



# HURST GREEN NEWS

February 2021

## Live in Hope

Living in hope is probably the best we can do at the moment in the restrictive lockdown we are now in. Our hope is for 2020 to become history and life return to what we regard as normal. For now we can only look at this global pandemic and what it has meant for us so far. How many words can you think of to describe the year 2020?

To be honest, I think the list could be overwhelming. Let's make a start: firstly shock and anxiety, then upsetting, unsettling, difficult, dark, lonely, restricting, frustrating, boring, disturbing, frightening; perhaps that is enough to be going on with.

Each of us may be described as being in the same boat, but that is only partly true as we all are individuals and our circumstances are different. The pandemic year of 2020 will have been easier to endure for some than others. Couples in a good relationship have probably fared best, though like everyone missing family and friends has given rise to great sadness. It surely, to generalise, must have been more difficult for those who live alone whatever age bracket they fall into, or for families with children whether babies, toddlers, school age, teenagers, all missing so much from their normal routines. And there are those who have no work now and are suffering financially.

In a way it is easy to list everything that made 2020 so hard to endure, but for our own well-being looking for what we can find positive in that upsetting year is really important. I have found it a time of much reflection on my life and found many positives there. Of course, everyone has joys and sorrows and the sorrows have to be acknowledged too, for they are as much part of us as the joys. I imagine each of us has done their best to find a way to survive such a troubled time. It is amazing how resourceful people become when the need arises. Kindness and generosity, watching out for our family, friends and neighbours have all become part of life. If we have not been able to help physically, we have had the phone as an excellent option to make contact and share feelings with one another. Also Zoom meetings and WhatsApp have been a lifeline for many.

There are many blessings to be thankful for, supermarkets, refuse collectors, take aways, postmen and not least the NHS. We have a grandson who is a doctor, so we are well aware how hard it has been for front-line staff involved in the treating of Covid patients. I have no magic answers for how to keep one's spirits up, but I do believe that God has not deserted us and God's healing love is ever with us. We can be thankful for the imagination of so many in the ways they have found to help wherever it has been possible. There are many well-known phrases that come to mind and have more than a ring of truth in them. 'All hands on deck' and 'actions speak louder than words' would surely feature and as my husband would say, 'fine words butter no parsnips'. From the Old Testament 'Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.' *Joshua 1, v 9*. I hope many of you will find those words a comfort too.

*Monica Fenton, Southwark Pastoral Auxiliary St John's*



## Save our frogs and toads!

Over the next few weeks you may catch sight of frogs and toads crossing the road near St John's Church close to the junction between Church Way and Oast Road.

What are the differences between frogs and toads? Frogs have smooth, moist skin and they aren't slimy! They tend to jump rather than crawl. Toads, on the other hand, have drier skin. They don't need to spend their lives so close to water. They lumber about when they move, instead of hopping.

Both frogs and toads, known as amphibians, because they live partly on land and partly in the water, travel back each year to the pond where they were bred. This happens in late winter/early spring, after it begins to get dark, often following a rainy day. They don't like the cold, so the temperature needs to be reasonably mild, otherwise they will stay put in someone's garden for a little longer, in their snug spot in the undergrowth, or a woodpile, or a hole in the ground. Then, when the conditions seem right, they set out on their journey - and they don't have any road sense!

## toads on roads



So, from early or mid-February until early April there are likely to be frogs and toads trying to cross Church Way and Oast Road near the T-junction in the hours after dusk. While we have a Toad Patrol in place to help them on their journey, we don't have enough people to cover the whole of each evening. These little amphibians can be seen and avoided if we all drive slowly and carefully in that area. Please help us to spare God's creatures.

*Many thanks from the Toad Patrol*

## The Oxted Team Advent Campaign

# THANK YOU

A huge thank you to all who have donated to our Advent Campaign to support Welcare. Together we have raised £615 for the Families in Crisis fund. This money will be used by Welcare to make a real difference to the lives of families and children in our local area. If you would still like to donate, you can do so using this link <https://bit.ly/StJWelcare2020>. For more information visit [www.welcare.org](http://www.welcare.org).

# HURST GREEN CHURCHES WELCOME YOU

Please check websites for up to date information, but at the time of writing:

**St John's, Hurst Green** is open for private prayer on Sundays and Wednesdays from 10am to 4pm.

**Hurst Green Evangelical Church** is offering online Sunday worship, prayer meetings and Bible studies during lockdown.

These are open to all and if you would like to be part of these times together, please contact [Pastor@hgec.org.uk](mailto:Pastor@hgec.org.uk).

## ST JOHN'S, CHURCH WAY

**Rector:** Anna Eltringham, 712674, 14 Oast Road  
(day off - Monday)

**Assistant Priest:** Mary Seller, 715675, 11 Home Park

**Southwark Pastoral Auxiliary:** Monica Fenton, 715769

[www.stjohnshurstgreen.org.uk](http://www.stjohnshurstgreen.org.uk)

## ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH OF OXTED & WARLINGHAM

**All Saints' Church** Chichele Road, Oxted - 627762

**St Ambrose Church** Warren Park, Warlingham

**Parish Priest** Fr Stephen, 713776

[www.oxtedandwarlinghamparish.org](http://www.oxtedandwarlinghamparish.org)

## METHODIST CHURCH, HURSTLANDS

**Minister** Stephen Mares - 020 3719 4644

## HURST GREEN EVANGELICAL CHURCH

**Pastor:** Keith Dickson, 712017, [Pastor@hgec.org.uk](mailto:Pastor@hgec.org.uk)

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## A handmade heart brings comfort

Pollards Oak WI member, Monica Fenton, who is part of the chaplaincy team at East Surrey Hospital, asked the committee if members might like to make small knitted or fabric hearts for the team as she had received a request from them that their supplies were running low. This is a nationwide initiative taken up by many hospitals. With so many Covid patients and others unable to have their families or loved ones visit them, two hearts are given out, one

to the patient and one to the family. Holding their respective hearts while making video or phone calls helps them to feel closer to each other and brings them comfort. And when not in touch, the hearts are a tangible reminder of the love that links them.

The committee thought this was a lovely idea and when members were asked for help the response was brilliant. Within about two weeks more than 100 hearts made from pretty fabrics were ready and Monica was able to take them to the hospital and present them to the Revd Vlada Rakin, one of the Chaplains in the chaplaincy team.

The WI had a lovely letter back thanking them for the hearts, saying they were very popular with the patients and were very much appreciated. Since then, Pollards Oak have made a further 88 hearts for Monica to take to the hospital. This appeal even went beyond the WI: a bag of pink knitted hearts were made by a member's neighbour who wanted to contribute to the collection and made 50! The members are continuing to make more hearts and they will be giving these to Monica for the hospital in the New Year.

*Jan Ward, Pollards Oak WI*

## Hurst Green Garden Club



Maybe like me you grew up in a house with a coal fire and ice on the bedroom windows. Even though the coal was once a tree, the clinker is not much use in the garden except on paths and drives. And maybe, like me, you now have a log fire as an extra source of heat in your house. Don't waste the wood ash. It is alkaline, but it can be used in the garden. If you are on clay, which is probably in the middle of acid/alkaline conditions (do get a testing kit to find out), the ash can be dressed over the winter soil and raked in. But do keep it away from the fruit garden, roses, rhododendrons, and other acid liking plants.

Moving on to the garden, I am sure you have all pruned your wisterias and shrubs by now. The snowdrop Ellwesii (my favourite) is the first to flower and is still in flower after weeks with other varieties trying to catch up. Mixed with the cyclamen corms, it is a picture under the leafless trees.

The pair of pigeons and collared doves have returned and are trying to sort out their previous nesting sites. Flocks of sparrows and blue tits come through twice a day joined by a mix of other birds for safety. Don't forget they need water as much as we do, so have several dishes around the garden of different sizes and depths, for washing and drinking. Keep them clean and ice free, as if you didn't have enough to do in your garden!

There is not much change in our Club programme for this year. The January meeting was on Zoom and February was scheduled as a practical demonstration, so cannot now go ahead. It took over two years to book the speaker we wanted for March but that now looks as if it will have to be delayed till next year. With current Covid restrictions, we will have to sort out the rest of this year's programme as best we can and we are now working on the 2022 programme too. *Brian Parrott*



## Counting the Birds

When I was a toddler my Uncle Peter used to take me out in my pushchair. I still remember the thrill of him lifting me to see a robins' nest in the bank with four white speckled eggs in it! Later Uncle Peter taught me to recognise birds by their flight and thus a lifelong love of birds came about.

My late husband used to have a band of retired chaps to help maintain local woodlands. I was with them one morning and I heard a marsh tit. John, one of the men, said 'Are you interested in birds?' 'Very much so' I replied and he told me about the BTO (British Trust for Ornithology, [www.bto.org](http://www.bto.org)). I applied and was gratefully recruited - the more, the merrier seems to be the norm!

I keep a weekly check of common birds on one sheet of paper and less common on another. Every 13 weeks an official form is filled out and sent to the BTO in Thetford, and I get a very interesting magazine four times a year, with the results of the surveys.

Sadly many once common species have declined rapidly - I haven't recorded a house sparrow for several years. And yet when we moved here 41 years ago, they nested in the eaves and were a pest, eating our hens' food!

My special visitor is a grey wagtail coming from the fast flowing stream at the bottom of the hill - so dainty.



I've been bird counting for 21 years. Birds are fascinating; to get to know their behaviour and interaction with each other is a real privilege.

*Suzanne Hill, Old Oxted*





## East Surrey Walkers

We were hoping that following the November lockdown we would be able to restore our walks programme. Sadly this was not to be and the imposition of the Tier 4 status on our area has unfortunately forced us to continue the suspension. East Surrey Walkers will recommence the programme of walks as soon as we are permitted and you can check the walks available on our website [www.eastsurreywalkers.org.uk](http://www.eastsurreywalkers.org.uk).

Walking provides opportunities to view nature up close and occasionally we witness an odd occurrence. Imagine the surprise of a small group of our walkers who came across a man attempting to shepherd a swan along a footpath. On asking, the 'swanherd' explained that the swan was a female (pen) and had lived with her partner (cob) on a nearby lake for a number of years. In recent times the couple had begun to argue and the pen reacted by 'walking out'. She would set off at a significant swan walking / waddling pace. This has occurred on several occasions and she uses the same route to leave the lake and chooses not to fly. It seems that having made her point she reinforces it by apparently only reluctantly returning to the lake when guided by the kindly man. Harmony is restored in the short term until the next lovers' tiff when she goes off on another walk.

Perhaps we are not the only species that finds a walk can help us to manage problems as well as providing physical fitness and pleasure?



## Delivering Hurst Green News

In normal times, a group of volunteers 'fold' each printed edition into A5 size and these copies are put into bags which our trusty deliverers pick up from the church and deliver to each household in Hurst Green - that's over 2,700 copies. For Covid reasons, we're no longer able to gather to fold each edition and, as the church isn't open every day, we now leave the unfolded copies in a waterproof box outside the church for our deliverers to collect. It's not a very exact science as some of our deliverers are not able to help at the moment, for a variety of reasons, but we're supported by others who like to add a sense of purpose to their daily exercise so will pick up a supply and deliver those for us. We have a list of roads so that people can see what's being covered but we do realise that it's possible for some roads to get overlooked. We apologise if that has happened to you and it wasn't helped by Storm Bella last month who blew the box open, scattered the newsletters all over the church grounds and they got so wet they became unusable! We're trying our best and think that we usually manage to deliver to 85% of households which isn't too bad in the circumstances. But if your road is missing out, please do come to the church and from around the 25th of each month, you will find a big plastic box outside holding copies of the newsletter - grab enough for your road and tick the list so we know it's been covered. Many thanks.

## Would you like to write an article for us?

Hurst Green News is normally full of articles promoting local events, e.g. WI meetings, gardening clubs, school open days or jumble sales. Obviously, with Covid restrictions and, at the time of writing, the third lockdown, most of these events have stopped.

This, in turn, means it's getting harder to fill the column space! We really want to keep publishing as we receive lots of positive feedback and it's lovely to be able to reach out to the community, but we really would appreciate some help with new articles.

So, if you've ever fancied writing a short piece (around 250 words or shorter if that's too daunting) or a poem, we would love to hear from you. The subject is entirely up to you. Please have a go. Send your articles to [hgncompiler@gmail.com](mailto:hgncompiler@gmail.com).

There is no deadline as we will use the articles as and when there is space.

## PARISH REGISTERS

### Funerals

*Our sympathy goes to all his relatives and friends:*

23 December Terry Stent

### St John's Book of Remembrance

To have a name entered, please email [office@stjhurstgreen.co.uk](mailto:office@stjhurstgreen.co.uk)

## St Agatha's Hall

To enquire about booking, contact the **Booking Administrator:**  
**07586 863079** or  
**[aggieshall@gmail.com](mailto:aggieshall@gmail.com)**  
or complete the form on the website:  
**[stagathashall.weebly.com/contact.html](http://stagathashall.weebly.com/contact.html)**

## Hurst Green Evangelical Church

Have you any pictures of events or people connected with Hurst Green Evangelical Church from years gone by? We are in the process of developing a new website and would like to feature an extensive gallery of images from the Church's past.

If you have any photos you feel are appropriate for us to use, these would be very much appreciated. Anecdotes about the Church would also be very welcome.



Please send any contributions to [pastor@hgec.org.uk](mailto:pastor@hgec.org.uk). Hard copies may be sent to 75 Hurst Green Road, Hurst Green, Oxted, RH8 9AJ. We will scan any photographs and return the original to the owner, so please remember to include your name and address. Thank you.

## Oxted Band: [www.oxtedband.co.uk](http://www.oxtedband.co.uk)

The pandemic has affected all aspects of our lives, and 2020 was a year like no other in the history of the Band, which marks its 120th anniversary in 2021. We were unable to meet for rehearsals from early March, although we did get a few 'blow ins' at Holland Sports Ground in September and October, before Lockdown 2 took that off the agenda. Just before the second lockdown, six of us gathered at St Peter's Church in Limpsfield, where we usually participate in the church's Remembrance Service, to record some hymns and the National Anthem along with Last Post and Reveille for St Peter's Church and St John's Church, where we hold our concerts, to use in their online services on Remembrance Sunday. Some of us also played the Last Post on our doorstep, either on Remembrance Sunday, or at 11am on 11 November.

In December some members met at St John's Church, despite the rain, to play and record carols. The weather, and some members living in tier 3 areas being excluded, meant our ranks were a little depleted, but the group played



on for an hour of Christmas music. Unfortunately, this was the final time we could gather in this way as Surrey went in to tier 3 and then tier 4 restrictions, and carol playing sessions we had been asked to assist with at St John's Church and East Surrey Hospital had to be cancelled.



We plan to hold our usual Spring, Autumn and Christmas Concerts at St John's Church this year, hopefully adding other dates as restrictions (fingers crossed!) begin to lift. There are currently no plans for celebratory events for the Band's 120th anniversary in 2021 as we had hoped. We may just have to wait and celebrate 125 years instead!

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