

Welcome to the February issue of St Hilda's News
unfortunately 'technical issues' delayed us this month.

As always Thank You to those who have contributed articles to make this your Parish newsletter. We want to hear from you, so please tell us about your hobbies, activities, big birthdays and other celebrations.

Send all contributions to the Parish Office either by email or post.

Please check out the diary page for details of services and events happening this month.

The Editors

New Editors Needed

We are still on the hunt for the new editors of St Hilda's News, please contact us if you are interested in taking on this role.

The Life of your Ordinand Part Five

For some reason January and I don't go well together. Every year I have to think about why I also always forget that I don't like this month. January has never done me anything and I'd like to believe I have never done anything to annoy the first month of the year either. It should be a month of freshness, spirit of newness and promise of a spring and summer to come. This is completely lost in my being when I see the frosty ground and breath in the crisp air and my bones are frozen. And it's not even that cold. Funny enough, as many cheerfully point out, I should be used to winter and absolutely love it, because I am Swedish. Well, I guess something went terribly wrong with my DNA, I just can't appreciate it in a good way.

In the midst of my lamentation I was abruptly interrupted. I got a message from a close friend of mine which made me rethink my perception. And then more messages kept coming, from other friends. And pictures and video clips.

It was snowing in Jerusalem!

Now, this might not sound extremely exotic or exciting to you, but I know that if there is one thing that put the Holy Broken Land on hold from all everything going on there, it is snow. Everybody drops everything and just go out and look at the sky and no matter of faith or language, there is a chorus of praise to God for sending these beautiful snowflakes.



It is also a time when everything close: transport, schools, workplaces, shops, because this is a sacred moment. There are plough cars and scrapes and shovels, so it's not because the weather makes life impossible. It's merely because of the wonder. It is a sacred moment. Snow doesn't happen every winter and to my friends, and everybody else who is living there, this is very exotic and exciting. It is like a miracle. A small but significant miracle. A moment where everything stops.

Worries, fights, conflicts, and struggles are paused. For a brief moment there is only here and now. A genuine togetherness. A glimpse of heaven.

Suddenly January became a bit more friendly. Not because anything changed here, but because I had a reason to rejoice with others. The joy of someone else's joy, in snow falling over the Holy city of Jerusalem.



Maybe we should give ourselves that breath every now and then. The breath of someone else's miracle and blessing. The breath of a moment where everything stops. A breath of God. A breath that stops the day-to-day struggle and worries and give us a glimpse of heaven. There is no need or reason to be jealous or wish for exactly the same. There is no reason *not* to rejoice with others. We share the same God, and we share the same sky. Togetherness.

“Sing to the Lord a new song, sing to the Lord, all the earth.
Sing to the Lord, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.
Declare his glory among the nations, his marvellous deeds among all peoples”
Psalm 96:1-3

א שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה, שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ; שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה, כָּל-הָאָרֶץ.

ב שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה, בְּרִכּוֹ שָׁמוֹ; בְּשָׂרוּ מִיּוֹם-לְיוֹם,
יְשׁוּעָתוֹ.

ג סִפְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ; בְּכָל-הָעַמִּים, נִפְלְאוֹתָיו.

Back to my student/training reality: Apart from all wonderful essays to write we also have a thing called self-assessment. It is there for us to reflect on from where we came into the training and what we have discovered, experienced, and learnt so far. It is there to help us prepare and equip us for the future and for our college and diocese to make sure we're on track. It is almost like going through the selection hoops to be accepted as candidates for

ordination again. There are so many questions, and it sure does take time to articulate all that you are filled with in a way that responds to what is actually asked.

One question stuck out the most to me though, squeezed in among questions about strengths and weaknesses of your own church tradition in relation to traditions very different from that: Have you encountered God in unexpected ways?

Well, how do we encounter God expectedly? Do we count on meeting God in a specific place, at a specific time and in a way that we create and can be in control over? How do we then know it is God and not us...

The first thing that came to my mind was that if there's something I have realised over the years, it is that God is full of surprises and with God we can expect the unexpected. And maybe it is more about how we respond to the unexpected, how we respond to our experiences of God. I also think that many times we don't even think of an encounter or experience as being God. But it is still there. So maybe we should take that breath again, the breath of someone else's miracle and blessing. And even if we don't have an epiphany or a burning bush suddenly appear in front of us or something we cannot really put into words, we still share that same breath of God. Like a snowflake in Jerusalem.

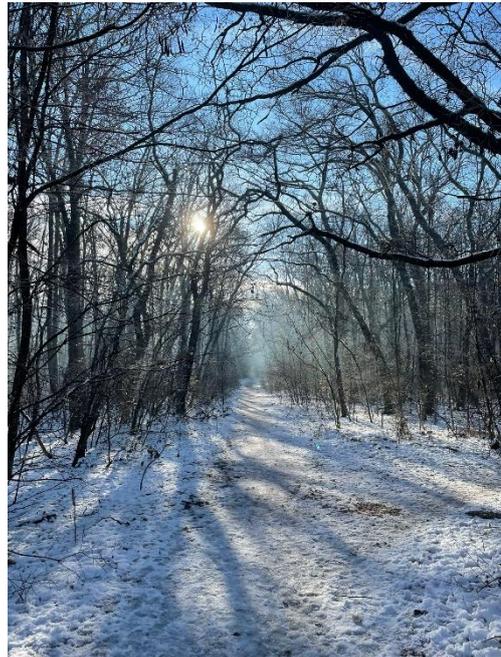
Until next time, rejoice in other's miracles and blessings, God is there, to share with you too.



Helen

My Visit to Bulgaria

My son James has recently started a new job and moved to Sofia in Bulgaria. On boxing day, I flew out to spend a couple of weeks with him. As they had had snow a week earlier, I packed plenty of warm clothes expecting the worst. In fact, the weather was fine, we had one day of heavy rain, however, a couple of days later I sat in the garden reading and the sun was really warm but a couple of days later we did get some snow, so a mixed bag. James sent me a video this morning



and they woke up to thick snow, so I missed it again. James's apartment has a backdrop of snow-covered mountains and backs onto the city forest. The forest is

so big it stretches right across the city from one side to the other. For the first few days I was there we took the dogs for a long walk in the forest every day. Apparently, Bulgaria had a King, he used to go hunting there every day. There are some forests in Bulgaria where they still have wild boar and the government have to compensate people when the boar ruins their properties.

Fortunately, the forest we walked in has only squirrels and woodpeckers, there are some signs of its former use, some large stones and ruins of buildings.

I didn't manage to do too much sight-seeing as James had to work but we did get about at the weekends and sampled the wonderful food in the restaurants. I was surprised how strict the Covid restrictions were there, before being allowed into the shopping malls or restaurants, you had to show proof of covid vaccinations, a clear PCR test or a certificate showing antibodies having already had covid. If you didn't have them then you were turned away and no one

complained, they know the rules and stick to them, so I felt really safe whilst I was there. Bulgaria is a beautiful country and Sofia is a city of two halves the very modern and the ancient buildings, as I said I didn't get to do too much sight-seeing. A good excuse to go back in the future.



Bobbie

Signs and Symbols

Crosses

Down the centuries crosses have been used as a Christian symbol. There are a variety of styles and designs and we shall look at a few over two issues. The third in this will look at crucifixes. The crucifix has the figure of Christ on it – a cross does not.

There are four basic types of iconographic representations of the cross: the *crux quadrata*, or [Greek cross](#), with four equal arms;



Greek

the *crux immissa*, or [Latin cross](#), whose [base](#) stem is longer than the other three arms;



Latin

the *crux commissa*, in the form of the Greek letter tau, sometimes called [St. Anthony's cross](#);



St. Anthony's

and the *crux decussata*, named from the Roman *decussis*, or symbol of the [numeral 10](#), also known as [St. Andrew's cross](#) for the supposed manner of the martyrdom of [St. Andrew the Apostle](#).



St. Andrew's

Tradition favours the *crux immissa* as that on which Christ died, but some believe that it was a *crux commissa*.

The many variations and ornamentations of processional, altar, and heraldic crosses, of carved and painted crosses in churches, graveyards, and elsewhere, are developments of these four types.



Ethiopian processional cross

Before the time of the Emperor [Constantine](#) in the 4th century, Christians rarely displayed the cross because it might put them in danger. After Constantine converted to [Christianity](#), he abolished crucifixion as a [death penalty](#) and promoted, as symbols of the Christian faith, both the cross and the chi-rho monogram of the name of Christ. The symbols became immensely popular in Christian art and funerary monuments from c. 350.



6th February - 4th Sunday before Lent

Sheep and Lambs Together Creative and Reflective activities for All Ages

Luke 5: 1-11

It had been a long night. Simon, James and John had been fishing but they hadn't caught any fish. Jesus was stood by the lake and said, 'Go and let down your nets again.' They did as Jesus said. And this time they caught lots and lots of fish. Jesus said, 'Come with me and tell everyone about God.' So they left their boats and went with Jesus.

Play a fishing game. You could make fish from card and twist a paper clip at the mouth end. See picture. Use a rubber band on a lolly stick or straw to hook the fish.



Think as you play hook a fish how you could tell other people about God.

Lord of the hosts of heaven,
our salvation and our strength,
without you we are lost:
guard us from all that harms or hurts
and raise us when we fall;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

13th February - 3rd Sunday before Lent

Sheep and Lambs Together Creative and Reflective activities for All Ages

Luke 6: 17-26

Luke has a balanced set of four blessings and woes. Jesus was not spelling out four ways to be happy. Rather, he was describing the way things are inside and outside the kingdom. There is both a present (such as the rich having had the rewards) and a future (such as you will be filled, laugh) reference in the blessings and woes.

Jesus' good news of the kingdom of God turns the world upside down. We are encouraged to live a blessed life. It is good to reflect on the blessings from God. We are blessed to be a blessing to others.

Set up a game of Snakes and Ladders if you have one.

Each time someone lands on a snake, tell them something positive (see below) and move up the board, and each time they land on a ladder, they move down the board and have to do a simple forfeit, e.g. do five star jumps/ sing a song /count backwards from 10

Snake positives:

- You are loved
- You are special
- You have been given gifts to share with the world
- You are part of God's family
- You can be friends with Jesus
- You are blessed
- God hears you when you pray
- God is with you always



Eternal God,
whose Son went among the crowds
and brought healing with his touch:
help us to show his love,
in your Church as we gather together,
and by our lives as they are transformed
into the image of Christ our Lord.
Amen

20th February - 2nd Sunday before Lent

Sheep and Lambs Together **Creative and Reflective activities for All Ages**

Luke 6: 27-38

Read the passage then think about what this kind of behaviour means for you in your everyday life.

How do you feel when someone is unkind to you?

How does Jesus want us to behave when people are unkind?

When do you find it most difficult to be kind and forgiving?



Almighty God,
give us reverence for all creation
and respect for every person,
that we may mirror your likeness
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

27th February - The Sunday next before Lent

Sheep and Lambs Together **Creative and Reflective activities for All Ages**

Luke 9: 28-36

We all have mountaintop experiences. Peter, James and John certainly did, and they were changed by their experience. But they could not remain there; the journey down below had to continue.

Draw a mountain on a large piece of paper Think of things that have changed your life for better then draw them or write them on the mountain
e.g. a brother or sister being born, learning how to ride a bike, moving schools, etc.



Holy God,
you know the disorder of our sinful lives:
set straight our crooked hearts,
and bend our wills to love your goodness
and your glory
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Stewardship/ Donations

As Christians, our financial giving is a form of worship of a god who gives us everything. During the pandemic St Hilda's, like many charities has had a reduced income whilst still having repair and running costs. Even though we are now able to hold services in Church I am conscious that many are still unable to attend and contribute to the usual collections as they had previously. I would like to thank the many of you who are already regular committed givers and to all those who have supported us.

If you wish to make a one off or regular donation to the parish, please see below options to do so, alternatively call the Parish Office and Denise will help you. Thank you.

1. Parish Giving Scheme – Regular Giving

The Parish Giving Scheme has a telephone service, designed to enable donors to set up a regular Direct Debit donation over the phone.

- Call 0333 002 1271
- The phone line is open 9am – 5pm Monday-Friday
- An administrator will talk through the process
- The following information will be required:
 - Personal Bank Details
 - Name of the parish – Ashford St Hilda
 - Confirm whether the gift should increase with inflation each year
 - Confirm whether you are eligible for Gift Aid – they collect on our behalf
 - PGS Code for St Hilda's - **230623270**

2. CAF Donate – One off Donations - ONLINE

Click on the DONATIONS button on our website, sthilda.org, then please follow the instructions.

3. Standing Order – Regular Giving

Contact your local bank and set up a Standing Order with them

- Sort Code 60-01-22 (Nat West, Ashford)
- Account No. 36290696
- Account Name St Hilda's Parochial Church Council

4. Cheque donations

If you are unable to use any of the above ways then you can also send a cheque to The Parish Office payable to – St Hilda's Church PCC

Sponsor a church chair

We have now received our first delivery of new chairs at St Hilda's. However, we would still like to purchase some more and we are almost at our target amount.

If you would like to help us reach our goal and sponsor a chair please complete the form at the rear of the Church.

- £90 covers the cost of a chair
- £225 covers the cost of a stacking trolley

We will recognise the sponsors of the new chairs in a memorial book / list which will be displayed in church – you can donate either in memory of someone or as an individual donation.

Thank you

If you are interested in sponsoring a chair, please complete a form that can be found:

- At the back of the Church
- On the Website
- Or Contact the Parish Office

Cheques are payable to St Hilda's PCC or you can transfer monies direct;
St Hilda's PCC

Sort Code: 60-01-22

Account Number: 36290696

Feed My Sheep

Join us for the second meeting on Tuesday 22nd February from 2.30 - 4.00pm.

The theme is Whose Bible is it?

Turn up, sign in, put a £1 in the pot. Join in and also enjoy cake and tea.

Future dates and topics:

Mar 22nd Dead Sea Scrolls and Qumran

April 26th Prayer and Praying

May 24th Popes

Rosalyn Young

Hope Into Action

Thank you, to everyone who has used the blue bins to donate clothing. The bins will remain in place, please feel free to continue to leave clothing, belts and shoes. The money raised will be put towards the work of Hope into Action locally.

Please – clean clothes, paired shoes, and belts only. We cannot do anything with bedding, towels, curtains, and other soft furnishings.

St Hilda's Flower Team



Fresh flower arrangement in St Hilda's, from a January morning. It's becoming more and more difficult to maintain a decent altar arrangement due to the ever increasing cost of flowers. Many people ask us to do a pedestal arrangement in memory of a loved one and the cost was around £20 - £25 with a wide variety of flowers being used. Towards the end of last year the cost had risen to £30-£35.

For this, I used 3 bunches of spray chrysanthems and a bunch of lilies (3 stems) cost £25. All the greenery I sourced from the church grounds.

If you would like a display made or to join the flower team, do contact the office and they will put you in touch with Alison or myself. We will soon be running some workshops for those who would like to join us.

Pauline Milton

Children's Society Collecting Boxes

For those of you who are constantly, or occasionally, topping-up a Children's Society collection box, this is the time of year when I invite you to hand in your box for its contents to be emptied, counted, banked and sent off to the Society.

In these difficult times, the Children's Society needs our support more than ever. Last year we sent to the Society £364.50 in total, £278.50 from our collecting boxes and £86.00 from our Christingle. It would be good if St Hilda's could continue to keep up the momentum.

As we are still not all able to attend Church Services, I again offer alternative arrangements. If you are coming to Church, please bring your Children's Society box with you and hand it to me, or leave it on the table at the back of Church for collection at the end of the Service.

Otherwise, I would be very happy to collect your box from you, at a time convenient for both of us, if you phone me on 01784 252170. Please don't hesitate to get in touch.

If you are not currently a box-holder, but would like to have one for the coming year, please let me know on the above phone number.

Many thanks for your support and donations, past, present and future, for a very worthwhile cause.

Chris Davenport
St Hilda's Box Coordinator

St Hilda's Memorial Book

We will be sending the Memorial Book away for updating soon. If you would like to have a name added please complete the form which can be found in the memorial corner of the church and return it to the office by 28th February.

Just Keep Running!

In autumn 2020 I started doing Couch to 5K to introduce some activity into my life, and in January 2021 I wrote in this newsletter about a running challenge I was undertaking to support the charity 'Mind'. Well who would have thought that a year later I would still be running? I certainly wouldn't!

Nevertheless here we are and despite not yet running more than 5km, I have signed up to complete a 10km race on 9th April in support of Cancer Research. Lots of us know people who have or have had this disease. My mother died from it and I currently have two good friends going through treatment. I welcome all your prayers and words of encouragement as this feels like a very long way! If you would like to sponsor me you can use this giving page:

<https://fundraise.cancerresearchuk.org/page/carolyns-giving-page-2053>

Thank you for all your support!

Carolyn Clark

Canaan Ministries are open for any of your needs. Just simply phone or email them and they will look after you. They also offer a delivery service.

Any other information can be found on their website www.canaanchristianministries.co.uk/

St Hilda's Presents

Charley Brighton returns for his next Euphonium Recital on Saturday, February 12th. at the slightly later starting time of 1pm.

This will be no.4 in 'The Richard Scholar Recital Series', a tribute to his very first brass teacher at Longford School in Feltham, and he will be joined by his wife Sue, on Baritone.

Gareth Green will be at the piano.

The programme will feature music by Dvorak, John Rutter, Herbert L. Clarke, Billy Mayerl, Sigmund Romberg and Bert Kaempfert.

Many of the solo items will be played on vintage & historic Euphoniums, dating back to 1891 and including recent additions to his treasured collection.

The concert will last for around 45 minutes with refreshments served afterwards.

Admission is £5 at the door.

For more details;

www.sthilda.org

www.euphoniumcollective.co.uk

Facebook and Twitter (@CharleyBrighton) and listen to previous performances on Soundcloud (www.soundcloud.com/highams)



UPCOMING SWING & BALLROOM CLASSES AT ST HILDAS CHURCH IN ASHFORD

February 20th - March 6th - 3 Sundays

with Denise Steele for children and adults

BALLROOM: Beginning Salsa & Cha Cha - 2:30pm

Partner required

£45 per couple for 3 weeks

SWING & LATIN LINE DANCE - 3:30pm

No partner necessary

£23 per person for 3 weeks

BEGINNING SWING & LINDY HOP - 4:30pm

Partner required

£45 per couple for 3 weeks



This is a 3 week session, all classes are progressive, class size limited so pre-registration required: Denise@DeniseSteele.com

Food & Fellowship

Joint Men and Women's Breakfast – 12th February

There will a joint breakfast in February. We do not have a speaker this month, however, it is a time to get together for a friendly chat and hearty meal.

Tickets can be booked via the ticket tailor links on our website or Facebook page or by contacting the parish office. There is a suggested donation of £5 to attend the breakfast.

Spread the word, all are welcome.



Community Lunch

The community lunch is back Wednesday at midday all are welcome, please book by contacting the office or via the links on our website and Facebook page.

John Hunt – A Thank You

To the Editor of St Hilda's 'News letter', in response to the entry in Issue 67 - January 2022.

May I thank friends and members of St Hilda's for their kindness, congratulations, and Good wishes for the future, to celebrate my 90th birthday. A total of 21 cards dropped through our letterbox, and several friends came "knocking" to deliver their message in person - or even supplement with a little liquid refreshment (anon.).

The beautiful cards, some with perhaps very carefully chosen expressions of greeting, make a proud show and worthy of retention for future pleasure.

Yes, most sincerely 'Thank You all'.

John.

Services Times for the month of February

Sunday Eucharist – 9.30am

Wednesday Eucharist – 11am

From February, we will be holding a 8am Book of Common Prayer service on the first Sunday of each month.

The Sunday service is livestreamed and can be viewed via our Facebook page and YouTube channel (St Hilda's Ashford).

Tickets can be booked for the services via the links on our website and Facebook page or by contacting the Parish Office by 5pm Friday for Sunday's service and 12pm Tuesday for Wednesday's service.

Dates for your Diary

February in St Hilda's

11 th	5.30pm	FACT – Time Together-What is real Love?
12 th	9.30am	Joint Breakfast
12 th	1.00pm	Euphonium Recital
22 nd	2.30pm	Feed My Sheep

Community Lunch – Every Wednesday at midday

Bible Study – Every Wednesday at 7.30pm

Please hold in your prayers and thoughts this week those who are affected by the Corona Virus as well as the family and friends of those below.

The Sick

James Bedford
Darren Burkin
Robb Clarke
Ann Considine
Julia Cowley
Michael Dixon
Anna Elwell
Jack Everett
Peter Garner
Juliet Griffith

Alison Griffiths
Vicky Hall
Jean Iddiols
Jane Johnson
Pat Kyle
Pauline Lewis
Chris Maddock
Mrs McCammon
Libby Mills
Raymond Nation

Pat Parish
Peggy Pinfold
Elizabeth Savill-Burgess
Delphine Scrivener
Riley Shaw
Elsie Stone
Roy Stone
Rev. Peter Taylor
Carla Wells
Sheila West

Philip Willerton
Chick Wilson
Peter Wilson
Jo Wood
Izzy
Nic
Baby Reuben
Bob
Margaret

