

Alpheton Parish News

digital edition



November 2020

CHURCH OF ST PETER AND ST PAUL, ALPHETON

NOVEMBER 2020

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SERVICES

Sunday 1 Nov	10.30am	Holy Trinity	Livestream Holy Communion
Sunday 1 Nov	6.30pm	Holy Trinity	All Souls service
Wed 4 Nov	10.30am	Alpheton	Midweek communion
Sunday 8 Nov	10.50am	Holy Trinity	Livestream Remembrance
Wed 11 Nov	10.30am	Shimpling	Remembrance service
Sunday 15 Nov	10.30am	Holy Trinity	Livestream Holy Communion
Wed 18 Nov	10.30am	Holy Trinity	Midweek communion
Sunday 22 Nov	10.30am	Holy Trinity	Livestream Holy Communion
Wed 25 Nov	10.30am	Holy Trinity	Midweek communion
Sunday 29 Nov	10.30am	Holy Trinity	Livestream Holy Communion

Livestreaming our service

1. Go to the Melford Church website: www.longmelfordchurch.com
2. Scroll down to the Facebook box on the front page
3. Click on the words 'Holy Trinity Church' at the top of this box
4. Once in our Facebook page scroll down a little to see the service

Phone in service

If you do not have an internet connection you can phone in on an 0333 number which should be free if you have free calls (free weekend calls), or you are within your free minutes' limit on a phone contract (please check).

Dial 0333 0110 946, 'Room' number: 20966931#, Guest PIN: 5252#

Services may be subject to change in light of the situation with Coronavirus.

*Check the websites for any changes. **www.longmelfordchurch.com***

From the Rector

Living in the present

“What are you going to be when you grow up?”. I sometimes feel sorry for children because this question can be asked at nearly every family gathering. Whereas from time to time a child has a sense of vocation from an early age, for many the question can add an unnecessary pressure! Indeed, which of any of us really know what we will be doing in a year’s time, let alone in a couple of decades, or even tomorrow.

But it is true that in general children do tend to look ahead to the future. Maybe this is one reason they are instinctively more concerned about the environment. I suspect we have also met adults who are always looking ahead, pressing on for the next goal or achievement, draining the energy from those around them who are less goal oriented.

But there are also those people who tend to focus on the past. I’ve met people like this working on preserved railways lines; perhaps they are nostalgic for a time when life appeared to be better or simpler (though I am not always sure that it was). As we mature we cannot help but interpret the present in the context of all our life’s experience, but maybe we risk losing some of our ability to embrace the uncertain future with a sense of excitement. “There is nothing new under the sun,” the writer of Ecclesiastes lamented 3000 years ago.

But there is also the gift of being able to enjoy the present, and to savour the many blessings each day brings. In truth we need a balance of all three perspectives. I reflect that Jesus was able to draw on his Jewish heritage to guide and inform him of his role in life, and he was clearly task orientated as to his purpose on earth and his heavenly calling, but I feel he was very much able to live in the present and was all the more alive because of it.

This year we are reflecting on what life was like ‘pre-Covid’, and there is uncertainty as to what life will be like ‘post-Covid’. Perhaps this is a good year to practise living in the blessings of today.

Rev. Matthew Lawson

Welcoming Rev Judith Offord



We are delighted to announce that Rev Judith Offord has been appointed as a Curate to the churches in Alpheton, Long Melford and Shimpling.

Judith, originally from Nottingham, has been living in Suffolk for many years and knows the area well.

Judith, who is self-supporting, will be working with us for the next two years on a part-time basis, and I pray we will be able to receive from her, and she from us.

ALPHETON PULLS TOGETHER TO CLEAR ROAD BLOCKED BY FALLEN TREE



During high winds on the afternoon of 25 September, the major part of a substantial willow tree fell close to the village hall, completely blocking the Old Bury Road.

Within minutes, two dozen volunteers, wielding between them no fewer than five chainsaws, were hard at work cutting, dragging, sweeping and clearing. A huge village effort ensured that within only 40 minutes the road was once again completely passable.



A huge thank you to the whole arboricultural team who got the village back to normal so swiftly.

Farewell Ken Watkins

Ken has been actively involved in the village for over 20 years. On October 8, during his last service in church (where we got him to do a reading), on behalf of the community we presented him with a card, a collection of photographs and painted images from Alpheton, and a garden centre voucher. We wish Ken and Judy all the very best in Wales – Alpheton's loss is Wales' gain.

May we also thank Ken for all his work on the magazine. For the moment it has to be distributed only online, but we very much hope that it will soon again be distributed in print too.

A reminder that if you would like to consider being the editor of the magazine, please contact the Rector on 01787 310 845.

Happy memories

My thanks to all those who gave me a surprise, but lovely, send off at the October midweek communion service at St Peter and St Paul. Thank you to everyone for their generous words and wishes in the card. I will treasure the album. Judy and I take away many happy memories of our 21 years in Alpheton, a lovely community.

Ken Watkins

Events off

Because of the COVID-19 epidemic, regular monthly events at Alpheton village hall, including the WI and Film Night, have been cancelled until further notice.

Remembrance

This year the Remembrance service will be at Shimpling church on November 11 at 10.30am. There is plenty of room in the church for people to sit in a socially distance manner; please do bring a mask.

Some of you may be considering attending the service at Holy Trinity in Long Melford at 10.50am on Sunday 8 November. We are still at the planning stage for this. It is probable that there will be an invitation system in place so please don't turn up without checking first. However the service will be livestreamed.

Christmas 2020 — outdoor carols

We need to plan for Christmas, even though things are a bit uncertain. We are planning an outdoor carol service, which is likely to be held outside the church (with the generous support of Alpheton Hall Barns) on Sunday 20 December at 6.30pm.

As part of the ceremony we plan to light up the tree on the Green and remember those who are no longer with us. Because we will be outside we should all be able to sing carols in a socially distanced way, so let's hope we can come together in this way. Wrap up well.

Livestream Service Instructions

Some people have felt unable to join the livestream service because they assumed they need to have a Facebook account. However, you do not need a Facebook account to follow the livestream.

1. Just google "Holy Trinity Long Melford Facebook"
2. Click on the top link which takes you to the Holy Trinity Facebook Page.
3. Scroll down a bit and you should find the service.

HEROES OF THE FAITH

GEORGE MÜLLER

Rev. Matthew Lawson writes:

I am reading a series on heroes of faith. I thought I'd share this one. It is written by J. John, Reverend Canon. www.canonjjohn.com, and is reproduced with permission.

One of the fascinating things about Christianity is how very different the great men and women of God are. George Müller (1805–1898) was not just different, he was unique.

Müller was born in the then Kingdom of Prussia (now Germany). He grew up into a young man who was frequently involved in petty crime, often to do with what we would call 'scams' and even a time in jail did nothing to reform him. However, in 1825 Müller attended a prayer meeting in someone's home where he encountered Christ.

With his life dramatically transformed, Müller felt called to mission work and ended up in London working amongst Jews. An illness led to him going to Devon to recover his health and that began life and ministry in the West Country. It became evident that he was gifted as a preacher and an evangelist, and he became the minister of a chapel.

Soon he and his wife moved to Bristol. There he became involved in creating Christian schools and supporting missionaries. Müller established 117 schools which offered Christian education to tens of thousands of children, and he continued to support a great number of missionaries throughout his life.

Müller is, however, remembered above all for his extraordinary achievements with orphans. In the Britain of the early 19th century the combination of large families, extreme poverty and a high level of adult mortality had resulted in many orphans, most of whom ended up on the street.

The state ignored them and in 1836 Müller and his wife began taking in orphans. Their work grew in an astonishing way, and they built a home for 300 children. Soon, however, even that was not enough, and more buildings followed in Bristol so that by 1870, 1,700 children were housed in five purpose-built homes with a total of 500 rooms.

By the end of Müller's life, his homes had housed 10,000 orphaned children. Müller's commitment was not simply to house children but to clothe, feed and educate them and ultimately, where possible, to find them jobs.

This achievement alone would justify Müller's hero status, but what is astonishing is that in doing what he did he never made requests for financial support. He simply prayed that God would supply all his needs and left it to him to supply them. Extraordinarily, God did just that regularly and for decades.

Müller was a meticulous administrator and his detailed accounts reveal that in his lifetime he received £1.5 million pounds in money and gifts; a figure that today would be over £100 million.

Always astonishingly generous, he refused donations for his own well-being and died in near poverty. These figures disguise an astonishing reality. There are many well-attested accounts of how, when he and his staff seemed to be on the point of running out of either food or money, last-minute unsolicited donations or gifts arrived. On one occasion Müller found himself with 300 orphans assembled for breakfast and no food at all. He simply sat them down at the table and confidently said grace.

At this point, a knock at the door occurred. It was a local baker who had woken up at 2 o'clock in the morning with a feeling that he needed to bake more bread than usual and take it to the orphanage. Shortly afterwards a milkman arrived to say that his wagon had broken down outside the orphanage and he wanted to offer his milk to the children. Over the decades, Müller's ever-expanding work often ran on a hand-to-mouth basis, but it never ran into debt.

With time Müller prayed for someone to succeed him as a manager and, having found him, handed over the reins in 1875. He then began 17 years of missionary work across the world in which he travelled over 200,000 miles teaching and preaching. Müller's funeral in 1898 brought Bristol to a

standstill with tens of thousands of people standing along the route. In a different form, his work continues today with the George Müller Charitable Trust.

Müller is a challenging figure in a number of areas but the most spectacular one is how he found funding for his work without openly asking for it. It's a strategy that many Christians have grappled with. Two things must be said.

First, Müller was a unique individual and this was a personal decision: he never set this out as a model for other Christian workers. He felt that this was what God wanted for him and that it would demonstrate that a miracle-working God still existed. It may also have involved an utter rejection of his pre-conversion tendency to raise money through fraud.

We are all led by God in different ways; St Paul, for instance, is open in asking for money to support Christians in Jerusalem (see 1 Corinthians 16:1–4; 2 Corinthians 8:1–9:15; Romans 15:25–31). Personally, I am in awe of Müller's decision (and must admit my faith is hugely challenged), but like St Paul I have mentioned the financial needs of my own ministry.

I am reminded of my favourite George Müller quote: 'Faith does not operate in the realm of the possible. There is no glory for God in that which is humanly possible. Faith begins where man's power ends.' Indeed that was true then and continues to be true today.

Yet there are other areas of Müller's life that are challenging. His prayer life was astonishing, and he had an extraordinarily deep relationship with God. Fundamental to this was how, despite running an enormous and complex charitable enterprise, he made sure that time with God came first.

It's hard to not be impressed by the way that Müller's faith gave him breathtaking audacity in what he planned and achieved. Most of us would have been daunted by a goal of housing a hundred orphans, let alone a hundred times that.

Finally, Müller was committed to both preaching the gospel and doing good deeds. He clearly felt no tension between sharing the good news of Jesus and working to care for orphans.

George Müller's unique life demonstrated to his contemporaries that God could be trusted. It says the same to us today.

You are welcome to join our livestream services every Sunday at 10.30am

Directions:

1. Google the five words "Holy Trinity Long Melford Facebook".
2. Click on the top link which takes you to the Holy Trinity Facebook page.
3. Scroll down a bit ... service should be there.
4. Note that you do not need to join Facebook, and you can watch the service later.



Welcome back

**The Church of St Peter and St Paul, Alpheton
is now open for prayer**



Please note that the church is currently open for individual prayer, and we hope to be open more generally soon. If you visit the church for individual prayer, please observe these basic rules for keeping everyone safe:

- Please clean your hands thoroughly using the hand sanitiser provided before going in, and take a wipe with you into the church.
- Keep the wipe with you in the church and wipe any surfaces you touch.
- Please keep a safe distance (2m) from people other than your own household.
- Please avoid touching any books or other loose objects.
- When leaving, please use the hand-sanitiser to clean your hands and take your used wipe with you and dispose of it at home.
- Please close the inner door to keep birds out, but leave the porch door open.

Thank you – it is wonderful to have this special place open again.

*God bless you, and thank you for ensuring that both you
and other visitors stay safe.*

Simple midweek communion services are planned for Alpheton, Long Melford and Shimpling in November, with the service in Alpheton on
Wednesday 4 November at 10.30am



Children at Church

There is still plenty going on during lockdown:
Crafts, videos, stories, Zoom meetings, teaching ...
silliness.



For more information please contact our family
worker Pam: melfordfamilyworker@gmail.com,
07890 880 976 ...

... or ask to be invited to our 'Children at Church'
Facebook Page.

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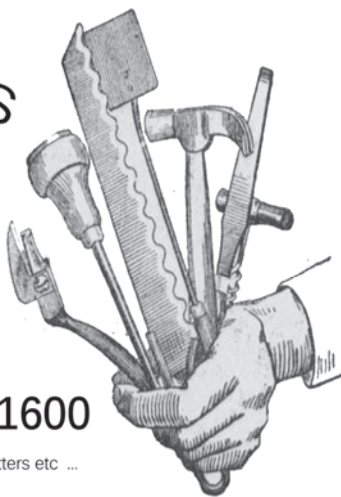
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Weekly events at the Village Hall

All events subject to cancellation following government COVID-19 advice

Second Tuesday of the month: WI, 7.30pm (*Spring and Summer*)

Third Tuesday of the month: Film Night, 7.30pm

Last Tuesday of the month: Coffee Pot from 10.30am

Last Friday of the month: Craft and Social session, 2.00pm (not Dec)
Alphie's Bar, 8.00pm

Mobile Library:

Thursday every four weeks (next visit November 19)

11.35-11.55 opposite the Village Hall

12.00-12.15 Post Box near Church Lane



Village Hall Bookings

The Village Hall, which has a licensed bar, will again be available for rental when all necessary precautions against Covid-19 have been carried out.



Advertisements

Commercial Ads (*up to half a page*): £3.50 per month or £35 per annum

Domestic small Ads £0.85 per month

Alpheton Parish News is published by Alpheton and Shimplingthorne Parochial Church Council, *Editor Emeritus* Mrs Paddy Trevelyan. The PCC reserves the right to alter or refuse any item submitted for publication and cannot be held responsible for the accuracy of any claims made by any advertiser. Articles submitted do not necessarily represent the view of the publisher.



COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

Please email copy by November 12 to

Rev Matthew Lawson: revmattis@gmail.com

copy received after the deadline will be held until the next issue

Artwork for the front cover is always welcome

Please ensure that any graphics are emailed as hi-res Jpegs or PDFs

Camera-ready artwork should be hi-res: portrait for full page, landscape for half page



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

during November 2020

NB: All regular social events at the village hall are suspended until further notice in view of the current COVID-19 epidemic. They will return once government advice changes to allow them to resume.

Sunday 1 Nov	Livestream Communion, Holy Trinity, 10.30am
Sunday 1 Nov	All Souls service, Holy Trinity, 6.30pm
Wed 4 Nov	Midweek Communion, Alpheton Church, 10.30am
Sunday 8 Nov	Remembrance livestream, Holy Trinity, 10.50am
Wed 11 Nov	Remembrance service, Shimpling, 10.30am
Sunday 15 Nov	Livestream Communion, Holy Trinity, 10.30am
Sunday 22 Nov	Livestream Communion, Holy Trinity, 10.30am
Sunday 29 Nov	Livestream Communion, Holy Trinity, 10.30am



Further ahead

We look forward to regular events returning once government advice changes to allow them to resume.



Message from the Editor

In view of the current restrictions, and as a safety precaution for everyone involved in the normal production and delivery of the Parish magazine, this edition is coming to you online, rather than through your letter box.

It is appearing on both the Alpheton village website, and the St Peter and St Paul website, and will continue to do so until circumstances change.

Stay safe, and take care.

Cover artwork: Julie Rix