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THURSDAY 14 SEPT	10.00 am	Midweek Communion
SUNDAY 17 SEPT	11.15 am	Holy Communion
SUNDAY 24 SEPT	11.00 am	Café Church
THURSDAY 28 SEPT	10.00 am	Midweek Communion

SUNDAY 1 OCT	11.15 am	All-Age Worship
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PARISH MAGAZINE
SEPTEMBER 2023

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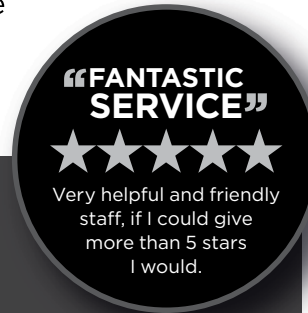
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The Rector writes



Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light." Matthew 11:28-30 (NLT)

When I was born, there were four channels on the television, and you had to settle for whatever was on at the time – usually something brilliant like *Gladiators* or *Bucky O'Hare*. Today, my children will ask for a specific episode, of a specific series, of whichever show they are watching at the time. My job is to navigate the maze of Amazon Prime and find it. Don't get me wrong... I love my children, but sometimes all the choice is exhausting.

Life can often feel busy and full of choices. There is a lot of pressure to have things and to make right decisions. We are given so many options, encouraged to be whatever we want to be and, these days in particular, often encouraged to question fundamental things. Can it sometimes feel more exhausting than liberating? How often do we have a chance to slow down?

Christ's words offer peace to all who feel the burdens of this life. It is an invitation to follow him, to know him and receive from him. How does Christ offer us peace? He offers us peace by giving us the knowledge of who we are: people made by God, for God, loved by God. We do not need to invent ourselves and our lives are full of meaning.

He offers us peace by showing us the good way to live. As our creator, he knows what it means to be human – and in his human life showed us how to love.

He offers us peace by assuring us that, in his name, we are forgiven and part of his family. In him, there is peace for our mistakes, healing for our hearts and love to be given and received as one of his people.

He offers us peace by bringing us hope, that not everything hinges on this life, but just as he lives in everlasting life, so shall we.

If you would like to find out more about Jesus, please do join us for Christianity Explored in September. Christianity Explored is a seven-week course, looking at the life of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark. You'll find an advert for Christianity Explored on the inside back cover of the magazine, or you can find out details on our website and how to sign up.

Another way to find out more about Jesus is to join us at church. While our church services vary in style, they are all an opportunity to stop, reflect and consider the peace Jesus has to offer. We'd love to see you.

God bless, Revd Ben

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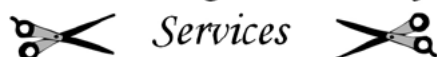
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DADS & TOTS



Join us once a month on a Saturday morning for **Dads and Tots**. This group is for Dads/Grandads and their children/grandchildren aged 0-4 years of age.

Dads and Tots is an opportunity to spend time with your children, get to know other dads and enjoy unlimited coffee/tea and some breakfast. There will be snacks for the children and bacon/sausage sandwiches for dads.

Sessions run from 9-10:30am on a Saturday morning in St Bartholomew's.

**Next sessions: 23 September 21 October
25 November 16 December**

We ask for a donation of £2 per adult and 50p per child.

To find out more, please contact our Vicar, Ben (see page 3 for details).

CHELWOOD GATE AND DANEHILL VILLAGE MARKET

**Saturday 16 September 10am-2pm
Beaconsfield Road, Chelwood Gate RH17 7LE**

Join us for the next Village Market – there will be a wide range of stallholders selling a variety of delicious produce, all locally sourced, and others selling interesting and unusual gifts. Hot rolls, tea and coffee available from the cafe. The Tombola is always popular with the children; every ticket wins a prize and proceeds are donated to our local youth charities TNT and ICE.

PLUS – a firefighting crew will be joining us with their engine, and will be available to chat about their work.

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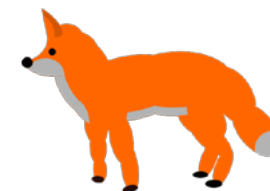
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Maresfield Lunch Club

The next Village Lunch will be in the Village Hall on

Thursday 7th September 12.30pm

**It would be very helpful if anyone interested in joining us would let
us know in advance, to give us an idea of how many to cater for.**

**Ring Pat on 01825 769644 or email plangridge69@gmail.com
to book your place.**



Civic Centre Uckfield

The ELO Encounter

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Sat 28 October - Tickets £25

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Maresfield Conservation Group

On the first Saturday of July around 35 of us enjoyed a lovely evening in Ann Thompson's garden at Newnham Cottage. The garden looked splendid as ever and was a perfect setting for our cheese and wine evening.

A small army of MCG members have embarked on delivering leaflets through everyone's letterboxes in the village drawing attention to the Planning Appeal in relation to Downland Farm. Hopefully many of you will have taken time out to lodge your objections. It is so important that we all do what we can.

Many of you will have received a letter from East Sussex Highways advising you of their plans to repair the bridge on Underhill. We were somewhat concerned to read that they intended damming Shortbridge as part of their repair procedures. We have written to ESCC seeking clarification and asking for assurances that no damage will be inflicted on this delicate ecosystem.

At the last AGM we formally appointed Terence Brady as our new Treasurer. Following on in the footsteps of his predecessors he is keen to raise funds for the MCG and its causes. Once such initiative has been enrolling the MCG in the Wealden lottery. Full details can be found at <https://www.wealdencommunitylottery.co.uk/>. Once on the site, just click on 'Play the lottery' and select Maresfield Conservation Group from the list. You could win £25,000 and a percentage of the proceeds from the sales of the MCG tickets are returned to us for us to use in our future projects. A "win-win" as some might say. Good luck!

Footpaths Group by Bruce Milton

The group have been busy the last few weeks controlling the rampant vegetation which constantly threatens to engulf every footpath. However, we are now aided by the acquisition of new equipment, namely new strimmer, loppers and secateurs.

We are still finding a lot of dog mess lying around due to a few selfish dog owners and continue to hope they now start to do the decent and healthy thing and pick it up.



Jo Lawrance - Chairman, MCG

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The Arts Society Ashdown Forest

Crowborough Community Centre, Pine Grove, Crowborough TN6 1FE

Thursday 14 September at 2pm

Venice, Canaletto and his Rivals

Lecturer: Anthony Russell

Anthony presents a heady mixture of a 'superstar' painter, immensely rich patrons and a city whose modern face hides behind a romantic mask. These are magical paintings by an Italian artist greatly influenced by British taste and this country boasts the greatest collection of his works. While these views depict a serene dreamland and have always been prized, Venice is now in serious trouble and needs global cooperation to save it from sinking forever.

Anthony Russell is a cultural historian, writer and artist, and a highly esteemed speaker who lectures for the Arts Society on a wide variety of subjects, covering fine art, architecture, furniture and historical topics.

Members free, £7 for visitors – who are very welcome.

More information from www.tasaf.org.uk



Uckfield Folk Club

Upstairs at The Station Pub, Uckfield
Every third Tuesday of the month, at 8pm

Tuesday 19th September: Over Albion

(Natasha Norodien & Terry Lees)

Natasha Norodien is a very talented folk singer, guitarist, and flautist

Terry Lees is a world-class acoustic guitarist and singer

All singers and musicians welcome – floor spots available, to be arranged on the night, or just come and listen! Lots of space for social distancing.

Hat collection on guest nights – a contribution of £10 is suggested.

Info: contact Pat on 07788 994266 or plangridge69@gmail.com

**NB: There is a parking charge in the Station Car Park,
but free parking is available within walking distance**

County Council News

Suicide in East Sussex

Recently in my capacity as Vice Chairman of the County Council, I attended the AGM of the Eastbourne and District Samaritans. This dedicated group of people try to help those who are suicidal and spend many hours listening and helping. They emphasise listening rather than talking.

For several years, the suicide rate in East Sussex has been a bit higher than the national average but what is alarming is that the rate amongst men is much higher than women. Quite often these are young white male adults, which underlines the concern I've had for a while that their problems do not get sufficient attention.

Another alarming factor is that apparently people come to East Sussex to visit Beachy Head and the surrounding cliffs deliberately to commit suicide. The Beachy Head Chaplaincy plays a vital role in interacting with these people.

Chelwood Gate and Danehill Village Market

At the market on September 16th, there will be a visit by an East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service engine. Subject to any more urgent operational requirements the engine will be with us from 10 am to 12 noon. Firefighters will be on hand to explain the equipment and talk about their firefighting experiences.

Roads

A number of local roads are included in current programmes for maintenance and investment.

- School Lane, Danehill is due for resurfacing very soon.
- Plawhatch Lane is due for carriageway repairs in a few months.
- The Hop Garden in Fairwarp is in the programme for 'cracks and joints'.

The patching programme will include:

- London Road, Station Road and Shepherds Hill in Buxted.
- Coopers Green- A272 and London Road.
- Church Street and Ruston Bridge Road, Fletching.
- High St. Maresfield
- Chelwood Gate Road, Nutley
- Piltdown- A272 and Batts Bridge Road
- Wych Cross -A 275 and Hindleap Lane

In each case sections of the road have been identified for repairs, not the whole road. The works are planned for the next nine months so will happen gradually. More than half of the Forest's funding is for Conservation work, which is provided directly by the Government.

Roy Galley

cllr.roy.galley@eastsussex.gov.uk 01825 713018

District Council News

I am pleased to report that Uckfield Leisure Centre has been saved from closure. Astute negotiating by senior officers has produced a new and (from our point of view) improved lease agreement with the County Council, under which the Leisure Centre has stayed open and available to the public.

Less pleasing, in respect of the Local Plan, is that the government has not relaxed the housing target it imposes on councils one little bit, let alone abolished it, contrary to what you may have heard from ill-informed politicians and journalists. It is true that the government ran a consultation earlier this year about (amongst other things) whether the straitjacket imposed by the current system should continue. This consultation closed in March. We were initially told that the government would respond in the spring, but that didn't happen and we are now told that there is no deadline for the response, and that it won't be soon. In the meantime the target applies with the same force it has had since it was introduced. Consequently, the forthcoming replacement Local Plan is having to be drafted with that target figure as the starting point, contrary to the wishes of nearly all the local people I have spoken to since becoming involved in council affairs.

Three organisations whose activities benefit our parish have had their council funding extended for another year. These are: the Ashdown Forest Conservators, Citizens' Advice and North Wealden Community Transport.











You will recall that the May elections were the first in which people voting in person had to produce ID. Whether the purpose of this change was to combat voting fraud (as the government said) or to deter certain people from voting (as its critics said), it doesn't seem to have had much effect in Wealden. The total number of voters was 28,728, which includes 20 people who were turned away as they didn't have the right ID and came back with it later. Another 18 were turned away and didn't come back. What we don't know is how many didn't try to vote, or why they didn't try.

Last, but by no means least, a lot of time has been taken up with water issues. Our parish wasn't affected by South-East Water's supply failures in June, but – from what I heard from its Chief Executive at a meeting in Wadhurst – that was more luck than judgement. The company has put forward a number of reasons or excuses for its failures, none of which is convincing, and it has become clear that it has failed to tackle its leak issues while running up substantial debt. Company representatives will be attending a meeting of the council's Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 11th September at 10 am in Hailsham. The meeting is open to the public and will be viewable online too. I'm not a member of this committee, but would be happy to pass on any questions you have for South-East Water to the Committee's Chair, Cllr Graham Shaw.

Ian Tysh, Maresfield Ward

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Parish Council News

Grant Application reminder

Applications should be made no later than 29th September and should be submitted to the Parish Office. A copy of the Parish Council's Grants Policy and the relevant application forms are available from the Parish Office (714555) and on the website. For this current year the Parish Council approved and has paid out 24 grants and donations, totalling some £16,000.

Playgrounds

Fords Green: Our contractor has finished the complete remodel of the children's playground at Fords Green in Nutley and it is now open for use. The new equipment and safety surface conform to the latest health and safety requirements.

Fairwarp and Parklands: New safety surfaces have also been installed at both playgrounds. These comply with health and safety and are also have good eco/sustainability credentials.

Planning Matters

The latest information from Wealden District Council is still that they are unlikely to publish their new draft Local Plan until they see clarity from the Government in respect of the new homes planning target for the District.

Meanwhile, within the Parish, the future of the land to the east of Straight Half Mile has still not been resolved. The original application in 2017 for 25 new homes and a 'community facility' on half of the site was, despite concerted opposition from the Parish Council and residents, eventually approved in a slightly modified form by Wealden in October 2020.

Subsequently new developers submitted an application for 25 homes and 12 allotments on the whole of the site and following objections this has been amended to 21 homes without the allotments. There are still major concerns, particularly about traffic, the northern access on to Straight Half Mile, the treatment of surface water drainage and the visual impacts of the proposed development from both Straight Half Mile and Nursery Lane.

This revised application contains no benefit to the Community. We await Wealden's decision.

Useful links

<https://my.wealden.gov.uk/> <http://www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk/>
<http://www.maresfieldparish.org.uk/> <https://www.ashdownforest.org/>

And you can also follow the Parish Council on Twitter and Facebook.

Martin Craddock
Chairman, Maresfield Parish Council

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Parish Council Meetings: September 2023

All meetings commence 7.30 pm.

Tuesday 5 Sept	Finance & Admin Meeting (Parish Office) – if necessary
Tuesday 5 Sept	Planning Meeting (Fairwarp Village Hall)
Monday 18 Sept	Planning Meeting (Fairwarp Village Hall)
Tuesday 19 Sept	Full Council (Fairwarp Village Hall)
Tuesday 26 Sept	MRGC Meeting (MRG Pavilion)
Thursday 28 Sept	NDP Steering Group (Parish Office) – if necessary



Maresfield Village Hall Committee

What do Committee Members do?

We organise the management, maintenance and improvement of the hall, providing an affordable and comfortable venue in our village.

We meet three or four times a year, plus the Annual General meeting. Committee meetings are kept to two hours maximum, and the AGM is usually completed within an hour.

Besides meetings, we meet up and communicate as needed, usually by email.

You can join us either as a volunteer or a full committee member, ie, a Charity Trustee. Of course, we are all volunteers – charity trustees cannot be paid. Trustees are elected at the Annual General Meeting, or are put forward as Representative Members by their village club or society.

If you would like to discuss joining us, please contact us:

email: maresfieldvillagehall@gmail.com

or call: 07876 718955

St. Barts Community Family Breakfast Club and Café

Café open 9am - 12noon every Wednesday

Come and join us!

Rose-ringed parakeet

One of my favourite quotes from *The Simpsons* comes from Springfield's vet: "I love animals. I spend my life saving them and they can't thank me. Well, the parrots can."

No animals are more famed for their ability to talk than parrots. Sure, their 'talking' is more mimicry than witty after-dinner conversation – a feathered echo chamber – but whether they're chanting 'pieces of eight' on a pirate's shoulder or swearing in front of Auntie Ethel, we humans have been entertained by their backchat for centuries.

There are around 400 species of parrot on our planet. Their native range encompasses pretty much everywhere south of the Tropic of Cancer. For us Brits their beautiful plumage embodies the exotic; the mystery and excitement of faraway lands. So imagine my surprise when I first saw a big green parrot flying around in Sussex.

The rose-ringed (or ring-necked) parakeet looks ridiculously out of place amongst our comparatively drab starlings, wood pigeons and crows. With its garish green plumage and red beak, it stands out like a clown who has gate-crashed a funeral. And with that squawk – that incessant, demented squawk – there's no ignoring it.



Image: Hugh Clark

South-east England's parakeets are among the world's most northerly parrot populations, but how did they get here? Some believe they made their great escape from an East London film studio in 1951, after starring alongside Bogart and Hepburn in *The African Queen*. Others claim that the Parakeets were set 'Stone Free' by Jimi Hendrix, who liberated them from their plastic cage in his girlfriend's London flat.

I rather like the idea of American sixties icons being responsible for the spread of non-native species across the UK. Perhaps Sonny and Cher

smuggled grey squirrels in through customs under their furry waistcoats, or a tousle-haired Bob Dylan secretly released some American mink out of the stage door of the Albert Hall in '66.

The truth is, with tens of thousands of parakeets being imported into the UK it was no surprise that a few slipped their chains and flew the coop.

Since the end of the sixties these free spirits have been recreating the Summer of Love across the capital. Forming feral colonies, the parakeets have filled the air with their joyous, intolerable screeching and squawking; sounds that would make Hendrix and Dylan proud. And as for free love, their blatant fornicating in London's parks has led to a parakeet population explosion. They were once established in the (sub) urban jungle of Brighton and lived in the trees of Hollingbury from 1977 until the mid-nineties. Surely it's only a matter of time before the rose-ringed parakeet moves into suburban Sussex...



Image: Hugh Clark

Michael Blencowe

Learning & Engagement Officer,
Sussex Wildlife Trust

www.sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk

Sussex Wildlife Trust is an independent charity caring for wildlife and habitats throughout Sussex. Founded in 1961, we have worked with local people for over half a century to make Sussex richer in wildlife.

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