1952 to 1955, but left the army when his mother became ill and he was needed back home to help look after his little sister Sandra. He was tough as well as tender - he was a boxing champion in the Army, and he kept up his physical fitness for a very long part of his life. He met Lilian, suitably, at a Cycling Club in City Road, Islington and they were married on 15th February 1958 at St Mary's Church, Islington. So they have just celebrated their 62nd Wedding Anniversary, a wonderful legacy.

John worked as a Herdsman for his Uncle Oscar at a farm in Northamptonshire, then took up a similar position at Sherriff's Farm, Lemsford, which came with a tied cottage in Cromer Hyde Lane, where they moved in September 1963.

**W**ith children arriving John and Lily moved to Hatfield in the late sixties, after he'd got the job at Norton Abrasives, where he stayed until the factory closed. Several of the employees of Norton Abrasives pooled their redundancy money and started Consort Abrasives in 1983. John became Company Secretary and worked there on the presses until he retired at the age of 70.

John and Lily have been associated with St John's since 1963, and in 1993 Tracey & Russell started attending on a regular basis, prior to them getting married here.

John was one of the calmest people I have ever known, with a quiet Christian faith, a dedication to duty, kindness, loyalty and much more. He was extremely practical and hard working performing lots of essential tasks in the Church. For many years he helped at the Fete, setting it up, running the book stall, and then taking it down.





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**B**ut he was by no means only a practical person. He was thoughtful and wise too, and I much valued his comments on my sermons. When John could no longer drive, and as his symptoms of Parkinson's progressed, he and Lilian naturally could not be involved or even be here anything like they were before but they were always welcome.

Here are Tracey's own closing words on behalf of all the family: *'Dad loved his family and adored mum 100%. He would do anything for his family and he was the best father and proudest Popsey you could ask for, for all his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Above all dad was a true gentleman who made friends wherever he went, with the kindest heart'. For this life so well lived, thanks be to God.*

**Bruce Lindsay Sherriff 22.10.1945—6.2.2020**

**E**dward Cardale also officiated at the funeral of Bruce Sherriff, on Monday 17th February. The Church was packed and the congregation overflowed into the Brocket Chapel and Annex.

Bruce lived in Hertfordshire all of his life, since 1976 in Lemsford. He was educated at Aldwickbury School in Harpenden, and Writtle Agricultural College in Chelmsford. He helped his father run the family farm before starting his own haulage business, which he sold in 2008. Heavily involved in rural pursuits he was President of the Herts County Show in 2013 and managed a 200-acre woodland site of scientific interest near Hertford.

Bruce joined the Association of Professional Shooting Instructors in 2003. Besides his shotgun coaching skills he was also a very keen stalker, passing on extensive knowledge to his many friends and colleagues. He described himself as: *"A countryman at heart, with a mischievous sense of humour, and a passionate love of Hertfordshire."* He did much good work behind the scenes in the Village and will be greatly missed.





This is a copy of one of the most famous murals in the world—Leonardo da Vinci’s Last Supper, painted in 1495/8. It captures twelve individuals in the querying, gesticulating, or showing various shades of horror, anger and disbelief. They are in various degrees of shock, because Jesus has just declared that one of them would betray him. Their agitation is in complete contrast to the serene and expansive pose of Jesus himself.

From left to right in the painting, the Apostles are depicted in four groups of three: ONE Bartholomew, James the Less and Andrew are all surprised; TWO Judas Iscariot is taken aback; next to him, Peter holds a knife and looks stormy, while the boyish John, the youngest apostle, collapses; THREE Thomas is upset; James is shocked. Philip wants an explanation; FOUR Jude Thaddeus and Matthew turn to Simon the Zealot for answers.



As in all religious paintings on this theme, Jesus himself is the dynamic centre of the composition. Several architectural features converge on his figure, while his head represents the vanishing point for all perspective lines - an event which makes The Last Supper the epitome of Renaissance single point linear perspective. Meantime, his expansive gesture - indicating the holy sacrament of bread and wine - is not meant for his apostles, but for the monks and nuns of the Santa Maria delle Grazie monastery, for whose dining room this was painted.

Today, 2000-odd Easters later, humanity is reacting to the sudden news that Covid-19 has sprung upon us in very similar ways to the Apostles. His Spirit is still with us though, seeking to bring calm out of a crisis.

**W**e are now in the Easter season and our eyes and thoughts are in Jerusalem and the miraculous events of 2000 years ago that changed the world. Now more than ever, we need to trust in our Sovereign God of love and mercy, who hears and answers prayer and who has power to bring light from darkness, hope from fear and life from death, as he did that first Easter Day.



### **While we have no services or Sunday Club...**

There are loads of wonderful books, games and resources out there for children and families, here are a few useful website links and some ideas:

[www.thegoodbook.co.uk](http://www.thegoodbook.co.uk) Christian publishers with loads of children's and adults' titles to help you read the Bible, pray, wrestle with life.

Try '**The Garden the Curtain and the Cross**', beautifully illustrated story of God's salvation plan, from creation to the new creation – there's a story book and an activity / colouring book and a 15 day devotional guide to go with it.

[www.eden.co.uk](http://www.eden.co.uk) great children's section, with Bible story books, colouring and activity books and more. You could also get your **Real Easter Egg** – a chocolate egg with an Easter story book.

The '**Family Prayer Adventure**' is a prayer resource for Thy Kingdom Come, a global prayer movement leading to Pentecost. It can be used at any time though! Buy the journal at [www.cpo.org.uk](http://www.cpo.org.uk) or visit [www.thykingdomcome.global](http://www.thykingdomcome.global)

**L**ook at the pictures on the next page that tell the story. Can you put them in the right order? And which one should be in the empty box? *You could print it out on a big sheet and draw it in.*

Jesus is welcomed into Jerusalem by crowds waving palm branches.

Jesus has a last meal with his friends

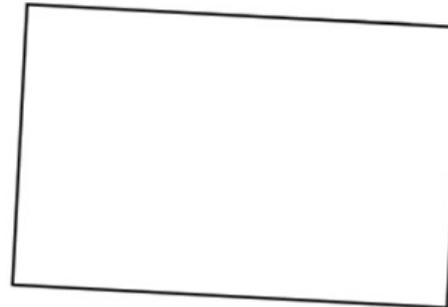
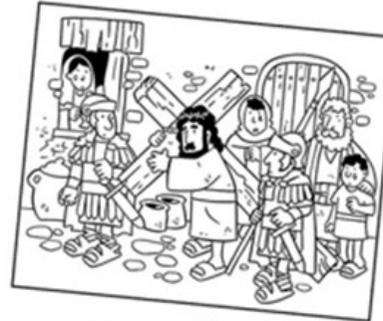
Jesus prays on his own in the garden.

Jesus is arrested and tried. The Roman governor finds him not guilty, but the people demand his death. He is put to death and buried in a tomb.

Three days later the women who were his friends go to the tomb—

the stone has been moved and the tomb is empty!  
A man tells them that Jesus is alive! They go and tell all his  
friends the good news.  
Jesus appears to the disciples. He gives them a job to do. He says,  
'go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation'.

**I look forward to the next time we are all together.**





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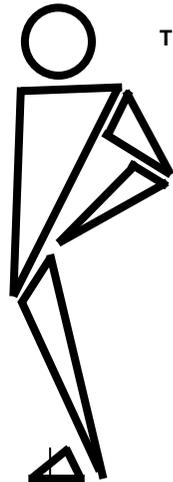
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**Lemsford Village Association :** The Spring bulbs which were planted by the residents in November have now bloomed and have made a very good show on the village green and along the riverside. It is planned to plant more this coming Autumn. (*picture inside front cover*)

The Social Committee have met and started planning events for this year. We are aiming to have a Summer village picnic starting with the duck race followed by games and music. A date for this will be given when things become clearer. The children's party will be held on Saturday 5th December and the Christmas dinner on Saturday 19th December. More information about these events to follow at a later date. Please note that for obvious reasons there will be no meet and greet sessions until further notice. **Janet Maisey**

**Lemsford Local History Group** The group enjoyed a lunchtime meeting in early March in the Annex of St John's when we discussed our plans for the Fete display – now planned for September. This year we will investigate WW2 and the effect on Lemsford Parish including the prisoner of war camp in Marford Road. Our guest Brian Lawrence informed us of an RAF camp in the Mill Green area near the old QE2 Hospital. He also talked about the bombs that were dropped in the area and the night eighteen people died at de Havillands, the aircraft factory.

The main event was a slide show with memories from the archives going back to the 1800s. We were lucky to have with us relatives of some of the people pictured. What is amazing is how the road out of the village has changed, as shown in a photo of Flo & Percy Eagles (*inside back cover*). The house in the background is 19 Lemsford Village. The second photo is Flo & Sylvie Eagles outside 2 Lemsford village. Both were from Bob Eagles, who was in the audience.

We have developed a **hub website** to connect all our websites for the parish of Lemsford. At this difficult time, we are happy to share it with the local community to help us get through the next few months. The site has links to various organisations which deal with the coronavirus and can be used by anyone in the parish who wishes to offer help or provide information. The website address is [www.lemsfordvillage.co.uk](http://www.lemsfordvillage.co.uk) and the email address to use is [info@lemsfordvillage.co.uk](mailto:info@lemsfordvillage.co.uk).

**Andy Chapman**

**100<sup>th</sup> peal on the bells**

**W**hen the church was built in 1859 it contained only a single bell until the current ring of six bells was installed in 1977. The first peal was rung on 27<sup>th</sup> December 1977. As the bells are light and easy to handle (3 cwt), it isn't surprising that 7 people have rung their first peal at Lemsford. Peals have been rung here to mark numerous special occasions: births, deaths, wedding anniversaries, royal occasions, to welcome new vicars and to wish retiring vicars well.

On 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020, Robert Crocker, a regular member of our Sunday service band and loyal supporter at our weekly practices, became the 13<sup>th</sup> person to ring 5,000 peals which coincided with being the 100<sup>th</sup> peal on the bells (5040 changes in 2 hrs 23 mins).

As the band descended the tower steps, they were greeted by members of the local bands of Kimpton, Sandridge, Lemsford, Wheathampstead and Hatfield, and the party made its way to The Sun to celebrate this outstanding achievement.

**Peal Band:** Judith Titmus, Colin Turner, Adam Crocker, Robert Crocker, Nicola Turner, Peter Ellis



**Quarter Peals**

Since Robert's 5,000<sup>th</sup> peal there have been two Quarter Peals – although only 1320 changes and 39 minutes duration, still no less significant. These were rang on Sunday, 15<sup>th</sup> March (Robert's 1,000<sup>th</sup> Quarter Peal) and Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> March as a 90<sup>th</sup> birthday compliment to Trevor Hawkins, organist and ringer at Sandridge, who also occasionally attends Lemsford practice night.

It was fortunate that we decided to ring the Quarter Peal for Trevor after practice and not wait until the following weekend, as the directive from the Central Council of Church Bellringers that all ringing must cease, was announced on Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> March. The bells will now remain silent until the Coronavirus pandemic is over.

**Robert's 1,000<sup>th</sup> Quarter Peal Band:**

Laura Hill, Darcey Palmer, Judith Titmus, Ben Quinn, Robert Crocker, Ron Titmus



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*"Christ the Lord is risen to-day,"  
Sons of men and angels say.  
Raise your joys and triumphs high;  
Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply.  
Charles Wesley*

---

*And finally ... Vicars are adapting to the lockdown in ingenious ways ....*

**Mary, do you accept John as your lawfully wedded husband? If you do press [ent].  
If you don't press [esc].**





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**Kate Armstrong-Taylor** (wife of **Tim** our Musical Director) had an urgent conference call and rapidly drew out this very clear note to her family. After she pasted it on her Facebook page it has been seen and commented on by (at the last count) 34,000 people.





**Pictures from Lemsford History (page 19)  
and St Johns School at The Albert Hall—page 9**





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