

INSIDE OUT

news from

WOODBIDGE, ST. MARY

Issue 2: March 2021



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THE DAWN OF EASTER and a NEW COUNTRY CHURCH

As I write, there are still uncollected Christmas cards in our Parish Church! And since I last wrote, we have joined up with St Mary's in Great Bealings to form what is called a 'United Benefice'. This means our geographical boundaries are larger and that there is a greater choice of where future baptisms, weddings, and funerals may take place. But the best immediate news is our sharing together in Holy Week and Easter as, very gradually, we ease our way out of lockdown. We will still have to 'book' our places, be masked, socially distanced and unable to sing in public, but at least we have the opportunity and can look forward to: a new season of whispered Alleluias!



I guess that April 12th is the key date when 'life as we knew it' will begin to unravel once more – and when I can get a haircut! But it is going to be a slow road back to recovery

and we cannot expect everything to be the same as before. We have heard horrendous stories of domestic abuse, mental health and relationship issues and rising unemployment, for which there will be no 'quick fix.' That said there is the natural excitement of families re-connecting with one another and being able to travel further than our own front door to reignite old friendships and (in my case hopefully) make some new ones.

So many of the biblical Easter stories are about starting out again and being signs of hope and love, each to the other. Mary mistook the Risen Lord as the gardener and the disciples on the Road to Emmaus took a long while for the 'penny to drop'. But when the Lord is recognized in our midst and 'cracked wide open' like the heaviest stone tomb or the lightest wafer of bread, we can be sure that our longest of lockdowns is behind us now. And that now, as before, God is very much still with us and encouraging us to see and know for ourselves the signs of new life and hope, which springs eternal.

We shall continue to offer online resources and opportunities for both our local communities of St. Mary, the Mother of our Lord. Her intercession for all of us remains unbroken and for ever sure. May God bless each of you in the days ahead and His road rise to meet you.

Fr Nigel

KAGERA LENT CHALLENGE

Thank you to everyone taking part again this year. It is still not too late to join in – download the booklet from our church website or ask for a hard copy in our local garden centres. As well as being very informative, it is great fun for all the family! **more information on page 6**

SPRING SHOOTS, SHORTS AND CUTTINGS



ST MARY'S CHURCH SHOP - A FAIRTRADE SHOP

We are so pleased that St Mary's Shop will be open again on Monday 12 April with the easing of COVID 19 restrictions. Pop in to stock up on cards, gifts, books and your favourite Fairtrade products. It was disappointing to postpone Fairtrade Fortnight this year but we're now planning it for October. Further details coming later! If you would like more information about Fairtrade and how to support Woodbridge to become an active Fairtrade town, please visit www.fairtrade4woodbridge.com or email woodbridgefairtrade@aol.com. Have you got some spare time and would like to volunteer in St Mary's Church Shop? It's a great way to meet people as well as supporting the local community. Please give me a call 01394 460329 or email sjbtodd@aol.com if you are interested.

Sue Todd, St Mary's Church Shop

PIP HARE - ROUND THE WORLD & OVER THE MOON

After great local radio and TV coverage it was exciting to see the safe arrival of Pip Hare finishing as only the 8th woman ever to complete the gruelling Vendee Globe single handed yacht race. As her Dad (one of our retired Clergy at St Mary's) said, she learned to sail in a Mirror dinghy on the River Deben, so be encouraged all who are learning to sail. Hopefully we will invite Pip back before long to share her story with a huge and enthusiastic local audience – watch this space.



WOODBIDGE SWIFTS NEST BOXES ON ST MARY'S HOUSE

We have a dream of swifts in The Market Square. We can imagine groups of swifts swirling and calling in the early evenings in summer as we walk through or sit and enjoy the ancient surroundings. We have applied to East Suffolk Council for planning permission to install nest boxes for swifts on the front facade of St Mary's House. As this is a listed building we have to follow some stringent guidelines and provide plans for unobtrusive structures.

Corona-virus restrictions have prevented us from meeting together with Father Nigel to discuss the way forward, but we have had some useful advice from the planners as to what will be required.

We realise that we will need some expert help and are therefore looking for willing swift enthusiasts with the requisite skills to help us. We need someone with experience of planning matters who could prepare 'Design and Access Statements and Heritage Statements' and also someone who could do 'Site Location Plans, Block Plans and Elevational drawings of the proposed boxes and their site'. We will also need some building advice on installation on a medieval building.

We have swift experts to build site specific boxes, so all we need is a good case based on thorough preparation to present a project which the planners will find acceptable. If you think you can help us in any way, please contact us at woodbridge.swifts@gmail.com.



Jenny James, Woodbridge Swifts

OUR NEW BENEFICE and the SECKFORD CONNECTION

Our new United Benefice can be commemorated, on the ground, so as to speak, by a walk between the two churches, with some routes taking in Seckford Hall and the surrounding area. On New Year's day several of us did this loosely organised socially distanced walk - dogs joined in, bells were rung in both churches at midday, and many photographs were taken. Because of Covid restrictions, neither church was properly open, but commemorative books for signing were available in the porches.

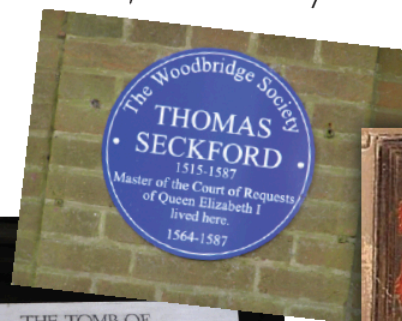
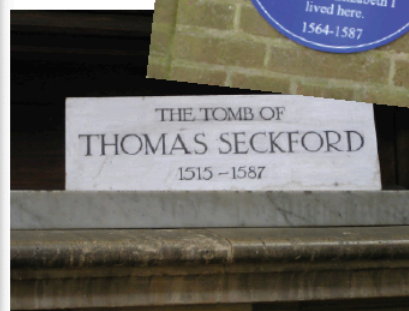


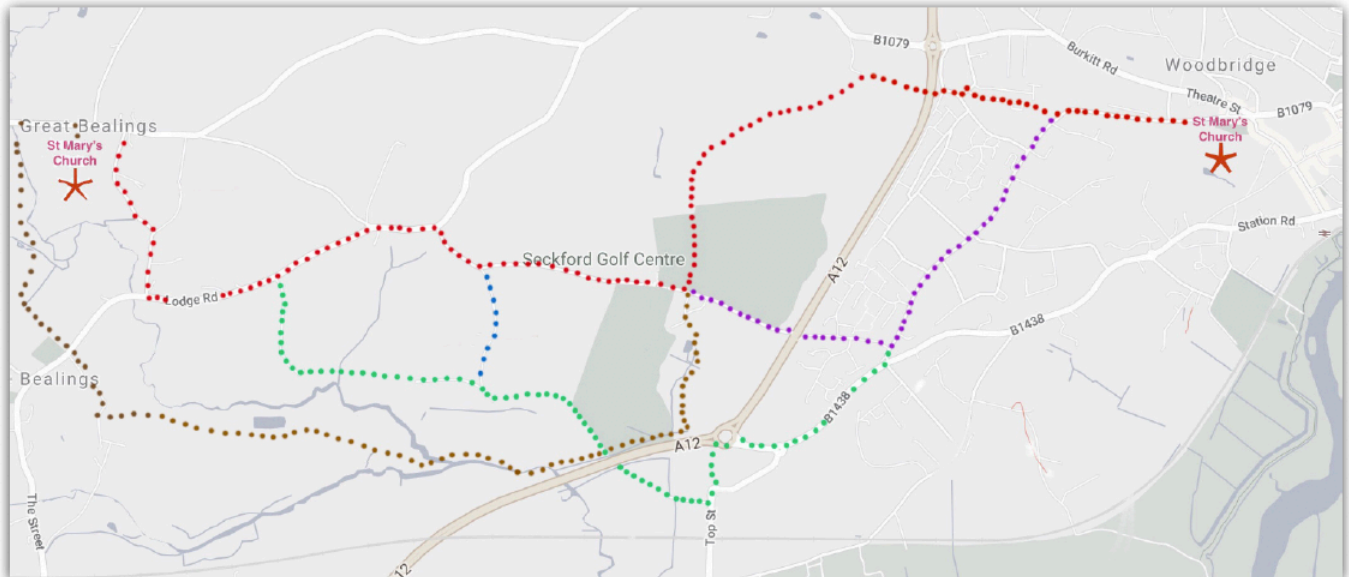
At one end is St Mary's Woodbridge, with Thomas Seckford's tomb, the Abbey House, the Shire Hall built by Thomas Seckford in 1578, Seckford Almshouses, and at the other end St Mary's Great Bealings, where the Seckford Memorial and the Tudor-brick Seckford porch can be found.

Thomas Seckford (1515 - 1587) is acknowledged as Woodbridge's main benefactor. His family held the Manor of Seckford, just outside Woodbridge from the 12th century, and the present Seckford Hall (now hotel) was built by his father on the site of

an older house. Educated at Cambridge University and Gray's Inn, Thomas Seckford was called to the bar and became a lawyer of great repute. He also held several public appointments that contributed to his position as one of the State's highest legal officers, and not long after her accession, Queen Elizabeth 1 appointed him to her Court (it is believed she actually stayed in Seckford Hall). In 1550, 1563 and 1572 he was elected to Parliament by the constituents of Ipswich. He bought the manor of Woodbridge priory, which was next to St Mary's Church, in 1564 and built Abbey House as his home (now Abbey School). In 1587 he decided to donate part of his considerable wealth to the town of Woodbridge by founding and endowing some almshouses (now, much rebuilt and extended, providing the present Seckford Almshouses). He founded Woodbridge School, in memory of his parents, and the Shire Hall was also built by him.

Rita James





Please check OS maps and apps for greater accuracy of routes.

To mark the United Benefice a new tree was planted in each of our churchyards on the Feast of the Annunciation and a Eucharist was celebrated on that evening, Thursday 25 March. Watch out for pictures in the local press!



THE LONGSHIP AND WOODBRIDGE TAPESTRY

The river Deben is the heart of Woodbridge and at the centre of this story. The lockdown and other restrictions may have kept us at home but this has not stopped the tapestry team from continuing with their amazing work on some of the 30plus panels for "The Longship and Woodbridge Tapestry". From "acorn to tree" all things grow. Similarly from a lighthearted suggestion the tapestry project has grown and the panels are taking shape with great skill as the 40 or so members of the team enthusiastically continue their work. The completed tapestry will show a history of the Sutton Hoo burial ship from the first acorn planted by a jay in around 400AD, through the centuries. The story's links to the town of Woodbridge and the river Deben, taking in the grave robberies during the reign of Queen Elizabeth 1, Thomas Seckford, the almshouses, the garrison, the excavation at Sutton Hoo in 1939, the present day construction of the replica ship in the Longshed, and the ship's sea trials.



The tapestry panels will eventually be hung, as each is completed, in the gallery room when the Longshed re-opens.

If you think you might be interested in joining the tapestry team please e-mail Collyjay1947@gmail.com. Whether you are a seamstress or home maker of cushions and curtains, your skills will be used well. There is no time limit on this project! The illustration shown is of an unfinished panel by Fiona, Gil, Henri and Pauline depicting Woodbridge in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Jane Guy

BISHOP JOHN - A TRIBUTE



The Right Reverend John Waine, KCVO – at onetime the Bishop of this Diocese, and later Bishop of Chelmsford, was fondly known as 'Bish the Dish.' He earned this title for his endless good humour, his gentle kindness, his great wisdom – and those twinkling eyes! Bishop John retired to live in Grundisburgh nearly 25 years ago, but continued in active ministry up until his Passing at Christmas 2020 aged 90. In those years he was a much loved visitor and preacher in St Mary's and village churches around Suffolk. Bishop John's faith and compassion shone around him – he loved people, and would come to Woodbridge to shop

with his beloved wife Pat, happy to stop in the Thoroughfare, and talk – and listen to – churchgoers and disbelievers alike. As it was said in his obituary in the Church Times: ' Bishop John had a profound influence on many people and we have a huge reason to be grateful to God for his life, ministry, friendship, and love. May he rest in peace.'

Margie Stagg

BISHOPS' LENT APPEAL FOR KAGERA 2021

Are you ready to count your saucepans? How many musical instruments are hidden in your attics? In 2021 we're again asking if you would like to support our link Diocese of Kagera in Tanzania. We know that many here are suffering hardship because of the pandemic yet continue to support their communities with love and care. Please go to the Lent 2021 webpage for more information or to download your copy <https://www.stmaryswoodbridge.org/lent-2021>

CALLING ALL SINGERS!



Do you enjoy singing? Are you able to sing in tune? Are you aged 7 years or older? (No upper limit!) Do you enjoy working as part of a team? If so, the choir at St Mary's has a place for you! Despite lockdown restrictions we are still keen to recruit and welcome new members for all of our parts: Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass.

Rehearsals will be in our church hall on Thursday evenings from 18:30-20.00, though our younger members usually leave at 19:30 to facilitate the completion of school homework commitments. Thereafter we rehearse at 09:30 on Sunday mornings in preparation for our Sunday morning worship at 10:00am (10:30 for 11:00 on the 1st Sunday of each month). It would be lovely to hear from anyone interested in joining us, so please ring our Parish Office in the first instance (01394 388820) or email: parish.office@stmaryswoodbridge.org and I will be in touch with you with further details or advice as required.

Bob Peggall (Choirmaster)

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HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES AT WOODBRIDGE ST MARY WITH GREAT BEALINGS

Sunday 21 March LENT 5 (Passiontide) Woodbridge re-opens for 10am Mass
Tuesday 23 March 11.30am National Day of Reflection

* Livestreaming of Eucharist from Seckford Chapel

Thursday 25 March (Annunciation) Gt Bealings re-opens 5pm Said Eucharist

Sunday 28 March Palm Sunday 8am Eucharist Woodbridge
10 am* United Benefice Blessing of Palms,
Dramatic Reading of the Passion & Eucharist, Woodbridge

Monday -Wednesday HOLY WEEK 6pm Eucharist + Homily Woodbridge

Maundy Thursday 1 April 10am Eucharist Gt Bealings

7.30pm* United Benefice Eucharist & Stripping of Altar,
followed by brief Watch of Prayer Woodbridge

Good Friday 2 April 10 am Churches Together Procession of Witness (online)

2pm* United Benefice Celebration of the Cross/Liturgy of the Day Woodbridge

Easter Eve 3 April Children bring flowers for outdoor Easter Garden Woodbridge

8pm* United Benefice Easter Vigil, Blessing of New Fire &
First Communion of Easter Woodbridge

Easter Day, Sunday 4 April 9.30 am Festival Eucharist Gt Bealings

11am* Festival Parish Eucharist Woodbridge

*denotes livestreaming and/or video recording for website (please check website www.stmaryswoodbridge.org & FB @StMarysWoodbridge for further details and links before, and on, the day)

Please remember that you must book your place for Sunday services in advance by emailing parish.office@stmaryswoodbridge.org with your name, the service you wish to attend and how many from your household/bubble will be attending **by noon on the preceding Friday.**

RECTOR: The Revd Nigel Prior **ASSISTANT CURATE:** The Revd Andy Todd
Email rector@stmaryswoodbridge.org Email andyjtodd@aol.com

Day off: Wednesday Day off: Friday

PARISH OFFICE 01394 388820 Email: parish.office@stmaryswoodbridge.org

CHURCH CENTRE BOOKINGS Email: parish.hall@stmaryswoodbridge.org

CHRIST DIES IN WOODBRIDGE AND GREAT BEALINGS



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