

# PEWTALK

£1

June 2026



EAST & WEST TILBURY AND LINFORD PARISH MAGAZINE

Parish web site: [www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk](http://www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk)

# BITs AnD PiECes

**Please note** the new Pewtalk email address: [pewtalk@stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk](mailto:pewtalk@stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk) because, from the middle of June, the old address will no longer be available and your contribution will not reach the editor.

**100 Club** - Sheila and I were on holiday on May 1st. Our Churchwarden Les looked after the Admin. and Revd. Michèle made the draw. The winner was Maureen Carter Julie Guest's Mum. Delighted that one of Julie's family won as Julie has always supported the 100 Club. I'm sure that Julie was delighted to take the £10 home to Mum. *Norman*

**A reminder** that the Bradwell pilgrimage is on the first Saturday in July. If you would like to take part this year but are uncertain of the arrangements, do have a word with Kim, Chris or Julie who have been pilgrims before.



The last time that members of St. Catherine's went on the pilgrimage was in the company of Revd. Laurence Whitford (who subsequently became the Rector of Bradwell on leaving this Parish). One of the reasons for us joining the walk was the fact that St. Cedd is linked to both the chapel of St. Peter-on-the-Wall at Bradwell and St. Catherine. Because of this connection

Dick Collen, one of the churchwardens at the time, made a banner emblazoned "St. Cedd's other church" for us to carry. It certainly brought us to the attention of the then Bishop of Bradwell, Laurie Green.

**The birds nesting** in St. Catherine's porch have been identified as swifts and, as at Sunday 24<sup>th</sup>, the parents were sitting on the nest. If you are entering or leaving the church early in June please take care to do so quickly to avoid a bird entering the church. Our experience last year was that they are very good at getting in but find it impossible to find the way out.

**Another future date** for your diary is Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September which is when this year's Orsett Show will be held. Our Thurrock deanery tent will be there to welcome visitors and show the love of God.

**On a recent visit** to Waterstones in Lakeside we came across a brochure for the 'Essex Book Festival'. There are events across the county from 29<sup>th</sup> May to the end of June and the brochure can be downloaded from their website: - [essexbookfestival.org.uk/](http://essexbookfestival.org.uk/) and they will probably still be available at Waterstones. There are local events in Grays Central Library and Purfleet.

**Our annual Rogation** service will take place in St. Catherine's churchyard at 4pm on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June and, as usual our worship will be led by the Grays Town Band. Everyone is welcome to join us for this historic service of thanks as well as to tea and cake afterwards.

## **A prayer for all those affected by sickness and ill-health**

*Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy. Sustain and support the anxious, be with those who care for the sick, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may find comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.*

## Reflections from The Rectory



**"One is nearer God's heart in a garden than anywhere else on earth"**

This quote came to mind as I sat down to write my reflections from the Rectory having just watched an episode of the RHS Chelsea Flower Show on television. The gardens on display are magnificent and so varied. They certainly make you think about the creative minds that put the gardens

together and those who will enjoy them.

The quote, **"One is nearer God's heart in a garden than anywhere else on earth,"**

is actually the last line of a poem called 'God's Garden' written by the poet Dorothy Frances Gurney (1858-1932). Dorothy, also known as Dora, was said to be 'a shy, devout girl with an inner passion for nature and began writing short poems at an early age.' (Later in life Dora also wrote the words of the hymn 'O Perfect Love, all human thought transcending' for the occasion of her sister's wedding.)

Back to Gardens - Much has been said about the benefits of being close to nature and green spaces. If we did not know this before then the times of lockdown just a few years ago made it very apparent. Many healthcare professionals now prescribe joining a programme that gives access to green spaces for well-being and recovery. I know for myself that being in a garden helps me to pause, slow down, breathe deeply and gaze on the wonders of nature. And, having taken time to slow down and step away from the list of things I must do my awareness of God increases.

As seeds sown grow and blossom into beautiful flowers, shrubs, plants or delicious vegetables they are reminder of God's hand in creation. In every wonderful and intricate plant we attempt to grow we gain an understanding of why God looked at all that He had made and was pleased. And in every seed sown there is hope and the gift of looking forward to what will be.

In the Churches calendar we have now reached the season of Ordinary Time. The Sundays that follow Trinity Sunday will take us all the way to Advent. The liturgical colour is green and a symbol of the 'growing' we will do over the summer months as we follow the story of Jesus ministry and teaching.

Jesus himself often uses references to gardens or gardening to highlight both the potential that lies within us all and the challenges of life we all face. The Parable of the Sower (*which can be found in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark & Luke*) speaks of a man who went out to sow corn. As he scatters the seed it falls into different places. Some fell along the path, some on rocky ground, some among the thorn bushes and some in good soil. The birds ate the seed that fell on the path, the seeds on rocky ground dried up for lack of moisture, the seeds in the thorn bushes were overwhelmed and did not have space to grow. But the soil than fell into the good soil grew and produced a good crop of corn.

In the parables Jesus takes a simple story to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson. In the parable of the Sower the 'seed' is the word of God. Depending on where and how the word of God is heard determines the potential for it to grow within a person's heart. As every gardener knows when we are attentive to plants the potential for growth is much more likely. Likewise when we are attentive to our inner being and our spiritual life we will grow in our understanding of God.

And where better to be attentive to our soul than in a garden or a green space.

I hope that you have opportunities to rest awhile, to gaze and to ponder. To hear the birds sing and the bumble bees hum. But should you struggle to get outside then perhaps Dora's poem will transport you there in your mind.

### God's Garden

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 enfurled.

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 dream that these garden-closes  
With their 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 a 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**

Every Blessing to all, *Revd Michèle*

## Rogation Sunday



In the Anglican Church, Rogation is celebrated on the fifth Sunday after Easter. Rogation means an asking of God - for blessing on the seed and land for the year ahead. It is appropriate in any emergency, war, plague, drought or foul weather.

The practice began with the Romans, who invoked the help of the gods Terminus and Ambarvalia. In those days a crowd moved in procession around the cornfields, singing and dancing, sacrificing animals, and driving

away Winter with sticks. They wanted to rid the cornfields of evil.

In about 465 the Western world was suffering from earthquake, storm and epidemic. So Mamertius, Bishop of Vienne, aware of the popular pagan custom, ordered that prayers should be said in the ruined or neglected fields on the days leading up to Ascension. With his decision, 'beating the bounds' became a Christian ceremonial.

Rogation-tide arrived in England early in the eighth century and became a fixed and perennial asking for help of the Christian God. On Rogation-tide, a little party would set out to trace the boundaries of the parish. At the head marched the bishop or the priest, with a minor official bearing a Cross, and after them the people of the parish, with schoolboys and their master trailing along. Most of them held slender wands of willow.

At certain points along the route - at well-known landmarks like a bridge or stile or ancient tree, the Cross halted, the party gathered about the priest, and a litany or rogation is said, imploring God to send seasonable wealth, keep the corn and roots and boughs in good health, and bring them to an ample harvest. At some point beer and cheese would be waiting.

In the days when maps were neither common nor accurate, there was much to be said for 'beating the bounds.' It was still very common as late as the reign of Queen Victoria. Certainly, parish boundaries rarely came into dispute, for everyone knew them. (Do you know the extent of our parish of East and West Tilbury and Linford?)

***Some years ago we celebrated Rogation in West Tilbury but more recently we have used St. Catherine's churchyard as the venue from where we can view both the river and the farmland. This year we will be celebrating Rogation a little later than is traditional (but still a good day to give thanks for God's bounty) on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June at 4pm in St. Catherine's churchyard and in the company of the Grays Town Band to lead our hymns of worship - do come and join in.....Ed***

## St. Petroc, the founder of Padstow



If you would like to be in Cornwall this summer in search of peace and quiet, Petroc is the saint for you. Especially if you used to find Padstow a bit too crowded for your liking! He would have sympathised.

This 6<sup>th</sup> century abbot is Cornwall's most famous saint. Petroc set sail from South Wales, landed at Haylemouth, and founded a monastery at Lanwethinoc – now called Padstow, after him (Petroc's Stow).

Padstow must have been popular even in those days, because about 30 years later Petroc, in search of some peace and quiet, moved on to build another monastery at Little Petherick (Nanceventon). Here he must have decided to try some 6<sup>th</sup> century equivalent of 'Fresh Expressions', because he engaged with his local community by building a mill and a chapel.

In time, Petroc began feeling crowded again. So he tramped off to the remote wilds of Bodmin Moor, where he lived as a hermit – until some 12 monks turned up to join him. Firmly, Petroc kept them all housed in a monastery on a hilltop, while he enjoyed his private space in a cell by the river.

But even here Petroc was not alone. One day a terrified stag came rushing through the woods, pursued by the hunt. Petroc flung open the door of his cell, and the panting animal took refuge. When the huntsmen arrived on the scene, they did not dare to argue with the famous holy man, and went their way. The stag's gratitude made him tame, and Petroc would come to be portrayed with a stag as his special emblem.

Petroc was buried in the monastery in Padstow but in c.1000 his shrine and relics, including his staff and bell, were translated to Bodmin. Here they have stayed ever since, except for a short, unplanned trip to Brittany in 1177, when they were stolen and carted off by a naughty Canon of the Church. Henry II intervened, and everything but a rib of Petroc was eventually returned.

***Recently Kim and I stayed in Padstow for several days and amongst other things visited St. Petroc's church in the town. What was particularly interesting was the fact that the building is shared by both the Anglican and Roman Catholic congregations.***

***The photo at the top of the article is of a replica of Christopher Columbus' ship 'Nao Santa Maria' visiting Padstow Harbour and was taken by my son - Adrian. The ship was due to visit London on 28<sup>th</sup> May. You may have seen it.***

**Chris Ford**

## **Evelyn Underhill, mystical writer of the 20<sup>th</sup> century**

For anyone interested in Christian mysticism, Evelyn Underhill may be a good place to begin. She died on 10<sup>th</sup> June 1941 after a life full of remarkable achievements: author of more than 30 books that explored the intersection between the spiritual and the physical, the first woman ever to lecture to the CofE clergy, the first woman to conduct spiritual retreats for the Church, the first woman to establish ecumenical links between churches, and one of the first women theologians to lecture in English universities. Evelyn was also an award-winning bookbinder.



Born in 1875, the daughter of a barrister from Wolverhampton, and then wife to a childhood friend, also a barrister, Evelyn moved in cultured, educated circles, and travelled widely each summer along the Mediterranean – both her father and husband were keen yachting enthusiasts.

Evelyn's inner, spiritual journey was more complex: from agnosticism to theism, on to Neoplatonism and then Roman Catholicism she went, until in 1921 she became an Anglican - with a later fascination for the Greek Orthodox church. Her daily life was one of reading, writing, and doing various forms of religious work, from visiting the poor to counselling people in trouble.

Her spiritual search began in childhood, after a number of "abrupt experiences of the peaceful, undifferentiated plane of reality—like the 'still desert' of the mystic—in which there was no multiplicity nor need of explanation". Trying to understand these mystical experiences sparked her passion and lifelong quest.

Evelyn became one of the most widely read writers on mysticism in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Her greatest book, *Mysticism: A Study of the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness*, was published in 1911, and is romantic, engaged, and theoretical rather than historical or scientific. While writing it she came into contact with Baron Friedrich von Hugel, who became her spiritual mentor for many years. He gradually steered her away from mysticism and towards a more Christocentric view of reality.

During World War I Evelyn worked in naval intelligence, but in later years became a Christian pacifist.

### **Late for Church**

A little girl, dressed in her Sunday best, was running as fast as she could go to church. As she ran, she prayed, "Dear Lord, please don't let me be late! Dear Lord, please don't let me be late!" While she was running and praying, she tripped on a curb and fell, getting her dress dirty. She got up, brushed herself off, and started running again. As she ran she once again began to pray, "Dear Lord, please don't let me be late...But please don't shove me again, either!"

## Our Annual meetings

The Parish annual meetings took place at St. Catherine's after the morning service on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May. There are two separate meetings, which may seem strange, but they are for different purposes.

The first, The Annual Meeting of Parishioners is for anyone living within the Parish and its purpose is to elect the Churchwardens. After the initial formalities had been dealt with and as there were only two nominations, Chris Ford and Les Schwar were elected for the coming year.

The second meeting, the Annual Parochial Church Meeting has rather more business to deal with. The matters dealt with included receiving the annual report of the church's affairs (together with the financial statement) which had been available before the meeting and, having been approved, is now available on the church's website or at either St. Catherine's or St. Francis.

This year two Deanery Synod representatives needed to be elected and, as the only nominations, Chris Ford and Valerie Schwar were duly elected.

There was no need for an election for members of the Parochial Church Council as there was just the 6 nominations and therefore the new members are:-

Kim Ford, Julie Guest, Norman King, Sheila King, June Schroeder, Patricia Webb

With the understanding that he was willing to do so, it was also agreed to appoint Mr. P. W. Chandler as the auditor for this years accounts.

Finally, at both meetings, it was agreed that next year the meetings will take place on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2027.

*The church officers and our sides people are not appointed at the annual meetings but at the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the new P.C.C. which is scheduled for Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026.*

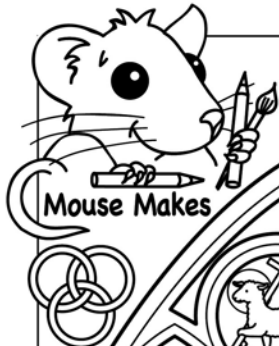
### **Country roads can be beautiful – but deadly. Beware.**

Be careful on rural roads. In the ten years to the end of 2024, nearly 10,000 people died on Britain's rural roads. And so NFU Mutual launched an on-going campaign in 2020, to warn people of the dangers. The website offers some excellent, practical tips to staying safe. Visit: [Ruralroadsafety@nfumuutal.co.uk](http://Ruralroadsafety@nfumuutal.co.uk)



Above, don't speed, because anything might be waiting for you in the road just around the next bend: bales of hay, cows, sheep or even a tractor!

Of course, in our own parish we have the added complication of the East Tilbury and Low Street level crossings, the Household Waste and Recycling Centre in Linford and all the traffic and general disruption caused by the various works relating to the Lower Thames Crossing. So please let's be aware - very aware of these dangers as we travel!



"May the grace of the Lord  
**JESUS CHRIST** and the  
 love of **GOD** and the  
 fellowship of the  
**HOLY SPIRIT** be  
 with you all."

2 Corinthians  
 13:14



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 VENLR  
 SLAEP LG  
 HALDOOR  
 EMEWORD  
 PBREADW  
 HLALPHA  
 EEMCG JY  
 RMEHOEK  
 DMIRSST  
 SAVIOUR  
 PNE SNSU  
 OUNTLOT  
 MESSIAH  
 RLGBFIS  
 KEOMEGA

**JESUS • CHRIST**  
 SON • SAVIOUR • LORD  
 EMMANUEL • MESSIAH  
 SHEPHERD • LAMB • WAY  
 TRUTH • LIFE • DOOR  
 BREAD • WORD • HEALER  
 VINE • ALPHA • OMEGA

O  
 ISD  
 JYIAM  
 ACGODJM  
 LROCKUA  
 MELORDJ  
 IABBAGE  
 GTDEBES  
 HOYRFET  
 TRAHATY  
 YGHOIEF  
 VSWLARA  
 OHEYENT  
 JEHOVAH  
 IKINGLE  
 SHIELDR  
 SAVIOUR

**GOD • FATHER**  
 ABBA • LORD • JEHOVAH  
 YAHWEH • ALMIGHTY  
 HOLY ONE • SAVIOUR  
 ETERNAL • CREATOR  
 KING • MAJESTY • JUDGE  
 SHIELD • ROCK • I AM

V  
 UDE  
 TRUTH  
 THAHSRI  
 OSPOWER  
 ULFLIFE  
 POWYNDR  
 AWISDOM  
 DBEPBVC  
 VWTIREO  
 OIEREFM  
 CTRIAIF  
 ANNTTRO  
 TEACHER  
 ESLGIFT  
 DSGUIDE  
 THELPER

**HOLY SPIRIT**  
 GIFT • HELPER • WITNESS  
 COMFORTER • GUIDE  
 ADVOCATE • WISDOM  
 POWER • TRUTH • BREATH  
 LIFE • ETERNAL • DOVE  
 WIND • FIRE • TEACHER



## PARISH DIARY FOR JUNE



All services and events may be changed in the light of any new developments.

Please see our weekly newsletter for the latest information. It can be found on our

Website: [www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk](http://www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk)

1 Jun	P.C.C. Meeting at St Francis	2.00pm
3 Jun	Mid-week communion at St. Francis	10.00am
	<i>Then the community support 'drop-in'</i>	10.30am-noon
4 Jun	Foodbank at St. Francis	11.00am-1pm
7 Jun	<b>1st Sunday after Trinity</b>	
	Holy Communion service at St. Catherine's	10.00am
	Rogation service with the Grays Town Band at St. Catherine's	4.00pm
8 Jun	Bible study and fellowship group at St. Francis	10.30am-noon
10 Jun	Morning Prayer at St. Francis	10.00am
	<i>Then the community support 'drop-in'</i>	10.30am-noon
11 Jun	Foodbank at St. Francis	11.00am-1pm
14 Jun	<b>2nd Sunday after Trinity</b>	
	Worshipping Together at St. Catherine's	10.00am
17 Jun	Morning Prayer at St. Francis	10.00am
	<i>Then the community support 'drop-in'</i>	10.30am-noon
18 Jun	Foodbank at St. Francis	11.00am-1pm
21 Jun	<b>3rd Sunday after Trinity</b>	
	'Worshipping Together' at St. Catherine's	10.00am
	Café Communion at St. Francis	4.30pm
22 Jun	Bible study and fellowship group at St. Francis	10.30am-noon
24 Jun	Morning Prayer at St. Francis	10.00am
	<i>Then the community support 'drop-in'</i>	10.30am-noon
25 Jun	Foodbank at St. Francis	11.00am-1pm
28 Jun	<b>4th Sunday after Trinity</b>	
	Holy Communion service at St. Catherine's	10.00am
	St. Catherine's open for ploughman's lunches	12.00am-1.30pm
	and tea and cake	2.00-4pm



If you would like to support the work of the parish and the churches of St. Catherine and St. Francis, this 'QR' code will take you to our 'Give A Little' donation page.

### 'Life Events' during May

#### **Baptism**

None

#### **Weddings**

None

#### **Funeral**

None

#### **Burials**

None

#### **Committal of Ashes**

None

### **Making History at St. Catherine's**

When I am talking to a visitor to St. Catherine's about I am often asked about the history of the building. My answer is always that I am not a historian but I can pass on what I know, which is mostly gleaned from the re-ordering of the church in 2015. I will often start by telling of the conversation between a member of the public visiting while the work was in progress, and the site foreman. Clearly the visitor was not a fan and told the foreman that 'he was destroying history' his retort was apparently 'no madam, I am creating history'. This was a perfectly accurate response as, if you look carefully around the building, you will see evidence of previous generations' efforts to make changes to meet the needs (or politics!) of the time.



Can you see where the archway leading into the sanctuary was 'remodelled' to accommodate a wooden 'rood screen' when these were deemed to be important? What about the slots in the pillars? They must have some purpose. There is also clear evidence of earlier aches in the walls on both sides of the nave. And what about the crypt discovered when the chancel floor was re-laid as part of the recent work? And of course, the tower ( or as much of it as was built). All of these things indicate, that for the centuries that make the life span of this parish church, the then congregation and parishioners cared deeply that it should be relevant at all times - which is what we aimed for in 2015.

*Chris Ford*

**And while your looking** around can you find reference to the Rector of Llangyvelach & East Tilbury who died on 20<sup>th</sup> December 1841 at 90 years of age. It has always struck me as quite a commute for Revd. Evan Lloyd - but perhaps it was not at the same time!

## The Priest in charge

REVD. MICHÈLE MARSHALL

The Rectory

24, Somerset Road, Linford

Stanford-le-Hope

Essex, SS17 0QA.

Telephone: 01375 671754

email: [mjmarshall@fastmail.co.uk](mailto:mjmarshall@fastmail.co.uk)

## The Usual Service Pattern

- ◆ 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays, 10am at St. Catherine's, Holy Communion
- ◆ 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays, 10am at St. Catherine's, Family Service and at 4.30pm at St. Francis, a service of Café style Holy Communion.
- ◆ 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays, 10.30am a joint service with the Linford Methodists

Wednesdays 10.00 a.m. at St. Francis 1<sup>st</sup> of the month Holy Communion,  
other Wednesdays, Morning Prayer

For Baptisms, Weddings or Funerals please contact Revd. Michèle Marshall

## Our Churchwardens

CHRIS FORD T: 01375-675863

E: [chris.pewtal@outlook.com](mailto:chris.pewtal@outlook.com)

LES SCHWAR T: 07758-461380

E: [leslie.bowles2@gmail.com](mailto:leslie.bowles2@gmail.com)

## PEWTALK Editor

Chris Ford

44, Northumberland Road  
Linford, SS17 0PU

T: 01375 675863

E: [pewtalk@stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk](mailto:pewtalk@stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk)

## St. Francis Centre

The centre is available for hire at very reasonable rates. To discuss availability please contact Sheila King at:-

[sheila.king9987@gmail.com](mailto:sheila.king9987@gmail.com)

## Copy Dates for Pewtalk

*22<sup>nd</sup> June 2026*

*22<sup>nd</sup> July 2026*

*22<sup>nd</sup> August 2026*