

October 2020

30p

Upton-cum-Chalvey Parish News

St Mary St Laurence St Peter



SERVICES & EVENTS

As a result of restrictions put in place due to the coronavirus pandemic, the weekly pattern of worship for the time being is:

Sunday:

9.30am: Said mass and sermon at St Mary's

9.30am: Said mass and sermon at St Peter's

11.00am: Said mass and sermon at St Laurence's

Tuesday:

10.00am: Said mass at St Mary's

Wednesday:

9.30am Said mass at St Peter's

12.30pm: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at St Mary's

Thursday:

10.00am: Said mass at St Laurence's

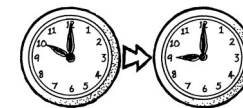
This will be the worship pattern for the foreseeable future. Worshippers are asked to sign into the churches, to observe the one-way system in place in each church, to observe social distancing, and to follow directions given for their own safety.

Communion will be given in one kind only. There will be no collection, but plates/boxes will be available to make a donation. There will be no singing, but there may be some music.

OCTOBER DATES

Sunday 4th – Harvest Festival at the three churches

Sunday 11th – 10am: Joint Parish Said Mass at St Mary's, followed by Annual Parochial Church Meeting



Sunday 25th – Bible Sunday: Said Masses at the three churches (NB – clocks go back one hour at 2.00am)

The Vicar Writes:

Over the years I have had some terrible jobs!

Principally I mean the various jobs I picked up in my student years. I particularly remember working for a removal firm which could have come out of a situation comedy. In an event reminiscent of the chandelier scene in *Only fools and horses* somebody's prize china ended up all over the A2 because somebody forgot to take it out of the sideboard before loading it on the van. In real life it wasn't so funny, especially not for the lady who owned the china.

But the worst job I really ever had was as chair of governors of a school. I won't go into detail, except to say that I still have the occasional nightmare, as I spent the best part of a year trying to negotiate four ways in a long-running dispute between the head-teacher, the Diocese, the Local Authority, and the same headteacher's Union, all of whom had a different take on what should happen. I tell this not to discourage you from taking on a school governorship (they're not all like that) but to tell you why I took it on in the first place. I took it on because nobody else would do it, and because I knew that a crisis was looming and felt that I had a choice of being part of the solution or part of the problem. Perhaps I was over-confident in my own abilities, and I certainly expected no thanks... and didn't get any. But in spite of that, I am glad that I did it. And under the same circumstances would do it again.

In October we have our parish annual meeting (slightly later than planned!) St Mary's and St Peter's also have to have their district meetings. Elections form a major part of these meetings. I am telling the story of my nightmare job as a roundabout way of encouraging you to offer yourselves for some form of service. For that is what office in the church is... it is a service. And the honest truth is that it is often thankless and under-appreciated. I've only ever known one churchwarden who thought they would get kudos from the job, and that person didn't last the year! It can be hard work, but particularly in the interregnum, and at a difficult time for the church overall it is more necessary than ever. If not yourself, can you think of somebody who may have the gifts to exercise leadership within our churches, and encourage them? Maybe they're just waiting to be asked...

Fr Alistair

Report: The toll of lockdown on low-income families

Coronavirus has left low-income families struggling with a significant deterioration in living standards and high stress levels. So warns a new report from Child Poverty Action Group and the Church of England.

The report, *Poverty in the pandemic: The impact of coronavirus on low-income families and children*, is based on a survey of families with children who are eligible for free school meals.

It found around eight in 10 respondents reported being in a worse financial position than before the pandemic, and half were much worse off because their income had fallen while costs have risen.

Nearly nine in 10 respondents reported spending substantially more than before on food, electricity, and other essentials – usually because they have been at home much more. Many families also said that the cost of food had gone up significantly during the early part of lockdown.

The Bishop of Durham, Paul Butler, who speaks for the Church of England on matters relating to children and families, said: "In these unprecedented times, we all need to ask ourselves urgently how we can help our neighbour. It is also imperative that the Government does all that it can to protect families and children."

Alison Garnham, Chief Executive of Child Poverty Action Group, said: "Low-income parents have been living under a cloud of anxiety in lockdown - trying to find money for family basics as their costs have been rising. That's taken a very heavy toll."

Church of England and RSCM await next steps following study into singing safety

The Church of England and Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) have been awaiting updated guidance on singing in places of worship after findings of a Government-backed study were published.

The research project, known as 'PERFORM', recently published its findings on measuring aerosol production from humans. It measured singing, speaking and breathing in a zero-background environment.

Researchers reported a steep rise in aerosol mass with increase in the loudness of the singing and speaking, rising by as much as a factor of 20-30. However, it was also found that singing does not produce substantially more aerosol

than speaking at a similar volume.

The RSCM's Director, Hugh Morris said: "We welcome this news. Singing is of such importance in worship, and this is a really encouraging step towards its safe resumption.

"It is of course vital that all choirs and singing groups follow the relevant government advice, and so we look forward to receiving the latest guidance in this important area." The Church of England and RSCM both regularly update their advice following the publication of Government guidance.

Oppressed Christians struggling under Covid-19

Oppression and discrimination against Christians has increased during Covid, says Release International, which has launched an appeal to help Christians suffering during the pandemic.

Many Christians have been denied food and relief aid and excluded from support systems during lockdown. They have been abandoned by families because of their faith and refused relief by governments and NGOs.

At the same time, several countries have stepped up persecution against Christians. One of the worst offenders is China, where Christians have been arrested for simply holding prayer meetings online.

"The situation has got much worse for many Christians during lockdown," says Release International CEO Paul Robinson.

"Covid-19 is having a devastating impact on the lives of many poor Christians. In places hostile to the faith Christians are experiencing increased hardship.

"Food is now in short supply. They are unable to work and can't earn, and support is being withheld because of their faith. Their cries for help are being ignored by local charities who are distributing food packages only to families of other faiths. We can't afford to delay. These Christians need our help."

In **Algeria**, many Christians have had to stop work because of the lockdown, and so lost their income. They have been rejected by society and their families as a result of their faith. There is no social security in the country or government support.

Eritrean Christians fleeing persecution have been barred from refugee camps and are unable to get support from UNHCR. And they refuse to resort to crime to get the money and supplies they need.

In **Pakistan** the situation is especially hard for converts from a Muslim background. The only form of social security is family support, and Muslim families often withdraw support for family members who change their religion.

In several countries, lockdown has led to an increase in persecution.

In Upper **Egypt**, where Christians face discrimination for their faith, some organisations are allegedly refusing food and support to Christian families. Release partners report: "The authorities are helping Muslims but not Christians. And churches that try to help are being closed by police order."

In **China**, Release partners say the government is using the pandemic to step up its crackdown against Christians. They have accelerated campaigns such as the forced demolition of crosses. Pastors have been rounded up for sharing the gospel and distributing facemasks on the street. The authorities have "totally prohibited" online church services and prayer meetings, as "nothing constituting a religious service is allowed."

In **Nigeria**, the lockdown deepened the insecurity facing many Christian villagers, who face attacks by Fulani militia.

Paul Robinson of Release International says: "Right now, it's up to us in the family of faith to give them our support." Partners of Release International are providing food parcels to impoverished Christians in Algeria, Ethiopia, Egypt, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey.

If you can help, go to: www.releaseinternational.org/covid

Churches enjoy Zooming

Most churches who used digital channels during lockdown, in order to keep in touch with their congregations, found that their favourite platform was Zoom.

A recent survey by Ecclesiastical found that Zoom was used by 78 per cent; Skype by 12 per cent, and other platforms, including WhatsApp, by eight per cent.

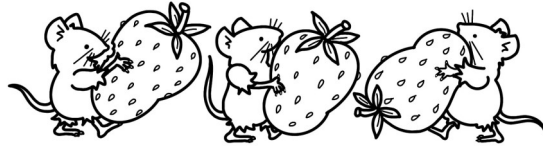
Nearly one third of churches who used digital channels have also reported an increased attendance at their virtual services.

That has led to some 38 per cent of churches saying that they would continue to use digital channels, even now that churches are physically open again.

St Mary's Lunchtime Concerts

The 30th Year of Saturday Lunchtime Concerts at St Mary's!

Due to the coronavirus pandemic there will be no Saturday Lunchtime Concerts until further notice.



St Laurence's Preserves

If you would like to order some St Laurence's jam, marmalade, chutney or other item from the preserves stall, please call Allan on 01753 532425 and he will arrange collection or delivery in line with current Covid-19 regulations.



They knew it was left over from the Harvest Festival, but not what it was, or where...

Remembering Elizabeth Fry, prison reformer

The prison reformer and philanthropist Elizabeth Fry died 175 years ago, on 12th October 1845. She was widely admired during her lifetime and after, and was depicted on the British £5 note between 2001 and 2016.

She was born into the family of a wealthy Quaker banker, John Gurney, in Norwich in 1870. She rededicated her life to Christ at the age of 18 and devoted herself to helping the downtrodden. This she continued to do after her marriage to London merchant Joseph Fry, and while giving birth to 11 children.

She was a minister of the Society of Friends from 1811 and travelled in England and Europe inspecting prisons and writing reports that were highly influential, transforming gaols from "pits of indecency and brutality" to more orderly places with a new interest in reform. She was admired by both Queen Victoria and Florence Nightingale.

Early on she made frequent visits to Newgate Prison in London, suggesting radical improvements that were adopted both there and in other prisons. She read the Bible to inmates and gave Bibles away, combining social work with proclamation of the Gospel in a way that inspired future generations. Her insights also led to the Prison Reform Act of 1823.



Looks like the sexton went to Spain after all, and is still in quarantine.

4th October: St Francis and the Life of Simplicity

Just about the only thing most people know about Francis of Assisi is that he talked to the birds. Church-goers also know the popular hymn based on his famous prayer, 'Make me a channel of your Peace', which was sung at the funeral of Princess Diana.

However, Italy's patron saint, whose feast day is this month (the 4th) was a more complex, and some would say controversial character. His life spanned the end of the 12th and beginning of the 13th centuries. He was born into a very wealthy family, but after what he called his 'conversion' standing before a crucifix he renounced all his possessions. In fact, he stripped himself of his of his wealthy garments in a public square in his hometown, Assisi. For the rest of his life he and his followers, including his feminine counterpart, St Claire longed, prayed and worked for a life of simplicity – a lifestyle without luxury or privileges. For the Franciscan brothers and the Poor Claires. This meant no private possessions at all. Francis saw that many poor people without these things, actually seemed to live happier and more fulfilling lives than the ambitious rich. He spoke of a simple life not shaped by money or power but by love and mutual concern. As his hymn says, 'it is in giving of ourselves that we receive'.

Of course, poverty; in our modern western world is seldom a matter of blissful simplicity, as present-day Franciscans recognise. For too many it is a matter of poor diet, over-crowded rooms, rough sleeping and unemployment. The call of today's followers of Francis and Claire is that those who are better-off should 'live more simply, so that others can simply live'. Christians follow a Master who said that He came with 'good news for the poor'. They believe that many of us today can be that good news.

9th October: Luis Bertran – patron saint of Columbia

Do you want your life to make a difference - for the good – in this world? Then Luis Bertran (1526-81) is the saint for you. This fearless Dominican priest so inspired tens of thousands of people in Latin America that he was chosen as patron of Columbia.

Luis Bertran was born at Valencia in 1526. He joined the Dominican Order in 1544, and was priested in 1547. Bertran started with the most important thing any Christian can do: he became a man of profound prayer. The rest of his ministry was built on this deep personal walk with God.

Luis Bertran was appointed 'novice-master', and right away put his faith into action: he began to reform the priests of his own order. Like a John the Baptist, Bertran preached both the fear and the love of God – urging people towards a

proper repentance and a turning to God in faith and humility.

But Spain was just the beginning for Bertran. In 1562 he was sent on the hazardous journey across the Atlantic to life in a priory in Cartengna, Latin America. Here he spent six years preaching to the Indians in Spanish, by way of a translator. His holiness and love were infectious - tens of thousands of Indians responded to him, and were baptised. He met the same response when he moved on to the Leeward Islands, the Virgin Islands and the Windward Islands.

Perhaps the Indians loved Bertran so much because he did not just preach to them. He was one of the first to openly criticise the cruelty and rapacity of many of the Spanish 'adventurers', whom the Indians both feared and hated.

Back in Spain in 1568, and now 42, Bertran decided it was time for him to concentrate on training other preachers for the missions. Bertran stressed to them the importance of both prayer and of doing good works that matched their own preaching. For this he won wide respect from all around him. By the time he was 54, Bertran was worn out. In 1580 he preached his last sermon in Valencia Cathedral, and then was taken ill, dying a few months later.

Bertran's example of a life of prayer, humility, integrity, reformation, witness and concern for social justice is very much needed today.

NEXT MONTH'S MAGAZINE

Please let me have articles for the November issue by **Sunday 11th October** at the latest!

Dave



Understanding the Bible

As we acknowledge Bible Sunday this month, it's a good opportunity to ask the question: *why should I read the Bible?*

The Bible is the world's best-selling book of all time. However, it isn't one book, but a library of 66 books, composed by some 44 writers over a period of 1500 years in a range of literature including history, poetry, prophecy, letters and apocalyptic (end times). Despite having a number of different writers, the Bible claims one author: God himself!

This is the basis of the unity of its message and authoritative claim to be the primary way by which God speaks to us: *'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work'* (2 Timothy 3:16). The Bible is inspired (*'the word of God in the words of men'*) and presents itself as a **manual for life**, equipping us to live for God in every aspect of our lives. We also have the promise of the Holy Spirit to guide us in applying the words to our lives: *'the Spirit will guide you into all truth'* (John 16:13).

However, the Bible could also be described as a **love letter** from God, as He uses it to deepen our relationship with him. As Jesus said: *'You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me'* (John 5:39,40). Christians follow a person not a book, and the Scriptures are intended to help us to know Jesus better.

At her coronation the Queen was given a Bible with the words *'the most precious thing this world affords'*. Does this reflect our own attitude to the Bible?

Canon Paul Hardingham

Do the Bible and Science contradict each other?

For the Christian, the Bible is God's word to us; it tells us about His character and creative purposes, how He has related to people in the past, and His promises for the future. Science is a specific way of studying the world, exploring the physical properties of things – a wonderful way to explore God's creation. So, the question to ask if the Bible and Science seem to be contradicting each other is, have we made a mistake in interpreting one or the other?

Science is very good at answering certain types of questions: 'What size is it?', 'How fast does it travel?', 'What is it made of?', and so on. Questions like 'What's it for?', 'What should I do with it?', and 'What's it worth?' can't be answered using scientific methods. Some of the misunderstanding in discussions of science and religion come from not recognising the limits of science.

It's also important to recognise what the Bible is, and what sorts of questions it can answer. The Bible was written well before people began to investigate the world in ways we would recognise as scientific. Of course, people in the Ancient Near East were studying the world around them, observing the movements of the stars, the processes of life and death that happened all around them, the seasons, the behaviour of physical objects, and so on. But they did not study the mechanisms underlying these things systematically using the tools of science, and they did not see or describe the world in scientific terms – not because they weren't intelligent, but because science as we know it wasn't happening at that time.

Instead, the biblical writers used words that were commonly used in their own cultures to record events, share truth and wisdom, and tell stories that convey deep truth about God's character. If we want to understand God's intention in inspiring these words, we need to do some careful work to connect with those ancient writers and find out what they meant, before we can discover what those words mean to us today.

These principles can help us have far more fruitful conversations about science and Christian faith. If we allow any apparent conflict between Science and the Bible to fuel our search for understanding, not only will we learn as individuals, but we will be able to draw others into a conversation that is relevant to wider society today.

Dr Ruth M Bancewicz

RSPCA launches emergency appeal in wake of Covid

The RSPCA has been overwhelmed this year by calls for help from people who are ill with Covid-19.

The animal welfare charity was swamped with 442,344 calls, and responded to 106,676 incidents of animals in need just between 24th March and 5th August. That averaged out at 790 incidents a day.

Such a volume of need was especially a challenge to meet, as the charity was working with fewer officers, due to ‘furlough, shielding and ill health’, a spokesman explained.

He went on: “As well as operating an emergency service, rescuing animals in need, RSPCA officers have also been collecting animals from the homes of people who have been admitted to hospital with Covid-19, who may not have anyone else to care for them while their owners are being treated.”

The charity has now launched an emergency fund-raising appeal, and said that its front-line animal rescue and care teams have been “stretched to their limit”. With about 6,400 animals in the care of the RSPCA across England and Wales, it is the largest animal welfare charity in the UK.

Shops dreaming of an early Christmas this year

Christmas should start with October’s half-term this year, rather than in November. Christmas lights could be switched on, and shoppers (hopefully) enticed back to the shops.

So say many retailers, as they struggle to recover from the pandemic. An executive with the New West End Company in London explains: “If we can bring the start of Christmas early, it will make it easier for people to spread their spending.”

Making ‘Christmas come early’ may have another advantage. Traders argue that having more weeks of Christmas shopping will ensure a more steady flow of visitors, which will make social distancing easier.

Meanwhile, shopping remains in the doldrums. In some parts of the country, numbers of shoppers are still 63 per cent down on last year. Shopping in the West End has been at only 37 per cent of the normal level.



Beware what lurks in the church vestry...

The Rectory
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren

I am unsurprised that the cleaning lady took exception to you dismantling your motorbike in the church vestry. Clergy vestries are the final repositories of rotting hymn books, ancient cassocks with a certain aroma, buckets with holes in, which are kept “just in case” and dead animals in various states of decomposition; but they are no place for bike chains, disc brakes and inner tubes.

I will concede that vestries seem to attract all those objects no one quite knows what to do with, but which parishioners can’t bear to throw away. Flower arrangers creep into my vestry, looking for space for boxes of twine. Decorators arrive with cribs and Easter gardens they are hoping to store. And even the choirmaster occasionally sidles in, trying to slip some anthems past me. I repel them all with vigour, and a firm broom.

One thing I can’t keep out of the vestry are the portraits of all my predecessors, who stare down at me reproachfully. The most recent, in colour, stare smugly, knowing that I am still being compared to them, and falling short. Earlier incumbents, in black and white, look mildly reproachful, reminding me that *they* all held doctorates from Oxford. The hand-drawn portraits from pre-1870 are the worst – they all look as if they drank vinegar for breakfast and argued Pelagianism over lunch, just for fun.

I am already rehearsing my own look of pained forgiveness for my leaving photo that will stare down on my own successor, and perpetually irritate him

It also seems to be a tradition that retiring clergy donate their robes for their successors, probably because it spares them a walk to the dustbin. So, a five-foot, 18 stone incumbent will leave a cassock for his six-foot, ten stone successor. There will also be a spare 1960s nylon surplice hanging on the back of the vestry door, to remind you that should you ever forget your own, then this is the horror you will be obliged to wear throughout Evensong.

Notices on the walls will tell you that marriage fees in the 1920s were seven shillings and sixpence, that Communion wine can be obtained from a shop that closed down a generation ago and there will be a copy of the prayer of thanksgiving to be used on the Relief of Mafeking.

My only advice is to remove your bike before it gets bundled up with the Scouts' tents – and lost forever in the churchwarden's shed.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace



...I've moved with the times - I've now got a solar-powered radio microphone...

GOD
is our
refuge
and
STRENGTH
a very present
help in trouble
therefore we will not fear.

Psalm 46:1

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Matthew 24:44-51, Luke 12:40-46

Jesus warned his disciples to be always ready for his return at the end of time by telling the story of two servants

The good servant

While I am away, I am putting you in charge of the food

My master could be away a long time; I will work as if he was here.

When the servants came for their food, he had it ready

He made sure everyone got their full amount every day

Then his master came back

I am putting you in charge of everything I have

Well done!

The bad servant

While I am away, I am putting you in charge of the food

My master could be away a long time; I can do what I want!

When the servants came for their food, he chased them away!

He had friends come round, and they ate and drank as much as they liked.

Then his master came back

Jesus said

This is the difference between those who follow me and those who only say they do.

and punished him.

The tale of the RICH FOOL



JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS

ONE STORY WAS ABOUT A MAN WHO HAD LOTS OF LAND WHICH GREW WONDERFUL WHEAT.

I HAVEN'T ANYWHERE TO KEEP ALL THIS FOOD

I KNOW! I'LL PULL DOWN MY BARN AND BUILD BIGGER ONES

THE MAN DEMOLISHED HIS OLD BARN...

...AND BEGAN TO BUILD NEW ONES.

SOON I'LL BE THE RICHEST MAN IN THE TOWN!

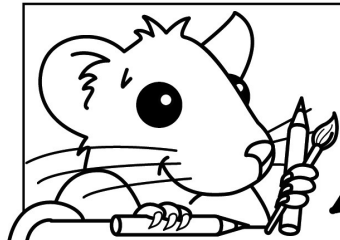
I'M SO LUCKY - I CAN EAT, DRINK AND BE MERRY!

BUT THAT VERY NIGHT, THE MAN DIED!

WHAT GOOD WERE HIS RICHES NOW?

JESUS EXPLAINED - IT'S NOT YOUR WEALTH THAT MATTERS, IT'S HOW YOU LIVE YOUR LIFE THAT'S IMPORTANT

CHILDREN'S PAGE



Mouse Makes

"GOD is the one who gives seed to those who **plant**, and He gives **bread** for **food**. And GOD will give you spiritual seed and make that seed grow. He will **produce** a great **harvest** from your goodness."

2 Corinthians 9:10

Jesus said:
"The kingdom of heaven is like a _____ **seed** that a man took and sowed in his **field**. It is the _____ of all the seeds, but when it has grown it becomes a tree, so that the wild _____ come and nest in its branches."

Read
Matthew
13:31-32

Jesus said:
"You do not need more **faith**. There is no 'more' or 'less' in faith. If you have a bare kernel of faith, say the size of a poppy seed, you could say to this sycamore tree

"Go jump into the lake" and it would do it!"
Luke 17:6

So the one who plants is not important, and the one who **waters** is not important. Only **GOD** is important because He is the one who makes things grow."

1 Corinthians 3:7

Find the words in **bold** on this page in the word search

H A R V E S T W O E S
F I A F T P L A N T B
O F A I T H A T E E R
O O J E S U S E E D E
D E U L O U G R O W A
P R O D U C E S G O D

Look out for seeds in the park and garden and in your kitchen store cupboard.



How many different seeds can you find?

Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

UPTON-CUM-CHALVEY / LANGLEY BRANCH PROGRAMME

All are open meetings and are joint meetings unless otherwise stated

2020 Theme: "Building with Confidence"

Meetings with a talk, either:

Third Wednesday of the month at St Laurence's Upton. Coffee and chat at 10.15am. A short service at 10.45am. Talk at 11.00am followed by a light lunch.

OR

Third Monday of the month at St Mary's Church Centre, Langley, 2.00pm

First Tuesday of the month: 2.30-4.00pm "Mulling It Over": Tea, Study and Prayer Group led by Revd Linda Hillier (see notice sheet for venues), open to all.

Second Thursday of the month at St Laurence's: 10.00am Mothers' Union Corporate Communion

Due to the coronavirus pandemic there will be no meetings until further notice.

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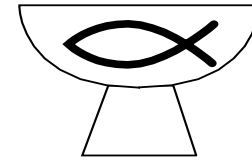
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Parish of Upton-cum-Chalvey

The Anglican parish of Upton-cum-Chalvey includes St Mary's, St Laurence's and St Peter's churches.

Revd Alistair Stewart (Team Vicar)	01753 520725
Revd Linda Hillier (Associate Minister)	0208 8645728
Rob Walker (Licensed Lay Minister)	
Parish Churchwarden: Andrea Sparrow	07446 187762
Parish Churchwarden:	
District Churchwarden (SM): Jean Smith	01753 862357
District Churchwarden (SM): Derek White-Taylor	Ex-dir
District Churchwarden (SL): David Kill	01628 776856
District Churchwarden (SL): Albert Lawrance	01753 523222
District Churchwarden (SP): Eddie Ijeomah	01753 857923
District Churchwarden (SP): Peter Clarke	07464 718909
Verger (SL): Allan James	01753 532425
Organist (SM): Malcolm Stowell	01628 660651
Mothers' Union: Julie James	01753 532425

Clergy days off:

Revd Alistair Stewart Tuesday

Magazine Editor: David Kill

Tel: 01628 776856 E-mail: david.kill@btinternet.com

Web-sites:

<https://stmarys-slough.org.uk/>

www.saint-laurence.com

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