

# **St John's Church**

*serving Stanborough, Lemsford, Cromer Hyde*



*August/September 2022*

**£1**



Front cover: Mandy Evans; and above with Joanna Nolan (L) and Gemma Kennedy—see page 4. Below, Michael Brooks entered into the spirit of the Jubilee at the celebration held in the Annex on 5 June.



## Message from Kathryn Alford

Summer is a time when many of us head off on our travels. Some of these travels will be physical journeys, with many of us venturing abroad for the first time in a while or exploring new parts of the UK. Other travels will be more 'life-based'. St John's school Year 6 students will be preparing for exciting journeys onwards to their new secondary schools, whilst the wonderful Mrs Evans, Mrs Kennedy and Mrs Nolan are journeying on to new retirement and Norfolk-bound adventures. We wish them all every happiness in their future journeys.



Personally, I'm getting ready to travel to St John's (and St Michael and All Angels in Birchwood) to be your new parish priest. This is a trip I'm hugely looking forward to making, and I already have several suitcases packed full of ideas, anticipation and enthusiasm.

My own short voyage to Lemsford, marks the beginning of another stage in a much bigger journey for St John's church that's been going for many, many years. Since 1859 St John's has been on a journey to help people know and share in God's love and life. From September, I hope to play my part in helping the church continue along that path. Some of the steps on this next stage of St John's journey will be familiar, and some may be new. What excites me most, is that it's a journey that we'll make together, with God alongside us.

Whether you're a regular churchgoer, or have only ever driven past the building, I very much hope you'll share with me what you already love about St John's and Lemsford, as well as what you think the church is being called to 'be' and 'do' going forwards. I also hope you'll join in with the journey in whatever way you can. It tends to be more fun travelling with others!

I've already had a taste of what my travels with you all will be like, having been fortunate enough to have led worship and school assemblies a number of times over the past year. After glimpsing what's in store, I can't wait to get going in the middle of September. In the meantime, I hope you all have a wonderful summer.

With love. Rev'd Kathryn

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## August

- 7th** 8 am MP John Marks  
11 am HC Rev Ron Ingamells + **Bring & share lunch**  
*Hebrews 11. 1-3 & 8-16 and Luke 12. 32-40*
- 14th.** 8 am MP Frank Puranik  
11 am HC - Rev Fiona Souter  
*Hebrews 11. 29-40 & 12 1-2 and Luke 12. 49-56*
- 21st** 8 am MP John Marks  
11 am MP Rev Laura Collingridge + John Barnard  
*Hebrews 12. 18-end and Luke 13. 10-17*
- 28th** 8 am BCP HC Rev Susan Marsh  
11 am HC Rev Laura Collingridge  
*Hebrews 13. 1-8 & 15-16 and Luke 14. 1 & 7-14*

## September

- 4th** 8 am HC BCP/MP tbc  
11 am HC Rev Susan Marsh  
*Philemon. 1-21 and Luke 14.25-33*
- 11th** 8 am HC BCP Rev Susan Marsh  
11 am HC Rev Fiona Souter  
*1 Timothy 1. 12-17 and Luke 15. 1-10*
- Saturday 17th 5 pm Rev Kathryn Alford WELCOME Service  
led by Archdeacon Janet Mackenzie**
- 18th** 8 am HC BCP Rev Kathryn Alford  
11 am HC Rev Kathryn Alford  
*1 Timothy 2. 1-7 and Luke 16. 1-13*
- 25th** 8 am HC BCP Rev Kathryn Alford  
11 am MP Rev Kathryn Alford  
*1 Timothy 6. 6-19 and Luke 16. 19-end*

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

### Baptisms

On 29th May **Lacie Ellis**, and on 3rd July **Clara Watson**. Many congratulations to their families. *See some happy pictures inside the back cover of these and another recent Baptism, of Edith Quinn.*

### Wedding

On 2nd July, of **Liam James** and **Lucy Palmer**. We wish them a long and happy life together.

### Funeral

On 23rd June, **Maureen Carnell**. We send our condolences to her family and friends.

### Mandy Evans

At her final School Service as Head Teacher, on 20th July, Mandy was presented with gifts from the Church, as were two of her colleagues who were also leaving, **Gemma Kennedy** and **Joanna Nolan**. She wrote afterwards: "Please send my grateful thanks to all those who attended from the congregation and for the unstinting support I have always had from St John's Church... and thanks for the gorgeous gifts! It really was delightful to walk in this morning and see so many of the congregation there - so touching. I hope to see you at the occasional

Sunday morning service just to keep in touch.

Kind regards Mandy"

*See a picture of her at the end of the Service, on the front cover, and another, inside the front cover, with Joanna and Gemma. See also page 9 for a message from **Michelle Boylan** her successor.*

### Ron Ingamells

will be taking a service of Holy Communion at 11.00am in our church on the first Sunday in August. He is approaching his 90th Birthday and wishes to celebrate this with us. After the Church there will be a Bring and Share lunch to which anyone who knew him when he was Minister here is very welcome.

### New Editor needed

At the end of this year I will be standing down as Editor. The PCC has asked me to seek the help of readers in finding a replacement. Do you know anyone who would like to take on this role? They would need to be familiar with computers, and will be given a great deal of help from me initially. I can honestly say that this role is most fulfilling and rewarding. Anyone interested should contact a Warden.

**Parish Magazine** copy date for the next issue: **18th September**

## News and People

**Kevin Earl** writes: " How about a hybrid??? The annual Beds and Herts Historic Churches Trust **Bike 'n Hike** will take place this year on **Saturday 10th September**. For the last two years St John's has entered by walking to and from St Alban's Abbey. This year, how about a hybrid alternative? We are planning to cycle from Lemsford to Hertingfordbury church, then walk to Hertford to visit all the churches there and walk back to Hertingfordbury before cycling back to Lemsford. Participants are welcome to do all of the above or, if preferred, just the walk from Hertingfordbury to Hertford and back, which we can do as a group. If you are free and would like to take part please contact Kevin and Lucy Earl at [kevinearl670@btinternet.com](mailto:kevinearl670@btinternet.com) , or 01707 39049 Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022

**Jacky Spry** writes: On **Friday 16th September** from 2pm to 4pm at the Church we are holding a **Macmillan Tea Party**. Please join us if you can and if you are able donations will be gratefully received.

Also can I ask if anyone who is able to provide cakes, please bring them along for everyone to enjoy, but more important is that you join us. We will be able to take electronic or cash donations.

Many Thanks

Jackie

### From the Bell tower

**Judith Titmus** writes:

Wednesday 13th July

A Quarter Peal of 1320 Changes of  
St Simon's, St Martin's and Plain Bob Doubles

- |                     |                         |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Bernard P Quinn  | 4. W Robert E T Goss    |
| 2. Judith E Titmus  | 5. Robert J Crocker (C) |
| 3. Dianne E Crowder | 6. Ron E Titmus         |

Rung as a wedding compliment to **Eleanore Titmus** (daughter of 2 and 6) and **Martin Layton** who were married at St Edmund's Church, Dolton, Devon on Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2022.



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St Cuthbert's Way is a walking trail of 62 miles stretching from Melrose in the Scottish borders to Holy Island (Lindisfarne). It takes in wide open hills, ancient abbeys, beautiful beech woods and gives the opportunity to meet delightful people.



Two such people joined us at breakfast, as my three friends and I prepared to start our second day on the trail. Our first day had given us a taste of the uphill and holy places and we were creaking in the joints, but ready for action. The American ladies compared notes with us on the previous day's ascent of the Eildon Hills and gave us each some tokens to tie on our rucksacks; one showed the cross of St. Cuthbert, one a scallop shell (the sign of pilgrimage) and one was inscribed with the words: "*Find Joy in the Journey*". This was so appropriate for the four of us, who for many years (covid permitting) have set out on a special time together, following in the steps of a saint and making the walk a pilgrimage. Walking from Melrose Abbey where Cuthbert started as a young monk and finishing at his Priory on Holy Island would surely help us find joy in our journey.

The history of the borders region has shaped the countryside and our walking. The Romans were there on the three peaks of the Eildon Hills, giving their name to the Roman fort of Trimontium and in the straight, and fortunately now unpaved, Roman Dere Street. These gave us both a hard climb and a more relaxing stroll.

The monks who founded the abbeys of the 7<sup>th</sup> century left ruined but majestic buildings where present-day pilgrims could explore and pray: at Melrose, Dryburgh, Jedburgh and on Holy Island. The Viking raids which caused the monks on Holy Island to flee with the remains of St. Cuthbert produced legends of where the bearers rested with their holy relic, including the atmospheric St. Cuthbert's Cave. We were there on our only rainy day and, in spite of the weather, could pause to make our own prayers for the peace of the world. How sad that recent visitors had lit a fire in the cave and seriously damaged the support rock!

*continued overleaf*

**F**amously the battles between the Scots clans and the English meant that earthworks and small forts were built among the rolling hills. We sat in the shade of Cessford Castle to eat our lunch not far from the aptly named town of Morebattle.

The climax of our journey was certainly walking across the Pilgrim's Path to Holy Island. The tides favoured us and the causeway was safe between 9.00 and 2.00. The path leaves the causeway which gives access to vehicles and leads directly across the sand in a straight line. My companions strode out in



traditional and practical bare feet. I, more suspiciously, kept my old walking boots on and paddled through the water where it became ankle deep. The blue sky stretched away for ever and the sea was a distant line. We were aware of the calls of the sea-birds and the barking of seals and all our senses were heightened. What a shock to arrive on the island and be instantly surrounded by crowds, after five days of simply sharing the company of other like-minded walkers! However, by 2.00 when the causeway was no longer safe, the island was left to its peace and we were able to explore and think more about St. Cuthbert who delighted in solitude but affected so many lives. Morning and evening prayer is offered every day in the little church of St. Mary and attending a service offered a fitting end to an inspiring pilgrim trail.

**P**ilgrimage however never has an end, but is always the start of something more. Already we are considering the paths available for next year, trusting that we shall be fit enough and the world open enough for us to find joy in another journey.

**H**ello everyone,  
I am writing to introduce myself as the new Headteacher at St. John's. I take up my post in September and am very much looking forward to becoming part of the team at St. John's.



I would like to tell you a little about myself. I grew up in Camborne, Cornwall – not the picture postcard image we have of the Duchy but very near to some lovely coastline. From very early on music was one of my main interests leading me to studying for a degree in music. After initially teacher training as a secondary school music teacher, I changed to primary teaching, eventually becoming Deputy Head at Panshanger Primary School.

I live in Welwyn Garden City and have three sons, all of whom have flown the nest! I know Lemsford well but mainly from the playing field as I have spent many hours on the touchline watching football as my eldest son was a very proud Lemsford Leopard! I am the organist at St Francis church in Welwyn Garden City and previously worshipped and supported the music at St Mary's in Welwyn village.

**I** feel privileged to be taking on the role as Headteacher at the school and to continue to build on the excellent educational provision that Mandy and the school team have provided. I very much appreciate and value the school's vision, 'I come that they may have life and have life abundantly' as well as the school's ethos of providing a high-quality education within Christian belief and context. I am looking forward to serving the school community as well as building on the strong links between the church and the school. I know Kathryn – also a football Mum and from worshipping at St.Mary's before she became a curate.

As you would expect, I am looking forward to coming with the school to regular worship on Wednesday mornings, and welcome any ideas for building on the strong links between church, school and village.

Your sincerely,

**Michelle Boylan**

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If you read my weekly Church emails [you don't have to be a regular church goer to sign up by the way] you'll have noticed that we're in the Church season of Trinity. In fact as I write this we're coming up for the Trinity 6 Sunday and Trinity would finish with Trinity 19 except for the fact that that Sunday is called Bible Sunday.



“What the heck is he wittering on about?” I hear you say. Well, basically Trinity is a very long season in the church calendar, and it's also a bit of an in-between season. Easter and Whitsun (Pentecost) are over and we're waiting for the lead up to Christmas (Advent). Now during this season, somewhat unsurprisingly, many vicars have decided to discuss the tricky business of 'The Trinity' because of this central issue: If there is only one God, then how come we have God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit - the Holy Trinity? It seems to be a vexing question.

I'd like to give you a mathematician's view. Stop! Before you put this down and turn to the next page muttering quietly under your breath “I could never do maths” - I promise not to tax you with anything complicated. First I'll disclose that I studied Pure Mathematics and this branch is rather beautiful, philosophical even, and really doesn't care whether you can add or multiply.

I was wondering how 'big' God was, as you do. The pure maths answer came to me as quite obvious: Infinite - surely. How could God be any less? Well, how big is Infinity? Pretty big right, but how big?

Well Pure Maths to the rescue here: Give me any number you like, and Infinity is bigger than that. So you say 1 million and I say no it's bigger, then you say OK, 1 billion and I say, no it's bigger and so on.

*Continued on page 13*



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OK so the mathematicians among you are rolling their eyes because this is very inexact language. They would use expressions in mathematical logic, series and limits, but it still boils down to this. Come up with any number you like - infinity is bigger.

You get this idea God is BIG! Bigger than you and me, bigger than the planet, bigger than the solar system, the galaxy, the universe....

**T**he trouble is that we humans, finite beings, don't really *do* infinity and so God gave us (part of) himself [or herself, itself is not really appropriate here] in the form of his Son, Jesus, so that we could better understand and relate to him [God]. As far as the Father and the Holy Spirit are concerned, I consider them to be the same - Infinite and everywhere. Omnipresent if you like.

### The show must go on

**A** swan moves effortlessly, but underneath, as we all know, there is furious paddling. At a recent wedding a lot of paddling was needed to keep things moving seamlessly.

Shortly before the start Frank Puranik got a message from the organist, Chris Maquire, that he was stuck on the A1, gridlocked. Frank could not contact the choir because they all had their phones dutifully switched off, so he rushed up to the Church to inform son Karl who was singing as a Tenor, but is also becoming a fine organist. Karl moved to the organ and without



rehearsal played the Bride's requested introduction, Pachelbel's Canon. Half way through Chris arrived and Karl resumed his place in the choir. The wedding went off well and none of the congregation were aware of the incident. Well done Puraniks, father & son.

*Karl is picturing duetting with Tim our Music Director.*

The bags are packed, we're on  
our way;

It's time to go on holiday.

The summer's here again,  
so pack your bag, fly off to Spain.

Wait in the line to check our cases.

Look at all the other faces;  
are they frustrated, just like you,  
waiting in the check-in queue?

Take-off belts and metal bits  
or security will be in fits.

Once the detector says OK  
you're passed to go. You're on your  
way.

Stuck in the airport, flight is late.  
One of the holiday things we hate.  
Air-side lounge is packed with folk,  
this flying's not a bl\*\*\*y joke.

Now you're in Air-side, find a seat,  
formalities now are all complete;  
until you reach departure gate  
where with passport, boarding card  
.... you wait.

The stewardess greets you with a  
smile.

You wander down the centre aisle;  
finding your seat is quite a labour  
and will I have a pleasant  
neighbour?

Will it be the travel bore,  
who says he's seen it all before,  
or perhaps the one who, you can bet  
will disturb you to go to the toilet?



Now you are coming down to land.  
Will everything happen as we  
planned?

Will the transfer still be waiting  
there?

I guess he will, he doesn't care.

He knows the flight has been  
delayed,  
and when it's done he will be paid.  
And we will check-in (once again)  
at the resort where we will remain.

The holiday flies by so fast  
and suddenly you are aghast  
to find (as in the sun you burn)  
that tomorrow morning you return.

And so it all begins again.  
No longer can you here remain.  
Tomorrow you must take a flight  
that'll get you home, late in the  
night.

This is a dream, you all must  
know;  
and do I really want to go?  
Do we really want the stress and  
fuss?  
Shall we stay at home, and be "Just  
Us"?



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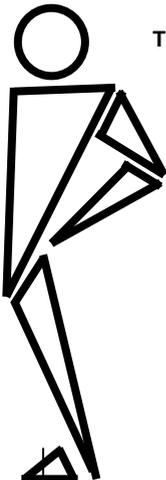
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The Group had its first meeting of the year in early July. A simple lunch in the Long and Short allowed us to catch up and talk about the future of the group. We had a guest, Richard Cuthbert, who updated us on the new school Head Teacher and how we can use the resources of the group with the school and church.

Since the last Parish Magazine we have celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and had a trip out with the Lemsford Senior Residents to Brighton. The trip was organised by two villagers, Carol Hicks and Carole Payne. Lemsford, Stanborough, Cromer Hyde Senior Residents was formerly known as Lemsford Old People's Welfare Committee and was set up nearly 100 years ago. For many years the late Jean Dance, who lived in the parish all her life, and ran the club, was the driving force for many community projects. It was funded by the Lord Mount Stephen Estate, Ramblers, the Church and Mrs Elliston, who worked with Jean Dance. When Mrs Elliston died, her daughter took responsibility for the trust, and it was then taken over by HCF, Herts Community Fund, and now they have to apply each year for the money for the annual trip.

Lord and Lady Mount Stephen were generous benefactors. From 1893 they leased Brocket Hall from Lord Cowper. They lived there until Lord Mount Stephen's death in 1921. His story was remarkable: born in Dufftown, Banffshire, Scotland, the son of William Stephen, a carpenter, he started as a farm worker. At the age of 21 he emigrated to Canada where for the next 15 years he laboured in a relative's textile business. Driven by a desire to succeed by 1866 he was running his own successful wool-

importing company then began investing in the railroad business with the Montreal Rolling Stock Company. He was appointed a director of the Bank of Montreal then President, a position he held until 1881 when he resigned to run the company that built the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Lord Mount Stephen retired to England, with a London house in 17 Carlton Terrace and Brocket Hall. He was created a Baronet of Montreal in the Province of Quebec in the Dominion of Canada, in 1886, and raised to the peerage as Baron Mount Stephen. Lord and Lady Mount Stephen's generosity to the Parish is recorded in the articles and memories we have in the archives.

Keith Ladbury son of Headmaster of St Johns from 1902 remembers. *'The School was patronised by Lord and Lady Mount Stephen. Christmas Treats provided by Lady Mount. Around 1910 each girl was given a dress length and each boy two woollen jerseys A number of books were also given as prizes attendance, work etc. I remember arrival of a large parcel of books, usually G.A. Henty.*

*The Christmas Prize Giving was an Occasion. Desks were turned round and tops adjusted to form tables. A van would arrive from the Hall with tin' loaves, Estate butter, buns and cakes. The Teachers would prepare masses of bread and butter. Additional supplies of a more delicate nature would also arrive for the tea, over which my Mother would preside, and held in our drawing room for Lady Mount, the Vicar and School Managers. Lady Mount. Presented the prizes. After the usual 'three cheers' all departed each with a large paper bag tied with red tape -*

*containing a red Canadian apple (reminiscent of Canadian railroad 'Mount Stephen' days) a baker's bun and an orange.'*

A wonderful memory from friend of the group Jack Brown. [The image of Mount Stephen and George V shows 4 boys beating, one of whom is Jack's dad].

*'My Father suffered from deafness when he was young and when Lord Stephen, who himself suffered from deafness in his old age, heard about it he arranged for an operation by a specialist which was a complete success. Dr Thomas who used to come to Cromer Hyde Lane from Welwyn in his pony ad trap decided that five of the children needed their tonsils done. My dad beat for Lord Mount Stephen. At that time it was a day job and it was arranged that the five would go to Hertford on the same day. When Lord Mount Stephen heard of it he arranged for his coachman and coach to take them and one can imagine the stir it must have made with the cottagers in the old lane which was only a dirt track. When it was time to come home Percy was not too well and had to stay in hospital. Next day all was well and the coach went again to bring them home. Unfortunately Percy was sick in the coach and my Grannie was very worried about what would be said. Apparently His Lordship dismissed the problem saying that the coach would be cleaned properly.'*

In 1905 Lady Mount Stephen (then resident at Brocket Hall), passing St John's School on a wet day saw that the children had nowhere to eat their dinner or to play in wet weather. She presented the corrugated building still there today on the left as you enter the school gate. These memories provide a kinder side to the

Mount Stephens that maybe official records do not show.



We celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in Stanborough with a street party in New Road due to a lot of hard work, best summed up by a thank you from chief organiser Gina Butler:

*'We sent out flyers saying we were planning on holding a jubilee event and to contact me if they could help in any way. I was overjoyed to receive so many people offering to help and many others who turned up on the day. It was like the feeding of the 5000, with so much food left at the end of the day. Thank you so much to everybody who helped and everybody who celebrated with us.*

*I have had a lot of people asking to do this annually. I don't know how that is possible as we can't close New Road for free unless there is a national event. Maybe we will have a Stanborough Day soon, watch this space.'*

Carol and Carole with the Brighton trip, Gina and friends, and Geoffrey Hollis, Editor of this magazine, all give to the Parish of Lemsford with hard work and a lot of their time. A big thank you to all of them for making the community of Lemsford Parish special.



# Frances Gregory

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- Beautifully decorated rooms all have en-suite showers, with some rooms opening on to the gardens
- Restaurant quality dining, café, salon and therapy room
- Sunny landscaped patio gardens with well stocked raised beds
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Royal celebrations were a very special part of Parish Life. The year 1887 saw the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria, and on the 12th July she visited Hatfield for two In 1893 there took place the wedding of George, Duke of York, and Princess Mary of Teck. The children were presented with medals and new shillings by Lady Mount Stephen.

The Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1897 was another occasion for celebration. The children were taken to Clarence Park, St. Albans, where they were presented with Jubilee mugs by Sir J. B. Maple, M.P. The next day they were again presented with mugs in Brocket Park, the infants being given 6d each in addition.

In 1910, King Edward VII died and his successor, King George V, paid a visit with Queen Mary to Brocket Hall on the 12th December. On this occasion, the children lined the entrance to the Park to see the King and Queen. Lady Mount Stephen presented a flag and flagstaff to the school in commemoration of the visit.

On the occasion of the Coronation in June 1911, medals were presented by Lady Mount Stephen and the school was closed for a week's holiday.

The school was again given a holiday in 1923, on the occasion of the marriage of H.R.H. the Duke of York (later King George VI) to Lady Elizabeth Bowes Lyon.

1935 was again Jubilee Year - this time for King George V and Queen Mary. Great celebrations were held in Brocket Park, accompanied by the presentation of mugs, badges and medals. Seven months later the King was dead, and the children listened on the radio to the broadcast of the Funeral Service. This radio had been presented by Lord Brocket and was used for the first broadcast lesson on 'Science and Gardening' in September 1936.

There is a royal connection between the Brighton trip and the Jubilee party—Queen Mary the wife of George V. When in June we learnt about our Queen her love for



her grandmother Queen Mary was apparent in the support she gave at the coronation of Elizabeth II. The Senior Club's connection with Queen Mary is through Lord Mount Stephen as the first Lady Charlotte Mount Stephen frequently entertained Duchess of Teck (the mother of Queen Mary).

In 1897, after the death of his first wife, Mount Stephen married Georgina Mary (known as Gian) Tufnell (1864–1933). She had been lady-in-waiting to Princess Mary Adelaide, Duchess of Teck, a frequent guest at Brocket Hall. Through this connection, Gian was a lifelong friend and confidant of Queen Mary and she and Lord Mount Stephen regularly entertained her and her husband, George V, at Brocket Hall.

In 1926 Brenda Edith Lines, a young child, who lived at 8 Great North Road was killed outside 7 Great North Road by a car; she is buried in St John's churchyard. The Herts Advertiser wrote '*The Queen (Mary) paid a visit to Brocket Hall. After lunching with Lady Mount Stephen, her Majesty and her hostess visited Lemsford churchyard. She placed a wreath on the grave of Lord Mount Stephen. She also sympathetically inspected the flowers on the grave of little Brenda Lines, the six year old victim of the recent motor car fatality*'

If you have any questions about the history of Lemsford parish or want to share memories email us at [info@lemsfordhistory.co.uk](mailto:info@lemsfordhistory.co.uk) or check out our website [www.lemsfordhistory.co.uk](http://www.lemsfordhistory.co.uk)



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Summer is a great time to take tea out of doors, but no sooner have the jam and scones appeared then so do the wasps. They are not just a nuisance as anyone who has been stung knows. Wasps are understandably many people's least favourite animals. I have invested in a device like a tennis racket, battery powered, with metal strings that can despatch wasps with a satisfying crack. But is this fair?



In the Bible, wasps or hornets were viewed as A Good Thing. They helped the Jews as they fought for the promised land after the long march across the desert. In Exodus 23v28 God promised "I will send hornets before you which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before you."

Wasps are important in the environment. Social wasps (the ones who build nests) are predators and play a vital ecological role, controlling the numbers of potential pests like greenfly and many caterpillars. Indeed, it has been estimated that the social wasps of the UK might account for 14 million kilograms of insect prey across the summer. A world without wasps would be a world with a very much larger number of insect pests on our crops and gardens. Wasps are also valuable pollinators, transferring pollen as they visit flowers to drink nectar.

In the early part of summer adult wasps feed off a sugary excretion from grubs laid by their queen. When these grubs hatch the supply of sugar stops so adults are forced to look elsewhere, which explains why they become so bothersome at this time of year.

Insects generally are having a hard time; changing environments, changing climate, habitat loss and the use of insecticides are all taking their toll on these vital creatures. Yet, whilst many take up the cause of the honeybee or extol the beauty of butterflies some of the most fascinating and important insects remain the most reviled. It's time we stopped asking "what is the point of wasps" and started to appreciate them for the ecological marvels that they are. Time to put away that tennis racket I guess.

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that all races and peoples may learn to live  
as members of one family  
and in obedience to your law,  
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.  
*The Church of England congregation that meets in Kyiv.*

***And finally .... Some waspish humour (with apologies)***

God initially planned to use wasps to pollinate flowers, but they weren't very friendly. *So He went with Plan Bee.*

Today I bought a vintage vinyl record *Sounds wasps make*. I put it on my record player and thought, "This doesn't sound anything like wasps!" *Then I realized I was playing the bee side.*

I went into a pet shop, hoping to buy some wasps. The shopkeeper said that he only stocked bees, so I bought I bought a dozen of them instead. As I was paying I said "Here, I bought twelve bees but there's 13 in this jar" and he said "Yes, one of them is a freebee".

One night I was woken up by loud knocking on my front door. I felt uneasy, but answered it anyway. When I opened the door I couldn't see anyone, then spotted a shellfish on my welcome mat. "Let me in", it cried, "I'm being chased by a bunch of wasps". That was when I realized why I felt so uneasy — *it was the clam before the swarm.*



Three recent Baptisms, from top: Clara Watson, Paul & Heather; Lacie Ellis, Thomas & Meghan; and Edith Quinn, Stephen & Lisa.





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