

Hythe Parish Review

MAGAZINE OF THE PARISH OF HYTHE, KENT



Dr Berkeley Hill BEM, Director of Music

Lent, Holy Week & Easter

March & April 2025

No 933

£1

Meet the Team



Revd Michael Darkins
Vicar



Revd Adrian Roux
Methodist Minister



Revd Dr Michael Chandler
Associate Priest



Revd Pam Clark
Associate Priest



Revd Canon David Russell
Associate Priest



Helen Waymouth
Churchwarden



John Wren
Churchwarden



Dudley Shipton
Lay Preacher



Aimee Babbs
Youth Worker



Imogen Taylor
Parish Administrator



Carolyn Chivers
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Submission deadline for the next issue: **15 April 2025**

Church services

Sundays

ST LEONARD'S PARISH CHURCH, Oak Walk, CT21 5DN

8.00am Holy Communion BCP (said)

9.30am Parish Communion

6.30pm Choral Evensong

4th Sunday 4pm Band Worship

ST MICHAEL'S METHODIST-ANGLICAN CHURCH CENTRE

Rampart Road, CT21 5BG

11.00am Morning Worship – 1st, 3rd & 5th Sundays

11.00am Holy Communion – 2nd & 4th Sunday

Wednesdays

11.00am Midweek Communion at St Michael's

HOLY CROSS, Jubilee Avenue, Palmmarsh, CT21 6NQ

Third Saturday of the month: 5pm: Evening Praise

Fifth Sunday of the month: 11.30am: Family Eucharist

Please check the weekly notices for changes or additions to this list.

St Leonard's and St Michael's Sunday services are now live streamed for those unable to attend the service in person. These services are easily accessed from our website www.slhk.org – just click on the online resources on the first page of the website. Evening prayer is said every weekday in St Leonard's at 5pm. Morning prayer is said on weekdays at 8.30am on Zoom (meeting no. 3821135036).

If you have access to email, you can subscribe to our emailing list by sending an email administrator@slhythe.com.

The Parish is served by three churches: St Leonard's, Holy Cross and the St Michael's Methodist–Anglican Church Centre.

Our vision is:

'We aim to be an ever-more welcoming, inclusive, and caring Christian community that reaches out to all, thankful to God who draws us together and gives us life in all its fullness.'

The whole worshipping congregation in each church of our parish has responsibility for living our vision

Priest's letter from Revd Michael Darkins

Dear Friends,

It feels very much like a season of endings and beginnings. At the start of March we say thank you to our Director of Music, Professor Berkeley Hill BEM. In his 52 years as Director of Music, Berkeley has inspired and shaped our church community, especially the many boys and girls, men and women, who have passed through his choirs. Berkeley certainly had a tough job to begin with. His predecessor, Fred Skinner, was much loved and had died in post – always daunting for the next incumbent. But after initially only agreeing to take on the role for 3 months, Berkeley took to the role like a duck to water and since starting has poured his infectious passion, his boundless energy, and his inspiring skills into every concert, choir rehearsal, Communion service and more.

And not to forget, Berkeley couldn't have done all of this without Hilarie. Hilarie has always been at Berkeley's side over these 52 years, supporting him with her own singing talents, attending choir rehearsals and concerts with him, and of course making sure that the boys and girls were suitably dressed in (well-fitting and well-ironed) cassocks and gowns. Together, Berkeley and Hilarie are part of the fabric of St Leonard's, much like the skulls in the crypt, they give St Leonard's much of its character and are part of what makes the community so wonderful – although Berkeley and Hilarie are much better looking than the skulls! Our celebrations of their ministries on the 2 March aren't a goodbye. It's a thank you. So please join us at 11am and 3pm to say, 'Thank you,' to both of them.

So with some rather large shoes to fill, it's also a delight to welcome Anita Jones in March as she takes over as Musical Director. Many of you will already know Anita as she's worn several hats in her relationship with St Leonard's – literally when she was Mayor of Hythe! We look forward to welcoming Anita to the parish as she plays for her first service on Ash Wednesday, and her first Sunday on the 9 March.

Finally, in March and April we enter the season of Lent and journey towards Holy Week and Easter. Much like endings, Lent can be a difficult season of change. Ash Wednesday reminds us of our own endings, and Lent invites us to wrestle with dislocation – the sense of being out of

one's comfort zone and without support structures in place. It recalls the experience of the wilderness the Israelites experienced in their journey from Egypt to a new home, and their time of captivity in Babylon; and of course the experience of Jesus as he was tempted in the wilderness and later in his journey into death. The experience of wilderness, although discomfiting and anxiety inducing, leads to restoration. For the Israelites it led to flourishing in a new home; and for Jesus his time in the wilderness leads to his Kingdom – the Kingdom seen through his ministry, and the Kingdom felt in his resurrection.

In March and April then I invite you to pray as we journey through these two months. Pray, giving thanks for Berkeley and Hilarie. Pray, asking God to bless Anita in her new role. Pray, for blessings and life for our church family.

Every Blessing,
Michael

From the Editor

In this spring issue of Hythe Parish Review we are delighted to introduce what we hope will become two regular new features. On page 19, 'Community spotlight' carries the first of a series of interviews by Steve Williams with people who make a difference to our community here in Hythe. Many thanks to him, and to our Mayor for so kindly giving up her time. Then on page 21 we have a fascinating article by Robert Booth, who blogs as the Fairy Trucker and enjoys a readership that we can only envy!

We always welcome your comments or ideas about what else you would like to see in the Review. Could you write us a short piece, perhaps on something of interest in our town or a book or film that you enjoyed, like the one on page 13? Please note that we are now a bimonthly publication and the next closing date for submissions will be **Tuesday 15 April**.

Very best wishes from the Hythe Parish Review team as we journey through Lent together and reach the joy of Easter.

Joanne Hill

Calendar of Events

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Event</i>
Saturday 1 st March	11am	101 Open Door	'Shrove Saturday' Pancakes
Sunday 2 nd March	11am	St Leonard's Church	Parish Eucharist <i>followed by bring-and-share lunch</i>
Sunday 2 nd March	3pm	St Leonard's Church	Berkeley's Farewell Evensong <i>followed by refreshments</i>
Wednesday 5 th March <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	8am	St Leonard's Church	Ash Wednesday Eucharist <i>with ashing</i>
	11am	St Michael's Church	Ash Wednesday Eucharist <i>with ashing</i>
	12-2pm	The Undercroft	'Ashes to Go'
	7pm	St Leonard's Church	Ash Wednesday Eucharist <i>with ashing</i>
Saturday 8 th March	10:30-4pm	St Leonard's Church	Hythe Community Games Day
Friday 21 st - Sunday 23 rd March	All Weekend	-	Youth Group Sailing Weekend
Thursday 3 rd April	10am	St Leonard's Church	Hythe Bay Easter Service
Sunday 13 th April <i>Palm Sunday</i>	10:30am	St Michael's Church	Joint St Michael's – St Leonard's Palm Sunday Service
Monday 14 th April	11am	St Leonard's Church	Midweek Communion <i>in Holy Week</i>
Tuesday 15 th April	11am	Holy Cross Church	Midweek Communion <i>in Holy Week</i>
Wednesday 16 th April	11am	St Michael's Church	Midweek Communion <i>in Holy Week</i>
Thursday 17 th April	6pm	St Leonard's Church	Maundy Thursday Meal
	7pm		Maundy Thursday Eucharist <i>followed by Vigil</i>
Friday 18 th April <i>Good Friday</i>	8am	St Leonard's Church	Matins & The Litany
	9:45am	Waitrose Carpark	Churches Together Walk of Witness
	12pm	St Leonard's Church	Good Friday Eucharist
Saturday 19th April <i>Holy Saturday</i>	8pm	St Leonard's Church	Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter
Sunday 20 th April <i>Easter Day</i>	5:30am	Twiss Road Carpark	Dawn Service
	9:30am	St Leonard's	Parish Eucharist on Easter Day
	11am	St Michael's	Methodist Service on Easter Day
	11:30am	Holy Cross Church	Eucharist on Easter Day

Please note that not all events have been listed here. Check the weekly notice sheet, Facebook, or our church website for further details.

Prayer prompts day by day

- 1 Our ministerial team
- 2 Our Churchwardens and PCC
- 3 Our new Musical Director
- 4 Mission Aviation Fellowship
- 5 The congregation of St Leonard's
- 6 Those recently bereaved
- 7 All who use our churches
- 8 The situation in Ukraine
- 9 The 101 "Open Door" project
- 10 Our Mayor and councillors
- 11 The congregation of St Michael's
- 12 Those in need in our community
- 13 Bishop Rose
- 14 The people of Israel and Gaza
- 15 Hythe Bay School
- 16 Archdeacon Darren
- 17 Revd Adrian Roux and his family
- 18 Revd Michael and his family
- 19 Our musicians, singers and bellringers
- 20 The congregation of Holy Cross
- 21 Our treasurers and Church finances
- 22 Local hospitals and care homes
- 23 The leadership of the Anglican Communion
- 24 Our work with children and young people
- 25 Those with a ministry of healing and care
- 26 Churches Together in Hythe and Saltwood
- 27 King Charles and our government
- 28 Refugees and asylum seekers
- 29 Those in need of Easter hope
- 30 Our local shops and businesses
- 31 Those parts of the world suffering from famine and natural disasters

A prayer for Lent and Easter

Christ, eternal Word,
you shared our human nature
and stood with us in the darkness
of abandonment and death.
We beg you,
flood your Church with the light
of your glorious rising from the
dead,
so that without doubt or fear
we may walk in the way of salvation.
For you are our life,
now and for ever.
Amen.

From 'The Way of the Cross', *Celebrating the Christian Year*, Vol. II (Canterbury Press Norwich, 2005)



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St. Michael's Methodist Anglican Church Centre, Hythe

The congregation of St. Michael's Church look forward to the spring with its lengthening days of sunlight, of hope and promise and the stir of new life in the church community garden to the front and rear of the church building, created just over six months ago. It is pleasing to remind ourselves of the need to be pastorally involved with the local community. Chris Porter, Jane Wright, Harriet Dawes, Judith Paul along with myself and others have been a part of the team refreshing the soil in the raised beds, cutting back the buddleia, planting snowdrops, pansies, daffodils, bulbs and seeds amongst the earlier planting of cyclamen, violets, heather, grasses and the many other donated plants, including two potted miniature conifers on each side of the pergola. Hopefully it will not be too long before we dedicate the garden and have a notice board explaining the involvement of the church and local community.

At this time of year we also look forward to Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday and the start of Lent. A time of spiritual reflection when we think of Jesus preparing for his ministry when we can also set goals for ourselves. Not in giving up something for Lent but in taking positive steps to make life better for others.

Engaging in conversation, saying thank you to someone, calling on a neighbour, holding a door open, smiling at people, saying hello, thanking the bus driver, giving way when driving, supporting local shops, farmers and markets. There is much that we can do to help other people and this was very much the mission of Jesus two thousand years ago and his relevance today is in our hands. In the end, everything in our life is only LENT to us.

Finally, let us place on record the dedication and commitment of Dr Berkeley Hill, the parish Director of Music, who over many years played the organ at St. Michael's and was actually brought up as a Methodist. We are most grateful for his ministry with us.

Dudley Shipton

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Fifty-two years of musical ministry in Hythe

The announcement by Dr Berkeley Hill BEM, of his retirement as Director of Music sparked memories and appreciative comments both in the parish and in the local music scene. The following would doubtless be echoed by many more.

Brinley Hughes Dr Berkeley Hill, recently appointed Organist Emeritus, has served as Director of Music at St Leonard's Church for more than half a century – a remarkable period of dedicated, unbroken service in the development and maintenance of high choral standards in the current three choirs (Adults, Men and Boys, Hythe Girls Choir), their predecessors and general musical wellbeing within the church. He will be fondly remembered for his effective training of young choristers (to whom he is affectionately known as 'Doc') and organ scholars. Throughout this time he has been most loyally supported by his wife Hilarie. Berkeley was a founder member (and sometime Chairman) of the Friends of St Leonard's Church and still continues to provide sage and much appreciated advice to the committee on music concert programming in the church. He was also Musical Director of the Folkestone Choral Society for 40 seasons until 2017 and continues to be conductor of the Shepway Singers chamber choir. He has been 'Mr Music' in the local area for as long as most people can remember!

Ian Gordon I had the joy and privilege to be a member of Folkestone Choral Society under Berkeley's leadership. We performed most major works of the choral repertory, including Bach's St Matthew and St John Passions, Mendelssohn's 'Elijah' and Elgar's 'Dream of Gerontius' at our annual Good Friday concert in the Leas Cliff Hall.

Tim Parsons Berkeley is an amazing inspiration – he brings so much to his music and has inspired so many people to become professional musicians.

Roger and Imogen Taylor Berkeley always schedules Karg-Elert's "Nun Danket", which was the voluntary played at our wedding, around the time of our wedding anniversary. It is so very thoughtful of him; a great piece superbly played. The congregations have long enjoyed Berkeley's voluntaries at the end of services often listened to quietly and followed by a round of applause.

Mike Cox

Congratulations, Berkeley! Our son drew this sketch back in the 1980s when he was a choirboy and an art student. And in his eyes, and most of the other boys', you were 'The Dynamic Choral Conductor' – and quite rightly!

I remember you did growl at them occasionally when they didn't quite produce the right sound, but that's how it was. And now you are 50 years down the track and I don't hear much growling but see a more mellowed Director of Music. Happy times, 'Doc'!



Bethany and Ollie from the girls

and boys choirs Ollie and the boys fondly recall Berkeley's self-given name of 'The Bear' given that he can (in his own words), at times, be a little grumpy and cranky!

Bethany and the girls have been entertained by Berkeley's frequent witty comments resulting in lots of laughter during choir their weekly practice.

Both will miss Berkeley's passion for music and support in developing them as individual singers and members of a choir. They have enjoyed his choice of music throughout the year and particularly looked forward to 'Carols for All' each year. Opportunities to sing elsewhere, particularly at Canterbury Cathedral, have also been a highlight for both. Not forgetting, of course, the annual battle of the girls' and boys' choir to obtain the singing rights for 'The Holly and the Ivy' at Christmas!

Theo Allen Doc is really nice. He has taught me to sing better and has given me a lot more confidence.



A timely reminder.....

As we thank Berkeley Hill we thought that you may like to know that an interesting interview with him can be enjoyed on the Hythe Civic Society website. Berkeley chatted about his life and interests. Just follow this link and scroll down to

Berkeley Hill. <https://www.hythecivicsociety.org/oral-histories>

A message from Anita Jones

I'm delighted to introduce myself as the new Director of Music for St Leonard's Church

I have worked as a musician and music teacher for all of my adult life. I gained my Degree from the Royal College of Music and PGCE from the University of Reading. I have taught in Primary and Secondary Schools and worked as a freelance and employed musician. I have played in many churches and am leaving Lyminge Parish Church after 15 years of service as their Organist and Choir Director.




I'm excited that the girls and boys choirs will be merging. This will give some good opportunities to explore a variety of new music and part singing.

Anita Jones



Friends of St Leonard's Church – Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the *Friends of St Leonard's Church* will take place on Monday 24 March 2025 at 6.00pm in the north transept. For more information about this meeting, or if you would like to consider joining the *Friends* committee, please contact Brin Hughes:

 01303 264470 or email to brin.hughes@btinternet.com.

Crypt/ossuary opening and stewarding



The crypt/ossuary will be open to visitors again at Easter weekend (on both Easter Saturday 19 April and Easter Monday 21 April) and then regularly from 1 May through until the end of September. Opening times will be 11.00am – 1.00pm and 2.00 – 4.00pm each day, except Sundays when the crypt will be open only during the afternoon. As in previous years, we depend on the availability of volunteer stewards to be able to maintain these opening times. To help meet rising costs, the crypt admission charge last year was increased to £5 for adults and £1 for children. We plan to maintain those prices through 2025 also.

Income from visitors, including for purchase of souvenirs, is an important supplementary source of revenue for the church. Crypt income from individual and group visits during 2024 exceeded £21,000 (an increase of more than 40% on the previous year's comparable total of £14,799). This was a magnificent achievement, very much appreciated by our PCC treasurer as a significant and highly welcome contribution towards meeting the church's running and maintenance costs. The crypt/ossuary was open on certain other special occasions, including Halloween (31 October) when the accompanying photograph was taken.

If you or anyone you know would like to become a crypt steward and spend a morning or afternoon once a fortnight (or more frequently!) helping in this way, or wish to learn more about what is involved, please contact Brin Hughes on 01303 264470 or email: brin.hughes@btinternet.com. He would also wish to know your availability (or otherwise), specifying preferred days of the week and sessions (mornings or afternoons) for volunteering so that a duty rota can be prepared. Comprehensive briefings on arrangements will be given in advance to all volunteers. Crypt stewards will also need to receive (or have received) basic safeguarding training.

Thank you so much. We do need your support!

Brin Hughes

Hythe Bay

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 20 JULY 2024 07:00 AM

January	
1st	Mince Pie Specials & Launch of Railway 200 
February	
15th 	Valentine's Diner 
18th-20th	Young Enthusiasts Day
March	
30th	Mother's Day 
April	
18th	Good Friday 
20th-21st	Easter Sunday & Monday
May	
10th-11th	Steam & Diesel Gala 
June	
7th	Fish & Chip Supper 
15th 	Father's Day & Mini Beer Festival
21st	Captain Barnacles (Octonauts)* 
July	
5th	100th Birthday Celebration for Green Goddess & Northern Chief 
11th	Winston's Wine Train
19th	Fish & Chip Supper 
26th	New Romney Country Fayre
August	
	
September	
7th	Bus Rally Day
21st	The Gruffalo* 
27th	Dungeness Sunset Diner
October	
18th-19th	Autumn Gala 
November	
29th	Santa Specials 
30th	Santa Specials
December	
6th-7th	Santa Specials
13th-14th	Santa Specials
20th-24th	Santa Specials
January 2026	
1st-4th	Mince Pie Specials 

*character appearances at intervals on selected dates

Community spotlight



We are delighted that The Mayor of Hythe, Councillor Penny Graham, has allocated time from her schedule to be the first interviewee for the Hythe Parish Review.

Our Mayor is a Green Party councillor, she chairs the full council meeting and currently chairs the community engagement working group.

As Mayor, Penny has found the opportunity to support so many projects, including raising funds for the Hythe youth centre, to have been uplifting and humbling.

We asked Penny a few questions.

What drives you professionally and personally?

Fairness, justice and human flourishing, encouraging people of all ages to make the best of their potential. My teaching career in deprived areas raised my awareness of deprivation and its direct effects upon individuals, limiting their life chances. I have also worked in the community in a health promotion role with schools, poorer children and Roma children experiencing deprivation and prejudice. We compiled a resource pack to help schools cope, aiming to defuse tension in the community and help schools integrate asylum seeker children.

What do you consider to be your greatest achievement?

I am lucky to have had something of an organic career path, finding roles that have allowed me to make a difference to people's lives in teaching and healthcare and latterly as a town councillor and Hythe Mayor. As Mayor, I have enjoyed helping with and supporting local issues. In particular, I have had some influence in ensuring the continuance of the Hythe youth centre. For some time, the Hythe youth centre has been at risk of closure due to lack of funding. I have helped to organise a Kindness Workshop for local schools, the first workshop is due to take

place imminently. I would not judge any achievement to have been great but rather, collectively, my people and community focussed achievements, have been very satisfying.

With such a busy political and mayoral diary, how do you relax and recharge?

I enjoy music concerts, I especially like early music circa 1750 and before. I like to play table tennis, my serve is admired! Table tennis suits my competitive nature, I love to win. I am an enthusiastic potter! I love to be creative and have now had two solo exhibitions as a part of JAM on the Marsh. I also enjoy my work with hART, the Hythe art group, as a founder and latterly as a guest. Being creative is my relaxing place.

What makes you smile and what worries you the most?

Observing daily small interactions and acts of kindness is uplifting. Simply watching play and participating in play makes me smile. Dogs and children playing are hilarious! Attending school assemblies and nativity plays as Mayor has been delightful.

The climate crisis and extinctions in the natural world are major concerns. I cannot see any government making the hard choices that are urgently needed, I think that lifestyle restrictions would be considered as too unpopular.

What is your greatest indulgence?

Dark chocolate! I have to avoid dairy products and so I particularly enjoy Booja Booja chocolates. They are dairy free and enable my chocolate fix. Forest Feast chocolate covered cherries hit the spot too!

Has the church played a significant role in your life? If so, in what ways has it influenced your personal and professional journey?

My mother adhered to the Catholic faith, while my father was an atheist. This difference in religious beliefs caused some division and undoubtedly influenced my own thinking. However, my experience here in Hythe has been shaped by the 'churches together' philosophy, fostering a strong sense of community support and inclusion. I have greatly appreciated the opportunity to participate in church events, thanks to invitations extended by Reverend Michael, Father Jim and Father Peter.

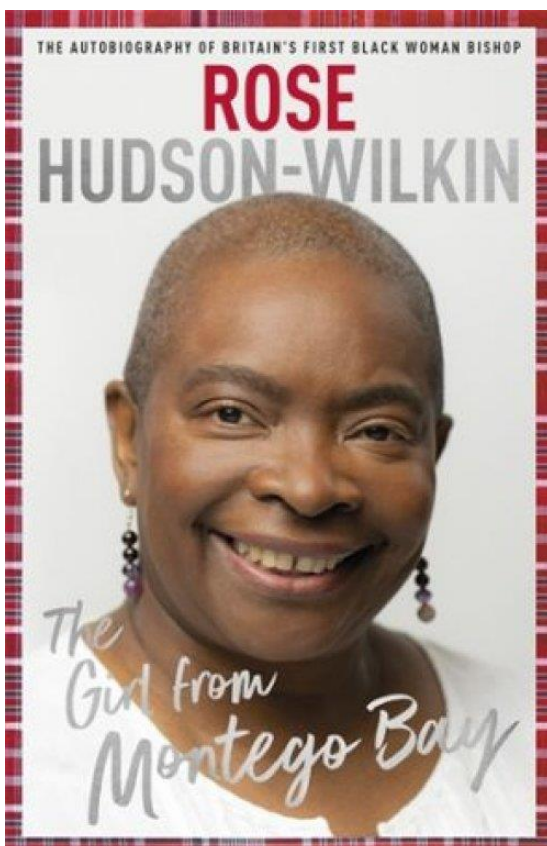
Do you have a message for the people of Hythe, Penny?

Yes, help to spread kindness please. Be kind to each other, to those you know and those you don't.

Steve Williams



Book review: *The Girl from Montego Bay* by Rose Hudson-Wilkin



The Girl from Montego Bay by our Bishop Rose – well, it took me just under three hours to read. Fascinating, and what a journey! It reads just like she talks, with excitement and with a great love for the God she sings about. She will have to write another book, though! I want to read about the time after she stops.

Nettie Wren

The Girl from Montego Bay is now available from 101 High Street, price £19.99



UNFORGETTABLE EVENTS AT

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MARCH 2025

The collage features six event posters:

- Top Left:** A colorful poster for a 'BINGO' event on Friday, 7th March at 18:30. It includes a 'Prizes included' list: £1000 cash prize, £500 cash prize, £250 cash prize, £100 cash prize, £50 cash prize, £25 cash prize, £10 cash prize, £5 cash prize, £2 cash prize, £1 cash prize, and a complimentary drink.
- Top Right:** A poster for 'The Castle Book Club' on Wednesday, 19th March, 10:00 - 11:00. The image shows an open book and a golden chalice.
- Middle Left:** A poster for 'MURDER MYSTERY DINNER' on Friday, 28th March, 2025. It features a scene from a murder mystery dinner.
- Middle Right:** A poster for 'CURRY & QUIZ NIGHT' on Friday, 28th March, 2025. It includes the text: 'SHOW OFF YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND ENJOY DELICIOUS CURRY WHILE HAVING FUN IN A FRIENDLY COMPETITION! PRIZES FOR THE WINNING TEAM!' and 'Curry & Quiz Night Friday, 28th March, 2025'. Ticket prices are listed as 'Curry & Quiz from £10.00' and 'Curry & Quiz with wine from £18.00'. Contact information: 'CALL for tickets and more information on 01303 533533 or email enquiries@lympnecastle.com'.
- Bottom Left:** A poster for 'MOTHERS DAY SPARKLING AFTERNOON TEA' on Saturday, 29th March, 11:00 & 15:00. It features images of a tea set and a cake. Price: '£17 per Person inc. VAT'.
- Bottom Right:** A poster for 'Mothering Sunday Roast' on Saturday, 29th March, 12:00. It features a plate of roast food. Price: '£15.00 per Person inc. VAT'.

For more Information visit the What's On page at www.lympnecastle.com

or to book call 01303 533533 or email enquiries@lympnecastle.com



Fairy Trucker

“Saveloy, Louis?” In the cold easterly wind, the steam rose from my chips, along with the waft of vinegar. Louis didn’t wait for the winds to cool his treat and we simultaneously regretted our rush for the hot food with gasps of air. Louis has an excuse; as a terrier he doesn’t have lips to blow on his food. I just wanted my chips! It’s funny, in nearly five years of travelling the UK in a lorry together, I have never known Louis turn down a saveloy and he certainly wasn’t going to, sat on Great Yarmouth beach at the end of a long week.

We must have made a strange sight for anyone braving the cold gusts, a man clad in orange coveralls, chatting to a tiny dog. “Blimey mate, I’m glad this week is nearly over. Mind you, you didn’t look so keen to be starting Sunday either!” Louis concentrated more on his saveloy as herring gulls hung in the air like model planes in a child's bedroom.

“You know, we don’t seem to have travelled far this week but we’ve covered some miles.” We have passed some of the churches that Lowry painted in Salford, with iconic figures remaining alive through his works, threaded our 54ft lorry through the tight streets of Middlewich, Sandbach, Cambridge, Havant and across London. We have squeezed into concrete plants to deliver chemicals that were designed for much smaller lorries and used our truck mounted forklift to get to those even tighter spots. We have dodged unaware drivers and cursed the selfish, but we have waved and thanked the so many more considerate people who have given us room. “Oh Louis. Did you really bark out of the window at that poor copper in King’s Cross, making her jump and then smile?” I ruffle Louis’ ears and he gyrates his tail in response.

We are aware that the gulls are eyeing us for potential food. This wouldn’t be the first time this week that we’ve fed the wildlife. “Have you forgiven me for feeding some of your food to the foxes at Chieveley Services?” Louis seems determined the gulls won’t have any food. I’m not sure he has forgiven me. “Oh Louis. We’re all on this planet to share aren’t we?” Apparently sharing meaty dog treats is a step too far. I’m not so sure as Chieveley had been a night of very mixed emotions.

We had managed to park up for the night early. When you travel with a dog, you learn where to park to take your four-legged copilot for a walk. Despite the driving rain, we managed to find our way into some very wet woods behind. Standing still whilst Louis investigated rabbit holes, the clatter of the first stirrings of an awakening world became apparent. Catkins hung above emerging leaves of lords and ladies, hopefully not to become an unpleasant hitchhiker in a forager's trug as she gathers the also emerging wild garlic. The odd cowslip showed a paler yellow to the winter aconites. Looking out to the field beyond, in the gathering gloom, the pureness of snowdrops glowed. A lorry driver's soul and a terrier's nose sated, we damply left the beauty of nature for the grubbiness of the lorry park which had filled significantly in the meantime.

I watched the Polish driver try once more to fit his truck into the tight space. We've all done it and he was now overthinking the reverse. I wandered over to help with Louis tucked under my arm. Two other drivers followed and between us we managed to get our European colleague safely parked. In amongst the waving arms and shouted instructions laughter emerged and strangers became temporary friends. Tall tales, silly stories and dad jokes passed around between a bunch of drivers from different countries as we all held a bottle of Polish beer in the rain.

Every motorway services has a set of showers for drivers. Of varying standard, Chieveley is not so bad with only a lot of mould as opposed to the usual lots of mould, broken fittings and the occasional vermin for company. You never shower barefooted! As I returned from the shower I noticed an ambulance nestled between two Scania trucks and a worried man stood smoking as the guy from the next truck was being treated in the back, before the ambulance exited rapidly with blue lights ablaze.

I'm not a man that manages to pray in a structured way, but as happens often Louis and I had a three-way conversation with God in the quiet of our lorry, my concerns and requests for the wellbeing of the stranger expressed. I couldn't quite quell the constant background fear I have, as a middle-aged chap, of severe illness coming to me in the loneliness of a sleeper cab deep in the night. The foxes carried away some of Louis' chews but left me with a sleepiness that the most insistent of dreams couldn't penetrate.

A gull swooped to catch the chip lobbed into the air and more gathered. We have seen some wildlife this week. The now common sights of buzzards stood sentry on fence posts along motorways or the prehistoric swooping of red kites looking for unfortunate victims of our motoring age. A kestrel hovering in the golden sunset and deer exploring the vegetation of roadsides. Wildlife that has learnt to live alongside the ever-noisier intrusion of mechanised life. As I filled the tank on the lorry a marauding mob of coal tits flowed through the bushes next to me, filling the air with calls and a jollity that made me grateful for their adaptability “Louis, do you think that hare was aware of you glowering out of the window at him in the traffic jam?” I suspect not, but Louis likes to think he can strike fear into any other animal. “If they knew how much you like your belly rubbed, nothing would be scared of you!” as I give him the last of the saveloy.

The wind picked up a little more and I snuggled into my work coat as Louis nudged in closer. Determination to make the most of time away from the cab kept us on the beach. This is the last break we have before running in and bringing our working week to a close. A time to square off our thoughts, a time for quietness and to put to bed any thoughts before the three-hour drive back to Kent and a return to family life. Of course, thoughts turn to next week, “What are we having for food next week Louis?” As always, Louis hopes sausages are on the menu. They weren’t this week and I’m sure he’s disgruntled.

Walk into any services and they are a temple of ultra processed, fast foods. Fresh, healthy food isn’t profitable and therefore not offered so we take our own. I’ve become a dab hand at making meals from scratch. This week two highlights have been leek and celeriac gratin after streaming Evensong from Canterbury and Lancashire butter pie whilst watching Puccini’s Madam Butterfly. Whilst I love opera, and especially Verdi and Puccini, the butter pie was a definite inspiration from Wallace and Gromit. “I know you wanted sausages, but we have done alright this week. We’ve had great food, seen a lot of amazing things and had an adventure.” We’ve always said this job has to be an adventure, and it is. “You know we’re off to the highlands next week? Shall we visit the whisky shop in Elgin? Ah, before then we need to go home. That’s the next adventure.” Louis wags his tail enthusiastically. Does he understand what I’m saying? Not all of it, but this is all part of that constant three-way conversation. Me, Louis and Him or Her. With this in mind, as we stroll

back to the lorry, I think of Reb Tevye's conversation with God in *Fiddler on the Roof*.

"Oh, Lord, you made many, many poor people
I realise, of course, that it's no shame to be poor
But it's no great honour either!
So, what would have been so terrible if I had a small fortune?"

I look down at Louis, faithfully by my side, at the lorry that has taken us on these adventures and will now take me to a comfortable, loving home and to a church that is fast becoming a community to us and realise that I am a rich man.

"Louis, what music shall we put on? No, you're not having Swords of a Thousand Men!" I think Louis likes the singing along. Out to sea, fingers of sunlight break through the cloud.

Here Comes the Sun

"Little darling
It's been a long cold, lonely winter
Little darling
It feels like years since it's been
here

Here comes the sun
Here comes the sun
And I say, it's alright"

(George Harrison)

And it is alright.

Come on Louis. Let's go home.



Robert Booth



**CONCERTS IN ST LEONARD'S CHURCH
(March – May 2025)**

Saturday 1 March, 7.00pm

Orsay Ensemble ♦ **Nathan Winters** *clarinet*

Dvořák *String quartet No 12 in F major ("The American"), Op 96*

Mozart *Clarinet quintet in A major, K581*

Saturday 15 March, 6.00pm

Bohemian Café:

Sylvia Akagi *singer/flautist* ♦ **Peter Golden** *singer/guitarist/composer*

Classical, traditional, blues and original music

Sunday 23 March, 3.00pm

Francis Grier *piano*

Mozart *Piano sonata in B flat, K333* ♦ *Piano sonata in D, K576*

Schubert *Piano sonata in D major, D850*

Tuesday 1 April, 7.00pm

Thomas Winrow-Campbell *organ* ♦ **Simon Langton** *music students*

Programme to be confirmed but will include works by **Bach** and **Haydn**

Saturday 5 April, 12 noon

Penelope Turner *mezzo* ♦ **Helen Crayford** *piano*

"The Lighter Side of Weill": Vintage cabaret songs by **Weill**, **Britten**, **Poulenc** and others

Friday 18 April (Good Friday), 6.00pm

Shepway Singers

"Holy Week music – from Palm Sunday to Easter" including works by **Tchaikovsky**, **Williamson**, **Kodaly**, **Bruckner**, **Sanders**, **Lotti**, **Gesualdo**, **Victoria**, **Wesley** and **Dvořák**

Friday 9 May, 12 noon

Stephen Banfield *organ*

JS Bach *Prelude and Fugue in A minor, BWV 543* ♦ *Trio Sonata No 6 in G major, BWV530*

Chorale Prelude on "Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr", BWV662 ♦ *Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor, BWV582*

Saturday 31 May, 11.00am

Ariodante Ensemble:

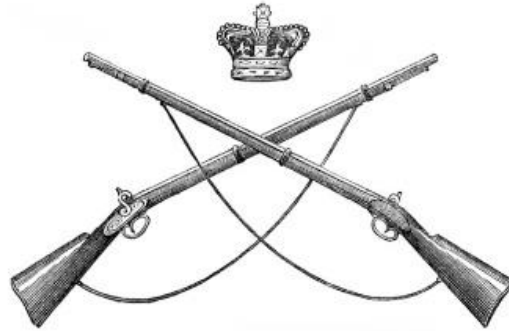
Sarah Hale *soprano* ♦ **Stelios Chatziiosifidis** *violin/viola* ♦ **Anthony Halstead** *piano*

Richard Strauss *Morgen* ♦ **Haydn** *Cantata: Arianna a Naxos* ♦ **Hindemith** *Trauermusik*

Brahms *Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer, Op 105 No 2* ♦ *Wie Melodien zieht es mir, Op 105, No 1*

Brahms *Violin Sonata No 2 in A major, Op 100*

History corner



In 1853, the War Department was looking for a site for its latest project – a training centre to instruct troops in the use of the latest combat weapon, the rifle. Invented by French Army captain Claude-Etienne Minié, it was more accurate and had a greater range than the musket, but accuracy depended on a range of factors including elevation, the strength and direction of the wind, and ballistics. True marksmanship was once again possible since the longbow fell into disuse.

The art needed to be taught, and it was decided in 1853 that a corps of experts should be formed. The site chosen for the new, and incongruously named School of Musketry, was at Hythe, where the War Department bought from Hythe Council 200 acres of beach for use as firing ranges, where stray bullets could fly harmlessly out to sea.

The first Commandant was Lt. Col. Charles Craufurd Ruse Hay of the Green Howards, otherwise known as the 19th Regiment of Foot. He was an excellent shot, and there is a story that he would fire from St Leonard's churchyard at targets on the ranges a mile away. This seems rather far-fetched and if true, it is unlikely that he hit his targets.

The School's reputation for excellence spread, as did Hay's reputation. It was written of him: 'None but an enthusiast would have stood from dawn to dark, as he daily did, on the bleak Hythe shingle, exposed to the piercing wintry blast that swept across it, while he tested endless rifles with his own hand.'

In 1858, 199 officers and 777 men were trained and Hay was made Major-General and Inspector General of Musketry. Ten years later, he was posted to the Cape as Commander in Chief. In failing health, he returned home in 1873 and died soon afterwards on the Isle of Wight.

The house in which he and his family had lived during his years at Hythe, known then simply as the Commandant's House, still stands in Sir John Moore Avenue. Now surrounded by modern housing, the Commandant's House was renamed 'Hay House' in the 1970s.

A contribution from Hythe Local History Group (HLHG)

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A new lease of life

Thanks to our aircraft, nurse and MAF staff member Betty Jurgensen was able to fly to a remote Madagascan village with a medical team from HoverAid.

Betty, along with a life-saving team of surgeons, anaesthetists, dentists and an evangelist, visited remote Ampasinambo, in south-eastern Madagascar.

They were there for five days, operating on patients, removing rotten teeth and sharing their faith.

By car, it would have taken the team about four days to reach the village. By plane, it only took 45 minutes.

The aim of the medical safari, which lasted five days, was to enable isolated communities to receive expert medical care.



PHOTOS: GINO ANTSAIANA RANDRIANASOLO

'Once we were there,' explains Betty, who has served in Madagascar for over two years, 'local villagers came to help us transport all the equipment to the health centre. It took about 20 minutes and involved crossing 2 rivers.'

Some of the patients came from the surrounding area, with many walking for days in order to obtain help in a region where healthcare is scarce.

Betty says they encountered many infectious diseases during the medical consultations 'because it's an area which is endemic to malaria.'

After being examined, one of the patients – a teenage girl with cerebral malaria – was admitted to hospital where, after receiving the

appropriate medication, she soon regained health.

While people were being examined, the missionary shared the Gospel and prayed for the patients, their families and the villagers.

'People,' Betty continues, 'came to the consultation almost dead, and left two days later very much alive again.'

'For me,' she concludes, 'it was a very powerful experience seeing MAF's impact and how important we are for people – physically and spiritually.'

'What we're doing is having a major impact. The work is important because we can bring help, hope and healing wherever we go.'

Pause for prayer

Please uphold Betty Jurgensen and her husband Michael, who, as our Madagascar programme's Country Director, is responsible for 24 staff. Pray too for our regular medical safaris as they provide healthcare and share Christ with those they meet. May our witness and work continue to be a blessing there.

Volunteer with MAF

Our volunteers tell us they love being part of MAF's exciting story and we're so grateful for all that they do. If you'd like to join their ranks, we'll do everything we can to support you. Roles vary from church representatives and speakers to events volunteers. To find out more, visit www.maf-uk.org/volunteer

MAF shop

Looking to buy a gift for someone whilst supporting a charity at the same time? Or perhaps you fancy treating yourself! You can find a variety of different items such as books, water bottles, socks, T-shirts and more. Just take a look at the items available from www.maf-uk.org/shop



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Methodist Minister Revd Adrian Roux 07721 006800 revadrianroux@outlook.com

Local Preacher Dudley Shipton 01303 487388 dbshipton@tiscali.co.uk

Safeguarding Lead Christine Porter 07549 998977 ceporter1@talktalk.net

PCC members: A list of all PCC members is posted in each of the churches. A list may also be obtained from the PCC Secretary on request.

Deanery Synod Representatives: Brian Bishop, David Owen, John Wren

PCC Registered Charity No 1144695

Post for the Parish Office should be addressed to:

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