

"Some sort of periodical is an essential life-line in a village such as ours"

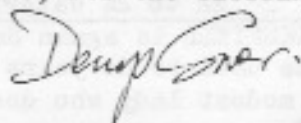
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SHALL WE CANCEL CHRISTMAS?

A Puritan named Hezekiah Woodward in 1647 described Christmas thus, "The good heathen's feasting day, the profane man's ranting day, the superstitious man's idol day & Satan's working day". No, I've never heard of him either, but there is something in his observation that still holds true in our time. The temptation to over-indulge in food and drink in this most affluent part of God's world hits its high point at this time of the year. And those many people who use our Lord's name as a swear word will do so on Christmas Day without too much reflection on the baby in the manger. Christmas has also collected its fair share of idols over the years and we have learned to venerate red nosed reindeers, Dickensian characters and fat old men in red dressing gowns along with the Heavenly choirs! Old Hezekiah was right too about Old Nick, Satan, The Devil, the powers of darkness, whatever name we call evil. Christmas or New Year, somewhere in God's world it seems, someone is plotting some deed to hurt or destroy that which is good, wholesome or beautiful.

So, shall we take a leaf out of Oliver Cromwell's book and cancel Christmas? No, we can't do that. Not because the services have been arranged and the turkey ordered but because we can not cancel out the Christ Child. He will survive the greed, the profanity, the idol worship of the world and even the powers of evil will never destroy His name. So, peace to you and yours this Christmastide, say a prayer for those who will be lonely or sad and give thanks, if you are able, for the blessing of friends,



CAROL SINGING

The carol singing pub crawl, led by Lesley Cushing and Val Barnwell, will be on Wednesday, 16 December, starting at 7.30 at the Tickled Trout, thence via the Good Intent to the White House. A nice idea has been suggested that the singers should perform outside Frances's bedroom window on their way round. She will enjoy that. Everybody welcome. Collection for Demelza House Children's Hospice.

TOGETHER WE WIN

With tremendous energy the parishoners of West Farleigh have got together to raise funds to pay for the new organ in the church. In addition to the annual Christmas Fair at Smith's Hall, events unique in village history have taken place. There have been two quizzes at the White House and a boot fair on the River Field, but the event to cap them all was a supper and auction of promises at Tutsham on 21 Nov. which raised over £3,000. Not all the events raised as much as this but they all took a lot of organising and gave a lot of pleasure to a lot of people. The last quiz at the White House, for instance, on 13 Nov. raised a good £130 with John Chapman as MC, Si as Quizmaster Extraordinaire and Gill's computerised scrutineering, all shepherded and overseen by Val Barnwell. The Christmas Fair, which Jane Stewart has made her very own, brought in about £4,00 and attracted a lot of newcomers to this village event and we hope they liked us well enough to come back for more on other occasions. The cake stall deserves special mention, having been supported by all the notable cooks in the village who contributed £140 towards the total - with the help of all the sweet toothed folk who bought the cakes. We were grateful to Stephen & Sandra Norman for the loan of their house. Similar grateful thanks are due to John & Sue Day for the barn where the auction was held and the many good folk who contributed the many items to bid for which were presented brilliantly and humorously by David Benson. He it was who coaxed so much cash out of the generous pockets of those present, ably assisted by the free flow of red wine after a supper skilfully prepared, served and cleared away by a willing team of happy workers. We've still £3,000 to find before the organ debts are paid off, so don't let us get complacent although we have done so well so far.

JAN & ARTHUR MORRIS have helped to raise a total of £356 for the Organ Fund by hosting 2 quiz evenings & holding 4 Pick-a-Diocese draws. They provided free food at quiz nights - generous drumsticks, sandwiches etc. Thank you both very much.

SPORTS REPORT

Both teams have had another mixed bag of results this month, some very good and some very bad, a manager's nightmare. 1st team's games were Kensing (7-Oaks Cup) lost 5 - 1, losing again 3 - 1 in the league away to The Rose. Then we were due to play Cherry Tree at home but amazingly the referee deemed the pitch a health hazard due to the sheep droppings. The first time in our history that this has happened. Could anything cap that? Well, the following week we nearly did, playing away in the Cup to old rivals Ulcombe produced a crazy scoreline by winning 14 - 0! One of the biggest winning margins I can remember.

2nd XI games were a defeat away to Risers (Ben Cup) 4 - 1 then an encouraging 2 - 1 victory at home v Headcorn Res (Kent Junior Cup), a narrow 3 - 2 league defeat away to Safeway Res and finally an excellent performance v 2nd place Larkfield, drawing 2 - 2.

Many thanks to all those who supported our recent Race Night. It was very successful and, depending on how much you won or lost, very enjoyable.

Our Christmas Draw will be on Friday, 18 Dec at Farleigh Bull. Everybody welcome. I have some tickets if you would like some. Our Club Barn Dance will be on Saturday, 9 Jan. If you would like to come, please let me know.

Happy Christmas to my reader(s).

Be in touch. Cheers, Tel

SERVICES FOR DECEMBER
IN ALL THREE CHURCHESWest Farleigh

Dec	6	0800	HC Bk of Common Prayer
	13	10.45	Coffee in church
		1115	Family Service with Campaigners
	20	0930	HC Alt Service Book
		1530	Carol Service
	24	2330	Midnight Mass
	25	1000	Family Service
	27	10.45	Coffee in Church
		1115	Family Service Helen Swan

Teston

Dec	3	0930	HC Alt Service Book
	6	09.45	Family Service
	10	0930	HC Alt Service Book
	13	0800	HC Book Common Prayer
		1830	Nativity
	17	0930	HC Alt Service Book
	20	09.45	Children's Church
		1830	Lessons & Carols
	24	1530	Blessing of the Crib
	25	09.45	Family Communion

Wateringbury

Dec	6	0930	Morning Prayer
	13	0930	HC Alt Service Book
	14	1800	School Carol Service
	17	2000	Lessons & Carols
	20	0800	HC Book Common Prayer
		1115	Nativity
	24	1100	Blessing of Crib
		2130	HC Book Common Prayer
	25	1030	Family & Toy Service Alastair Byron
	27	0930	HC Alt Service Book Rev, Christine Haydon

Morning Prayer Tues to Fri 0830

1 to 4	Dec Wateringbury
8 to 11	Teston
15 to 18	West Farleigh
22 to 24	Wateringbury

COME AND SEE the Nativity story from a different point of view. What did the animals in the stable in Bethlehem think? The Campaigners will be performing a musical Nativity, "The Animals' Story" on Sunday, 13 December 10.45 for 11.15. Come and support them.

THE EVERGREENS Christmas lunch is at the Tickled Trout 12.30 for 1pm on Tuesday, 8 December. If you would like to come but have not given your name to Helen or Stuart, please ring Helen on 814445. The Evergreens send Christmas greetings and thanks to all who have hosted meetings. If you too would like to host an occasional meeting, please phone Helen.

BABY & TODDLER GROUP meet in the church 1.30 to 3.00 on Wednesdays. The meeting on the 16th will have a Christmas flavour but no meetings on 22nd or 29th.

RECTOR'S & CHURCHWARDENS' SHERRY PARTY Fri, 1st Jan, Teston Village Hall. All welcome. Join us for a drink & good company 11am - 1pm.

PIPPA WAKEFIELD is again Secretary of the PCC, a job she used to do years ago. Thanks are due to this modest lady who does so much with so little fuss.

THE NEW BUS SERVICE from West Farleigh to Coxheath & East Farleigh via Dean Street will leave the Good Intent at 10am, 11.56am & 2.03pm on Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays, returning at appropriate times. Good news indeed.

THE PRESENTATION about the proposed Maidstone River Park, postponed from 24 August is due to be given in the church on Monday, 7th December at 7pm. It is open to all and will be followed by a normal Parish Council meeting.

WE, AS A PARISH, support the following charities - British Legion, Agricultural Benevolent Soc, Heart of Kent Hospice, Demelza House, Harare Appeal, Church Urban Fund, King George V Fund for Sailors. If you have any other suggestions, please tell the Rector.

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS & A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR TO ALL LIFE LINE READERS