

**COVER STORY:
MRS ROSEMARY
DYMOND RETIRES
AFTER 46 YEARS
OF TEACHING**



Issue 08 May-June-July 2015

£1.00

ALSO INSIDE:

NEWS &
UPCOMING EVENTS

REFLECTION:
ON MARY

40 ACTS OF
KINDNESS:
A DAILY DAIRY

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



MAGAZINE CONTACT

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Editorial & Highlights	p 2
Cover story: Mrs Dymond	p 3-4
News from the Parish	p 5-6
J.A.M. Zone!	p 7
Reflection: on Mary	p 8
40 Acts of Kindness: A Daily Dairy	p 9
Life Events & Meet the New Curate	p 10
Upcoming Events	p 11-12
Vicar's Thoughts	P 13
Advertisements	P 14

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SPECIAL EVENTS IN THE EAST GRAVESEND GROUP & ROCHESTER DIOCESE

St Aidan's has been part of the East Gravesend cluster for the past few years. This puts us in a close working relationship with Holy Family, St Margaret and Christ Church.

We also want to link up with activities organised by other churches in the deanery, and encourage everyone to support our shared ministry.

Here are some events you might want to join in over the next few months.

SAT 09/05/15, 10:00-16:00

CHALLENGING POVERTY

Celebrating humanity partnership for change, Trinity School, Belvedere

WED 13/05/15, 19:00

PRAYER FOR WEST AFRICA

At St George's, Gravesend

SUN 19/07/15, 13:00-19:00

DIOCESAN BIG DAY OUT

Leybourne Castle, entry by donation

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EDITORIAL



CHURCH HIGHLIGHTS



DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Please be aware, the deadline for contributions to the next issue of the magazine is 12th July and should include all dates for Aug, Sep & Oct 2015!



WONDERFUL WOMEN

I didn't plan for this issue to be all about women, but somehow they ended up playing a significant part.

Mrs Dymond, the headteacher at Riverview Junior School, retired at Easter and shares something of her years at school.

There are also reports on the first Women's Small Group and Women's World Day of Prayer.

On top of this you can read a short summary of a sermon on Mary, including a beautiful painting by Bristol artist Geraldine Farrell. I emailed her to see if she would be happy for me to publish her painting. Her reply: "Yes you can use it for your church magazine! I hope it will be of some help and inspiration, that's why I paint. It's the precious gift that God gave me, and it is for God's glory alone."

To close it all of you can find a beautiful quote by Maya Angelou. I hope you will all be encouraged by the stories of these wonderful women in the same way as I was.

Enjoy your read!

Mirjam Ngoy - Editor

SAYING GOODBYE TO HEADTEACHER FOR 27 YEARS

MRS ROSEMARY DYMOND RETIRED AT EASTER



Having been in the hot seat of Riverview Junior School for the past 27 years and teaching at the same school for a total of 46 years, Rosemary Dymond felt it was time for someone else to take on the reins. She has retired at Easter, giving herself more time to on her other commitments, including her involvement with the local community in Cobham and her role as a Deputy Lieutenant of Kent.

The Pilot met with Mrs Dymond, who is respected and loved by so many people of our local community, to find out more about what kept her going all these years and what she will miss most about being a teacher.

What made you decide to go into teaching?

"One day I had to teach at a school as part of my work experience. I gave a lesson on bees and how they work as a community. I remember how interested and engaged the children were. This really excited me. The word community has stuck with me ever since. I was interested in learning and education and saw schools as thriving communities, something energetic and full of life and I wanted to be part of it. I wanted to help children enrich their lives and gain a thirst for learning."

How did you end up teaching in this community, at Riverview Junior School?

"I was 21-years-old and teaching in London. I read an advert for schools in Kent and applied. At that time, you went for an interview with the Education Officer and the different headteachers would decide which teachers they were interested in. I remember dressing up in a suit. It was raining that day, so I brought an umbrella. I was later told jokingly that the umbrella was one of the reason the headteacher of Riverview Junior wanted to take me on, as I came across as someone who came well prepared."

How did you become the headteacher?

"I rose through the ranks, you might say, taking advantage of the many opportunities that arose in the school. During my first year, I organised netball, hockey and rounders clubs with regular matches. In my second year, I was promoted to head of girls games. I soon became senior teacher, then deputy

**"I SAW SCHOOLS AS
THRIVING COMMUNITIES,
SOMETHING ENERGETIC
AND FULL OF LIFE..."**

head and 27 years ago I was given the opportunity to apply for the position of headteacher."

"I have seen the role of headteacher evolve over the years. The biggest change has been the transformation of the national curriculum several times. And perhaps the tremendous increase in bureaucracy and the paperwork that goes with it."

What are you most passionate about in teaching?

"I firmly believe in the teaching of life skills. It is not just about learning maths for the sake of it – but about applying it to everyday life."

"Our school's motto is very important to me: Respect, Reliability & Responsibility. It is all about community and how the school should be at the hub of its

"I HOPE PEOPLE WILL REMEMBER ME AS SOMEONE WHO HAS NURTURED CHILDREN..."

community; a family centre. I am proud to say that so many of our pupils come back to do work experience, or when they are parents send their children to us to be educated. There are several staff now who have been pupils at the school."

What have you enjoyed most about working in a school?

"I have enjoyed every day of my life in education and in school. I love the enthusiasm and the excitement of the children who are always willing to learn new things and the fun that is had in doing that."

"Children have always inspired me, because they have a thirst for learning and have a tremendous energy to always want to know more. I have done my best to provide the opportunity to learn at all times, not just in the classroom, but also in the playground and sports field. One example is that each class has its own garden. I am a keen gardener, so love to encourage the children to grow things. It is also a wonderful means of quiet time for children – to think and reflect."



What do you hope your legacy will be?

"I hope the school stays as an inspiration of learning in all its facets. I also hope I have established Riverview Junior as a school in the community - not just Riverview Park, but Gravesend and beyond. That the school is recognised for that ethos and the quality of the youngsters that come through its doors. I hope people will remember me as someone who has nurtured children in the field of education."

What are you looking forward to the most when retired?

"Less paperwork, the chance to take holidays in term time, doing more cycling and being more involved in my local community. I will be very busy, but I shall miss the excitement of having hundreds of people around me everyday, the camaraderie between myself and the staff, and of course the children."

What can we as a church community learn from the children who come to your school?

"That children have a great desire to know more and to allow them to ask questions that you might be taken aback by. To answer them as honestly as you possibly can – at their level. There are a lot of questions parents don't want to or can't answer, for instance questions about human relationships, family relationships, families and religion. The church should be open to listen to children's questions and engage with them at their level."

"I hope that St Aidan's Church will continue to invite Riverview Junior School to all its events. It is so important to maintain good relationships with the schools in your area, as they are the community of the future, your new citizens. The more you can involve yourself with schools, the better!"

Thank you Mrs Dymond for being an inspiration to so many of us. We wish you all the best in this new chapter of your life and hope we will see you around every now and again!

By Mirjam Ngoy-Verhage

NEWS FROM THE PARISH

WOMEN COME TOGETHER AT WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

The service this year was prepared by women from the Bahamas on the theme "Jesus said to them: Do you know what I have done to you?" and was held at St Aidan's on 6th March.

We were delighted that the Mayoress, Mrs. Sue Caller, and her sister, were able to join us. It was a joy to have representatives from different churches in the town taking an active part in the service, which was well supported by a large congregation.



Commenting afterwards, Natalie Godbolt from St Paul's United Reformed Church said "The service was beautifully put together, and the words of the hymn specifically written for it were really thought provoking. The service flowed well, but I did miss not having a slot for a speaker".

EGG-CITEMENT ON HOLY SATURDAY



Crafts, children, and chocolate is this a potentially risky combination? Not if we go by the smiles on the faces of dozens of children and their parents gathered at St Aidan's Community hall for a morning of fun and excitement.

For the second year running, a team of St Aidan's volunteers put together an excellent morning of

crafts followed by an egg hunt on Holy Saturday. The popularity of the event was such that many of the craft activities ran out of material. Children were able to make their own Easter cards, decorate crosses, and do jar painting. They also decorated biscuits with all sort of interesting toppings. Little proof was left of that craft.

Then ensued organised chaos as young and old dispersed around the church grounds, hunting for chocolate eggs. Hundreds of eggs were collected by all, with some of the fastest hunters happily sharing the spoils with those less successful. Two fortunate hunters were rewarded with a special prize for finding the two silver eggs.

All then gathered in church for a short act of worship and the distribution of larger Easter eggs (no doubt consumed with great moderation) After a short reminder of the Easter story, we all parted, looking forward to the next craft morning at Harvest.

We are grateful to our Mayor, Councillor John Caller whose generous contribution made this event possible.

GREAT BARGAINS AT ANNUAL SPRING BOOT FAIR

Our annual spring Boot Fair was held on 21st March in the Church and Community Hall. We had a good number of stalls and there were certainly some excellent bargains to be had.

£200 was raised for church funds. Mrs Pearce regularly has a stall to support the work of Demelza House Children's Hospice. She said afterwards "I really enjoy coming – everyone is so friendly – everyone talks to everybody else – it is a lovely atmosphere".

The autumn Boot Fair is planned for 17th October.



WOMEN'S SMALL GROUP FIRST GET TOGETHER

In April, the new Women's Small Group met for the first time. It is designed to be a place to socialise and meet new friends, support each other as women, pray together and make the Bible relevant to our day to day lives.

Every month we will be looking at a different women from the Bible. This first evening we focused on Eve. Catherine said: "It was great to see a few different members of the congregation. I liked the mixture of video, bible study, opportunities for discussion in small groups as well as the whole group and the prayer time at the end."

The next meeting will be on Thursday 14th May. Contact Mirjam for more information (079 0864 7313)

CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN PLACE

We offer our congratulations to the Revd. Andrew Haviland, (John and Janet Morris's son-in-law), as he is installed as Canon in Salisbury Cathedral on 7th May.

LENT COURSE POVERTY CHALLENGE

This year's Lent course focussed on the theme of poverty. Here are eight guidances that came out of the meetings:

1. Buy things for their usefulness rather than their status.
2. Reject anything that is producing an addiction in you. Learn to distinguish between a real psychological need, like cheerful surroundings, and an addiction.
3. Develop a habit of giving things away. If you find that you are becoming attached to some possession, consider giving it to someone who needs it.
4. Refuse the propaganda of the custodians of modern gadgetry.
5. Learn to enjoy things without owning them.
6. Develop a deeper appreciation for Creation.
7. Look with a healthy scepticism at all 'buy now, pay later' schemes.
8. Shun anything that distracts you from seeking first the kingdom of God.

So take the following as a challenge: find someone who's in a tough circumstance, who needs help, and spend time with them. Don't throw money at them. Learn about their culture, the culture of the poor. Inside the heart of the poor are lessons waiting to be taught. They're just waiting for someone to listen and to care.

And let us, as a church, do all we can to support the food bank and organisations like Christian Aid, Tear Fund, etc.

J.A.M. (Jesus & Me) Zone!

Children's Page!

This issue's J.A.M. Zone was designed and written by Esther Osinibi:

"Hi, my name is Esther. I am ten years old and home schooled. I am a member of St Aidan's Church. I love writing poetry and stories and I love Jesus."



TO REFLECT

In Hosea, God asked the prophet Hosea to marry a harlot. He married Gomer, a woman with bad history.

Hosea loved her with all his heart even when the woman kept going back to her lovers. Hosea's heart was broken but he never let go of Gomer. He was ready to pay a great price to take back Gomer to be his wife.

This story is a reflection of God's love for all of us, either children or adults. He is longing for a relationship with all humans. He went all the way to give Jesus the highest price to bring us back to Himself. Jesus died for me and for you on the cross of Calvary.

How big is this Father's love for me! Though I am a child, he gave Jesus to die for me. I love you Jesus!



POEM

Summer

The time when I was born
 The time I hear the ice cream van horn
 A time for lazing around
 A time when holidays abound
 When beaches are packed
 When rucksacks are backed
 A season I always long for
 Thank you God for summer

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



WORDSEARCH

Find the following words:

- BROKEN
- CALVARY
- CHILD
- CROSS
- FATHER
- GOD
- GOMER
- HISTORY
- HOSEA
- ISRAEL
- JESUS
- LOVE
- PRICE
- PROPHET
- WIFE

REFLECTION: ON MARY

This is a short summary of our Mothering Sunday Sermon, which focussed on Mary's calling.

CONFUSION

The angel talks to Mary and calls her favoured one. And it says Mary: "was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be." When Mary is greeted with the words – favoured one – she is not 100% sure what to make of these.

A simple girl from Nazareth, she is young, a teenager!, poor, unmarried, not regarded as anything special in the eyes of men. And here is the angel, calling her favoured.

Is this not similar to how we often look at ourselves, at our own lives. There seems to be nothing special about us. Often we don't even feel worthy or good enough for love or belonging. But Mary's story shows us how the first step of obedience in our faith is to accept the fact we are loved, we are God's beloved.

QUESTIONING

Once she has overcome her confusion, Mary's second response to the angel's message is questioning; how will this happen? Mary is still young, and isn't sure how the message of the angel can become true, there seem to be many obstacles. You might be wondering similar things today – how can everything you hear in church really make a difference in your daily life. How is this possible?

What we learn from Mary is that there is room for this questioning. It is all right to bring those questions before God. But we also have to know that God won't always let us look very far in the future. He gives us just enough light for the next step ahead of us. The angel tells Mary how she is going to be pregnant, but he doesn't say anything about the years ahead and how Mary is going to be able to cope. She is only told what is going to happen in the next few days and months. Walking in faith means we have to learn to just take one next step. We don't have to know everything ahead of us.

FAITH

Mary is not afraid to first of all question the call she is given, but she still answers with a confident 'yes'. It is all right for her to first challenge and question it, because it makes her ready to give her 'yes' with all her heart, mind and strength. And in a way we are asked the same question today. Are we willing to allow God to come and save us and dwell in our midst, right here and now? When we see Mary, we know the truth. God doesn't work in a complicated way. He comes to us, here, now, in all our pain and brokenness, joy and excitement, however we feel, wherever we are.

By Mirjam Ngoy-Verhage

Luke 1: 26-38

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.



Annunciation - painting by Geraldine Farrell:

"There is an atmosphere of light in the darkness as Mary is seen in her home setting. I have used symbolism to reflect the person of Mary i.e. the lilies signify her purity of soul, the vessel symbolises Mary's willingness to carry Jesus to the world, her face partially in violet shadow represents the sorrows to come and the texture of the plaster used as a surface to paint on connects everything symbolically with the rock of the Church. Lastly the feather in Mary's hand represents Mary conceiving by the power of the Holy Spirit who is often represented in art as a white dove."

40 ACTS OF KINDNESS

A DAILY DAIRY

Caroline Ashurst, her son Michael (8) and daughter Layla (6) decided to take on the challenge of the 40 Acts as published in the last issue of our magazine. Each day of Lent, they were presented with a challenge to do something good. They managed a mere 23 out of 40 and kept a diary of the experience.

14th March 2015

Ok, following the initial enthusiasm "Of course, we'll do all the 40 acts for Lent" – our actual success has been slightly less than impressive. The story so far...

2. Create a Giving Jar.

The children decorated a giving jar and promptly raided mummy's purse. Michael chose to raise money for a cancer charity, because "at least 100 people have died from cancer you know..!"

3. Make your bed.

Layla always makes her own bed and yes, once, made all the others. Mikey is yet to even pretend he'll ever make his!

5. Write down five things you are thankful for.

Layla, Summer and I sat in McDonalds and discussed what we were thankful for. We covered my job, our home, our family, our abilities and of course... food!

16. Check through your games and toys and give ones you don't use to a charity shop (not broken ones!)

A donation bag was filled for Oxfam.

18th March 2015

A few more achieved over the last few days...

36. Give someone a Fairtrade Easter egg.

I gave a friend who is having a difficult time a fairtrade chocolate bar (I couldn't find an Easter egg). I received a smile in return.



24. Send a message to five people you haven't spoken to in a while to find out how they are.

I sent texts to friends on Mothering Sunday who I don't see often to remind them that they're all fabulous mummies.

22nd March 2015

We're getting there...

21. Organise some fundraising activities.

We made cakes and sold them at the Church Boot Fair to raise money for our 'Giving Jar'. Layla did the selling mostly – Mikey was far too busy playing with things we were trying to sell.

22. Pick up litter outside.

Armed with gloves and a rubbish bag we set out on a litter pick up. From dropped dummies to empty beer bottles, the path became spotless!



30th March 2015

The final entry for our journey through Lent...

34. Take someone breakfast in bed this morning.

Daddy regularly gets spoiled with breakfast in bed.

40. Donate to your chosen charity.

We counted the money in our 'giving jar' and managed to donate £30.02 + Gift Aid to a brave little two-year-old called Ruby from Gillingham enduring an aggressive form of cancer.

Some of the tasks I knew we'd never achieve – having a screen free day and tidying the bedroom – never in a billion years. Layla's favourite activity was picking up the litter as it was a fun thing we all did together. Michael's favorite activity was making the cakes to sell, as he got to eat some.

As for mummy, I found that the Acts brought Lent to life. Giving up things for Lent in the past has proven to be a fairly empty gesture, but the Acts show that just a small effort can make a real difference to other peoples' day – even momentarily. It was a nice way to build up to the celebration of Easter!

Now, where's the chocolate!?!?

LIFE EVENTS

BAPTISMS, FUNERALS & WEDDINGS

Baptisms:

05/04/2015 Margaret May Bunclock

Funerals:

04/02/2015 Louise Kempster (94)

05/02/2015 Eva Pearce (83)

16/02/2015 William George Angus McKay (74)

18/03/2015 Mary Vivien Dighton (63)

07/04/2015 Lexi Elsie-May Wickes (17 months)

16/04/2015 Barbara Louise Trevor (90)

16/04/2015 Grace Lewis (71)



MEET THE NEW CURATE: KAREN SEGGIE

Hi! I'm Karen Seggie and I will be joining the East Gravesend Group in July as a Pastoral Worker. Over the summer I will have lots of opportunity to get involved with all that is happening at St Aidan's, as well as the other parishes in the group: Christchurch, Holy Family and St Margaret's, Ifield.

Once I am ordained in September, I will be predominantly based at Christchurch with my training incumbent Rev Sue Brewer. I will spend more time with the rest of the East Gravesend Group once I am ordained Priest the following year.

So a bit about me: I have almost come to the end of two years of theological training at Ripon College Cuddesdon, in Oxfordshire. Before I began training, I worked in special needs schools for ten years. I have lived in Suffolk for most of my adult life but I am originally a Kent girl! I was born in Ashford, where my parents, sister and her family still live. I also have extended family in the Medway towns. I am so excited to be returning to Kent and look forward to getting to know Gravesend and the surrounding area.

In my spare time I enjoy browsing in houseware shops, listening to music, singing, going for long walks in the



countryside and by the sea, and spending time with friends and family. I am really looking forward to meeting you all in July. There's not long to go now! I would really appreciate your prayers as I finish my academic studies and prepare for my move to Gravesend.

See you all very soon!
Karen

UPCOMING EVENTS

ST AIDAN'S EVENTS

MAY 2015

SUN 10/05/2015 - SAT 16/05/2015
CHRISTIAN AID WEEK COLLECTIONS

In the Parish

Once again we will be covering as much of our large parish as possible for house to house collections. Please speak to Mavis if you are able to help.

At Ebbsfleet Station

We are delighted that David Eustace, the customer relations officer for Southeastern, has given Christian Aid approval to collect at Ebbsfleet station. We are extremely grateful for his support and excited by the challenge that is offered, but of course we need volunteers to make the most of this excellent opportunity. It is suggested that the most financially beneficial times of the day would probably be between 7:00-10:00 and 16:00-19:00 – although offers at any other times would not be rejected! If you feel able to give an hour or two to help in this exciting new venture, please have a word with Lusa (352500) or Mavis (812330).

SAT 16/05/2015, 14:00

JUMBLE SALE FOR CHRISTIAN AID

We will again be holding a Jumble Sale in the Church & Community Hall. If you have items that we could sell, please bring them along to the hall during the morning. Help will also be needed with sorting in the morning from 09:30 and for selling in the afternoon from 13:45. Please offer your help – don't wait for me to ask you! Thanks, Mavis

SUN 24/05/2015, 9:30

PENTECOST SERVICE + BRING AND SHARE MEAL

Join us as we mark the Church's birthday. The service will be followed by a bring & share meal for all.

JUNE 2015

SAT 06/06/2015, 10.00

COFFEE MORNING FOR CHRISTIAN AID (with plants and bring & buy stalls)

This will be held at 19 Hadley Close, Meopham between 10:00 and mid-day and will conclude our fund raising for this year's Christian Aid Week appeal. All are welcome.

JULY 2015

SAT 04/07/2015, 18:00

PROGRESSIVE SUPPER

There will be four courses - the "starter" will be served at 72 Astra Drive at 6pm. Make sure you get your ticket when they become available nearer the time.

SUN 05/07/2015, 13:00

AFTERNOON OUT AT AYLESFORD PRIORY

Everyone welcome. Details to be confirmed.

SUN 12/07/2015, 19:00

CONFIRMATION SERVICE

At St Mary's, Wrotham Road.

SAT 18/07/2015, 19:30

RAINHAM LADIES CHOIR

The Rainham Ladies Choir, with Janet Stone (organ) will be making a welcome return visit to St Aidan's. Tickets are £5 on the door – light refreshments will be available during the interval.

EVENTS IN GRAVESEND

MAY 2015

SAT 09/05/2015, 11:30

VE DAY 70th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

Gravesham Borough Council is planning to organise an event to mark this special anniversary in Fort Gardens. It will begin at 11.30am with entertainment and various stalls, followed by a service at 12.30pm. As Christian Aid was formed to alleviate the suffering in Europe left by the war, the local Christian Aid Committee has been invited to have a stall, so do come and say hello.

JUNE 2015

SAT 21/06/2015, 10:30-16:30

GRAVESHAM CHRISTIAN LADIES CONFERENCE

This is a gathering of ladies of all background as we seek God for personal, family and national Revival. Venue: St Aidan's Church, Gravesend. For further information visit www.graveshamchristianladies.co.uk or call Toyin on 079 4439 8415.

WEEKLY GROUPS AND MEETINGS AT ST AIDAN'S

WEDNESDAYS

AFTER SCHOOL CLUB (INCLUDING DRAMA)

A club for children to learn drama, play games, do crafts, and meet old & new friends. Every Wednesday during term-time at St Aidan's Community Hall, 15:30-17:00 (with 45 minutes of drama). Costs £2.

FRIDAYS

CHURCH CHOIR

if you're interested in singing, why not join our church choir. We rehearse most Fridays in church from 19:45.

FRIDAYS

COMMUNITY CAFE

Nice coffees and cakes, every Friday from 10:00-12:00.

DRAMA CLASSES

Teen and adult drama classes are held on Fridays between 19:00-21:00. Contact Gary Cordice on 079 8145 7667 for more information.

MONTHLY GROUPS AND MEETINGS AT ST AIDAN'S

1ST WEDNESDAY

COFFEE MORNING

Join us at the Powerhouse for coffee and tea right after our Wednesday communion service. There is a cake stall with delicious cakes for sale:
06/05/15 | 03/06/15 | 01/07/15, 10:15

2ND WEDNESDAY

AIDAN LADIES

Group for ladies, meeting at the Powerhouse to chat, play games, do crafts or listen to stories:
13/05/15, 14:00 - With speaker from Amen Trust
10/06/15, 14:00 - We are going out for a meal
8/07/15, 14:00 - Tea at Bronwyn's house

3RD WEDNESDAY

CRAFT CLUB

A group of us meets at the Powerhouse to do craft activities. Please feel free to join us:
20/05/15 | 17/06/15 | 15/07/15, 14:00

THURSDAY

WOMEN'S SMALL GROUP

This is a monthly meeting for women at The Vicarage. A place to socialise and meet new friends, support each other as women, pray together and make the Bible relevant to our day to day lives. Please feel free to join us, you are very welcome!
14/05/15, 20:00-21:30 - on Rebekah
18/06/15, 20:00-21:30 - on Leah

LAST THURSDAY

CAMEO

Are you at a "loose end" on the last Thursday afternoon of the month? If so, why not COME AND MEET OTHERS for a cup of tea, a piece of cake and a chat at our Church & Community Hall. Suggested donation of 50p.
28/05/15, 14:00-16:00
25/06/15, 14:00-16:00
30/07/15, 14:00-16:00

VICAR'S THOUGHTS

Every year on Passion Sunday, members of St Aidan's church gather for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. At that occasion, reports of our shared life are shared, including remarks from the Vicar. The Pilot has asked Lusa to share an edited version of the Vicar's remarks.

"If you want to walk fast, walk alone. If you want to walk far, walk together." This East-African proverb is, in some way, appropriate for a church dedicated to Aidan of Lindisfarne.

Aidan, our Patron Saint, was an Irish monk and missionary credited with restoring Christianity to Northumbria. He travelled (mostly on foot) throughout the countryside, gossiping the Gospel to the nobility and to the socially marginalised. By taking an active interest in people's lives and the communities they visited, Aidan and his fellow monks were able to bring deep transformation throughout Northumbria. As a result, their work grew considerably and has left a lasting legacy not only in Northumbria, but also in the whole of England.

A champion of the Gospel and its imperative for social justice, St Aidan has much to teach us, especially as we consider the way forward for our church's ministry in our parish.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has often been heard encouraging Christians in Britain to boldly engage in initiatives for growth. As a matter of fact, 'going for growth' has been a mantra for the Church of England in the past few decades.

A recent study called 'Church Growth Research' (one of many studies about church growth) shows that although there is a general decline in church attendance, many churches are bucking the trend and showing encouraging signs of growth. It seems that people are still searching for God and wanting to do so as part of a worshipping community.

The challenge of growth is one that St Aidan's has to face. So how can we make sure that there will be a vibrant church community here in the future to worship God and to witness to his love in the community?

While there is no single recipe for success, there are common ingredients strongly associated with growth in churches of any size, place or context, regardless of style such as a clear sense of mission



and purpose (outward looking), willingness to change, involvement of lay people (it's not all about the Vicar), and opportunities to better understand and engage with Christian faith.

"If you want to walk fast, walk alone. If you want to walk far, walk together."

What would it look like for us to walk together? More significantly how might our community be transformed if, like Aidan of Lindisfarne and his monks, we were prepared to become a missionary community, gossiping the Gospel and taking an active interest in people's lives?

There is no magic formula for growing a church. Church growth requires a combination of factors. What is certain, however is that a church that does not grow is declining. A declining church will eventually cease to be relevant and life-giving to the community in which it is located.

The task of the new PCC will be to lead St Aidan's into a vision that will usher in a new period of growth and transformation, remembering that, ultimately, the business of the church is not merely about changing statistics, but about changing lives, about growing communities.

Dear friends, let us step into the footsteps of those who have preceded us and whose example we are called to emulate in order to allow God's kingdom to grow further in our community. As we journey, we do so with the words of the hymn leading us:

**We are pilgrims on a journey,
we're companions on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.**

Yours in His service,
Lusa

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"We, unaccustomed to **courage**
exiles from delight
live coiled in shells of **loneliness**
until **love** leaves its high holy temple
and comes into our sight
to **liberate** us into life.

Love arrives
and in its train come ecstasies
old memories of pleasure
ancient histories of pain.
Yet if we are **bold**,
love strikes away the chains of **fear**
from our souls.

We are weaned from our timidity
In the flush of love's light
we dare be **brave**
And suddenly we see
that love costs all we are
and will ever be.
Yet it is only love
which sets us **free**."

Maya Angelou



“To share God’s love in the community.”

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OUR REGULAR SERVICES

1st Sunday	10.30	All Age Communion Service
2nd Sunday	9.30	Communion Service & Sunday School
3rd Sunday	9.30	Communion Service & Sunday School
	18.30	Joint Service with Riverview Baptists at the Christopher Centre
4th Sunday	9.30	Communion Service & Sunday School
5th Sunday	9.30	Communion Service with Prayer for Healing & Sunday School
Wednesdays	9.30	Communion Service