

THE LINK

JUNE & JULY 2021



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OPENING THOUGHTS

Carol Hayes has contributed three fascinating articles to this edition of the Link, one relating something of historical interest in each of the three churches of the Benefice. In this year when foreign travel is limited, it's worth taking time to explore more thoroughly the beauty and history of these gems right on our doorsteps. Although not of the grandeur of the great churches of Rome, Florence or Venice, each has things of exquisite beauty that tell of the love and devotion of people from our parishes through the ages (and there is no requirement to quarantine after visiting them).

For me, however, it is the numinous beauty in these churches that speaks of the awe and wonder felt by generations of worshippers who have brought their joys, sorrows, thanksgiving, petitions and grief before their almighty and transcendent God that is more powerful than any physical beauty. There have been places of worship where our churches stand since earliest Christian times and the spirit of the prayers of generations of the faithful through the centuries linger in them long after their bodies were consigned to our churchyards. When you visit one of the churches, stop and add your prayers to theirs and give thanks that the church still stands and we have the freedom to worship openly in it (some of the more injudicious decisions of the Church of England lately notwithstanding). It is now our duty to ensure that these churches remain standing in good condition and open for worship for the generations to come.

Mim Prins

BENEFICE CHURCHWARDENS

FARWAY

Tara Huffman 01404 871372
Robin Banks 01404 871355

OFFWELL

Jonathan Paveley 01404 831450
Marion Hutchinson 01404 830055

WIDWORTHY

Mim Prins 01404 831688
Mary Wakeley 01404 831345

Websites:

Farway:

www.farwaydevon.org.uk

Offwell:

www.offwell.org

Widworthy:

www.widworthyparishcouncil.co.uk

www.explorechurches.org

www.achurchnearyou.com

Front Cover: John Tristram, Bell Captain, in St. Mary's ringing chamber with the traditional ropes and hard at work on the Ellacombe bell system.

JUNE SERVICES

	OFFWELL	FARWAY	WIDWORTHY
June 6th	9:30am HC		9:30am Family Service
June 13th			9:30am Family Service
June 20th	11am Family Service		9:30am HC
June 27th		11:15am HC	9:30am Family Service

BIBLE READINGS

June 6th	1 Samuel 8:4-11 (12-15) 16-20 (11:14-15)	Psalms 138	2 Corinthians 4:13 to 5:1	Mark 3:20-35
June 13th	1 Samuel 15:34 - 16:13	Psalms 20	2 Corinthians 5:6-10 (11-13) 14-17	Mark 4:26-34
June 20th	1 Samuel 17: (1a, 4-11, 19-23) 32-49	Psalms 9:9-20	2 Corinthians 6:1-13	Mark 4:35-41
June 27th	2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27	Psalms 130	2 Corinthians 8:7-15	Mark 5:21-43

Ellacombe Chimes Exhibition

During **June** there will be an exhibition in **St. Mary's** celebrating the history of bell ringing at Offwell and the renovation of the Ellacombe Chimes.

*If that to Ring you do come here
 You must Ring Well with Hand and Ear
 If that you ring in Spur and Hat
 A Quart of Ale must pay for that
 And if a bell you ever throw
 Sixpence is Due before you go
 And if you Curse or Swear I say
 A Shilling's Due without delay
 And if you Quarrel in this place
 You shall Not Ring in any case!*

This amusing ode is pinned up in St. Mary's ringers platform.



JULY SERVICES

	OFFWELL	FARWAY	WIDWORTHY
July 4 th	9:30am HC		9:30am Family Service
July 11 th			9:30am Family Service
July 18 th	11am Family Service		9:30am HC
July 25 th		11:15am HC	9:30am Family Service
August 1 st	9:30am HC		9:30am Family Service

BIBLE READINGS

July 4 th	2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10	Psalms 48	2 Corinthians 12:2-10	Mark 6:1-13
July 11 th	2 Samuel 6:1-5, 12b-19	Psalms 24	Ephesians 1:3-14	Mark 6:14-29
July 18 th	2 Samuel 7:1-14a	Psalms 89:20-37	Ephesians 2:11-22	Mark 6:30-34, 53-56
July 25 th	2 Samuel 11:1-15	Psalms 14	Ephesians 3:14-21	John 6:1-21

FARWAY METHODIST CHURCH

June	6 th	11am	Conducted by Revd. Dr. Mosedale
	13 th	3pm	Conducted by Revd. Steve Santry
	20 th	11am	Conducted by Dr Alan Mcilveen
	27 th	3pm	Conducted by Revd. Ben Haslam. HC
July	4 th	11am	Conducted by Revd. Terry Spencer. HC
	13 th	3pm	Conducted by Mr Terry Palmer
	18 th	11am	Conducted by Mrs Pam Murphy
	25 th	3pm	Conducted by Revd. Brian Hadfield. HC



The LINK is the magazine of the three Parishes of OFFWELL, FARWAY and WIDWORTHY. Views expressed here are not necessarily the opinion of the Editor or the community. The next edition will be **AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2021**. Submissions to be received by **10th JULY at the latest please**. Email: Melanie at parisheslink@gmail.com Submissions, should be sent, preferably by email in text, Word, JPG, PDF or PNG format. The editor reserves the right to delay or refuse publication of articles for reasons of decorum, space or practicality. Please note - **Late submissions may not be included**.



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OFFWELL



A reminder, if you've been able to read your Link early enough, that the United Benefice Service will be at St Mary's on 30th May at 10.30am. It is Trinity Sunday when we celebrate the symbolic nature of the Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit being one God. It will be a Communion service taken by Bishop Oliver. He will also take the Communion services on 6th June and 4th July, both at 9.30am.

The usual Family services will be on 20th June and 18th July at 11.00am.

Despite the Covid restrictions there was a good turnout for the Easter services. It is always nice to have flowers back in church and they looked lovely. Thanks to the ladies who arranged them. There is only a small team of ladies and Phyllis would be extremely grateful for a couple more volunteers. Her number is 831520.

Thanks must also go to Marion who has worked tirelessly following government guidelines to ensure we have been able to hold our services. We are not able to sing but even though Charles is still recovering we are very fortunate that we have an organist standing in who plays for us. With the majority of the church family having had both the vaccinations and with social distancing there is no need to feel apprehensive about going to church.

Hopefully by the time the next Link goes to press we will have news of social activities resuming. There have been a number of house-moves during the last year or more and it will be so nice to be able to welcome all the newcomers to our lovely village.

Offwell Woodland & Wildlife Trust

Every Tuesday morning a small but happy band of volunteers pitch up at the Offwell Woodland Centre to help preserve and upkeep this precious asset that we are so lucky to have access to in Offwell.



We always welcome anyone who would like to join us. Why not come along and see what we do? It's a beautiful place and we welcome any extra pairs of hands. Check out our page on the Offwell web site for more information.

Rose's are red, tomatoes are too
This is a timely reminder for you
Have you taken your photo and
planned what to bake?
Or thought about what kind of model to
make?
Getting things ready to bring to the show
What should I make or what should I
grow?
Of course though you really have to
remember
The Flower Show's set for the **11th of
September**



Fish and Chips are frying in the village hall car park from 6:00-7:30pm Saturday 6th June & 4th July

A generous portion for £6

The bar will be open for tables of 6 people, with table service for drinks. If you wish to sit outside, please bring your own chairs and condiments. Thank you everyone for your support and sticking with us, it is much appreciated. Check the 'Sports and Social Club' Facebook page for up to date info. *Any profit goes to the children's new Play Park.*



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ELLACOMBE CHIMES 200TH ANNIVERSARY

The sound of bells ringing is deeply rooted in British culture and almost everyone in Britain lives within hearing range of church bells. By the 17th century bell ringing became extremely fashionable with the aristocracy as it provided physical exercise and intellectual stimulation. In rural churches, however, bands of ordinary ringers strived to outdo one another in ringing competitions. By the 1800's change ringing became synonymous with 'swearing, smoking and a barrel of beer'. Some belfries became notorious as the meeting place of the village riff-raff who indulged in 'heavy drinking and riotous behaviour'.

In 1822 the Rector at St. Mary's, Offwell, John Gaius Copleston, tried, unsuccessfully, to dissuade the ringers from celebrating Guy Fawkes night and ringing in the New Year instead. Around the same time Rev. Ellacombe at St. Mary's in Bitton, South Gloucestershire, was having problems with his own 'unruly and drunken ringers'. He was the editor of the bell ringing column of a church periodical called 'Church Bells' and he was not slow to criticise the actions of bell ringers who did not ring exclusively for church services. A particular target was prize ringing where different churches competed for the best ringing, usually accompanied by a social event. He described this as: "...allowing the bells to be prostituted for the benefits of a publican's pocket."



New blue rope pulley system

Rev. Ellacombe's solution was to devise an apparatus that enabled one trusted person to ring all the bells of a church. Each of the bells is struck while the bell is static instead of the bells being rotated and on 26th June 2021 there will be a worldwide celebration of the 200th year anniversary of the 'Ellacombe Chimes'. Churches around the world will join '**Chime Around the World**', beginning at Timaru in New Zealand at noon on 25th June. Over the next 17 hours,

working their way across the world, bells will be chiming at noon local time in each of the major time zones, arriving at their birthplace at Bitton at noon (BST) on Saturday 26th June.

During the 20th century the apparatus fell out of fashion and few remained in useable condition. Consequently Ellacombe devices were removed from a number of church towers in the UK but in Offwell the Ellacombe Chimes have been restored, in-between lockdowns, by Bell Captain, John Tristram, and Cllr. Clive Whithear. With only one ringer allowed in the bell tower during 2020 John was able to chime the bells to welcome parishioners to the Christmas morning service, and they will chime again to celebrate the anniversary on 26th June.



The Ellacombe hammer sits below the bell.

Tara Huffman in her Farway garden

Farway has a very famous horticultural heritage, namely the Tom Putt apple. Combe Estate's 18th century land owner, Thomas Putt, won several prizes for his fruit trees at agricultural fairs in Honiton; it is thought he passed on this new variety of apple tree to his nephew, Rev. Thomas Putt, rector at St. Michael's, who went on to build Farway School. The school have planted a Thomas Putt apple tree in their grounds as has Tara Huffman, although this triple purpose apple (cider/eater/cooking) is not a favourite of Tara's husband, who eats an apple a day from their apple orchard.



Growing up on the Devon/Somerset border Tara lived amongst the colour and diversity of the fields and hedgerows of the westcountry. Her father was a keen gardener, as was her mother, who inspired Tara's love of flowers. She became a Speech and Language therapist for the NHS and when she retired in 2013 flowers continued to inspire her artwork. Tara had always provided flower decorations for St. Michael's and on occasion she would sell her cut flowers. In 2015 she was asked to do the flowers for a local wedding and this business 'blossomed' until 2020 when Covid-19 arrived. Now Tara provides cut flowers for a local farm shop and bistro and people can order bouquets for delivery

within an eight mile radius (see advert on facing page).

Tara's favourite is Antirrhinum, which she grows alongside larkspur, cornflowers, Sweet William, Scabiosa and Sweet Peas, with flower petals dried for confetti. She also grows the greenery for her bouquets including Lavender and feverfew.



Any flower that Tara doesn't grow herself is sourced as locally as possible, so avoiding the need to import 'exotics' from overseas.

This year the cold weather has delayed flowering and Tara is still collecting blooms from her tunnel that last year would have been flowering in the garden. "I've got a warm greenhouse for my seedlings and every year there are different challenges", Tara tells me with the tolerant good humour that is so familiar amongst British gardeners.

On **Saturday 17th July**, fingers are firmly crossed that the Farway Flower Show can go ahead in Farway Village Hall. With exhibitions, flower arranging, produce, cakes and bakes on show it will be a longed for opportunity for the village to meet up and for Tara to share her love of flowers once more

FARWAY



Some of you may have noticed the brickwork around the water tap between Annings and Saddlecombe Cottage in Farway has been deteriorating over recent years and in need of a total rebuild. Many years ago, this was an important source of drinking water for several houses in the area. Thanks to the generosity of The Bucknall Partnership, this has now been restored.

Many thanks Tim, your help is much appreciated.



FARWAY FLOWER SHOW

will be held on

Saturday 17th July

in the Village Hall

starting at 2:30pm

Show Schedules are available from Pat Beard (871 445), Stefanie Kastner (871 292) and Sheila Lee (871 383) and can be found on the Village Hall website - [www:farwaydevon.org.uk](http://www.farwaydevon.org.uk)

BBQ, BAND & BAR

Saturday 21st AUGUST

7:30pm in Farway Village Hall

Nick will be working his magic behind the BBQ, the Band will be playing and the bar will be open for business.

It promises to be an evening to remember - everyone is welcome.



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Children in all the classes at Offwell School have been busy learning, playing and enjoying being back with their friends. We are all back on track following curriculum guidelines but, at the same time, ensuring that the children are centred, feel safe and know they can relax in the caring environment we create in each class.

In Ash (ages 3 to 5) they have just finished looking at plants and enjoying the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. The children have planted potatoes, runner beans, broad beans and peas and have explored roots and shoots by placing a broad bean between a sheet of blotting paper and a jam jar and then watching the root structure grow. They were excited by dandelion clocks being seeds (one of the children made a great model of one with straws) and discovering some 'tree seeds' (nuts) germinating in the flower beds.



All the children helped to make props to act out Jack and the Beanstalk including mixing their own salt dough to make magic beans and learning how to thread a harp. There was a cottage (complete with window to throw the beans out of) and a giant's castle, with beanstalk to climb, all set up outside.

In Willow (ages 5 to 7) they have been busy looking at 'The Scented Garden' with walks around our meadow studying different plants and their structures. They have also been planting a vegetable garden behind their class and are hoping

to create a pizza garden with each segment a different herb.

In Beech (ages 7 to 9) scientific studies have been ongoing into Rocks, Relics and Rumbles with investigative experiments on the properties and appearance of different soil samples and rock types. Learning about the locations and formation of volcanoes was exciting and they looked at a local heroine, Mary Anning, and her work on fossils. On one of their recent walks to the woods they looked for what kinds of rocks were found on the woodland floor.



In Oak (ages 9 to 11) they have been looking at Blood and the Heart. Amongst many activities stand out experiences have been through role playing the circulatory system and tackling some gritty topics about healthy hearts and living by looking at smoking, drugs and alcohol and their effects on the body. The class were able to demonstrate how much they have grown in maturity in their passage through the school by talking sensibly and thoughtfully about serious issues.

We are looking forward to better weather to continue enjoying PE up at the Village Field and getting in shape for Sports Day!

THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH AND ITS NAUGHTY PAST!

Hidden messages and tongue-in-cheek depictions were widespread throughout medieval churches and St. Mary's has a classic example of 'moon carvings' on one of the pillar capitals near the chancel.

Mooning means '*the exposure of one's buttocks to someone in order to insult or amuse them*' so was the medieval world rife with satire or did these etchings and carvings hold deeper meanings?

Animal imagery was popular with monkeys depicted as doctors, pall bearers and bell ringers. It's believed that apes were so called as they were said to 'ape' the behaviour of human beings. They were seen as thoughtless and compulsive parodies of humanity, displaying gluttony, vanity and foolishness – powerful reminders of the potential within all medieval men and women to engage in depraved acts and sin.

A 12th century parish church in Northamptonshire has a 'mooning man' stone gargoyle perched on the side of the tower. Local legend has it that his proud posterior is pointing in the direction of the stonemason of Peterborough Cathedral, in protest at not being paid.



'Moon' carvings can be found adorning the exterior of churches across the country in the form of gargoyles or grotesques and also as ornamental frieze fixtures.

Explaining the general purpose of these impish figures is a rather tricky task. There is certainly ample evidence that people mooned each other during the Middle Ages as a sign of insult. Many believe these carvings to be ultimately protective or apotropaic – to reflect the contrast between the world outside the church, beset by the devil and sin, as opposed to the sanctity contained within its walls. The idea is that they were placed to deflect the evil spirits by drawing their attention to these insulting characters. So perhaps the mooner is proudly cocking a snook at the Devil, though he may equally be intended to shock, amuse, or act as a counter and balance to the religious. At St. Mary's I guess we'll never really know.

ST. CUTHBERT'S, WIDWORTHY



'A Pelican in her Piety'

St. Cuthbert's at Widworthy contains some stunning memorials, one of which is for James Marwood (1701-1767) by the famous sculptor John Bacon the Elder, a relative of James' wife Sarah. On the left of the memorial is Justice, on the right Benevolence, both nearly life size. In the basket of Benevolence is a 'Pelican in her Piety', the symbol of love, sacrifice and motherhood.

In medieval Europe pelicans were thought to care so deeply for their young that they would pierce their own breasts to provide blood to drink if food was scarce. This ancient legend, which preceded Christianity, became familiar in Christian imagery as a metaphor for Christ's love and sacrifice on the cross.

The likeliest scenario as to where the story came from is the way in which a pelican feeds its chicks by chewing up fish in her large beak and lowering it to her chest to give them the food. To distant observers this looked like she was pecking her own chest and the fact that some European pelicans have a crimson stain on their beak probably reinforced this idea of feeding her chicks with her own blood.



The famous medieval theologian, Thomas Aquinas, used the imagery in a hymn he composed for the Feast of Corpus Christi:

*Lord Jesus, Good Pelican,
Wash my filthiness and clean me with your Blood,
One drop of which can free
The entire world of all its sins.*

A 'Pelican in her Piety' became such a popular image that it is now seen in many churches and cathedrals. In Devon the pelican is depicted in at least thirteen 16th century church roof bosses. The image can also be found in stained glass, paintings, bench ends, misericords and various carvings in wood and stone all over Europe.

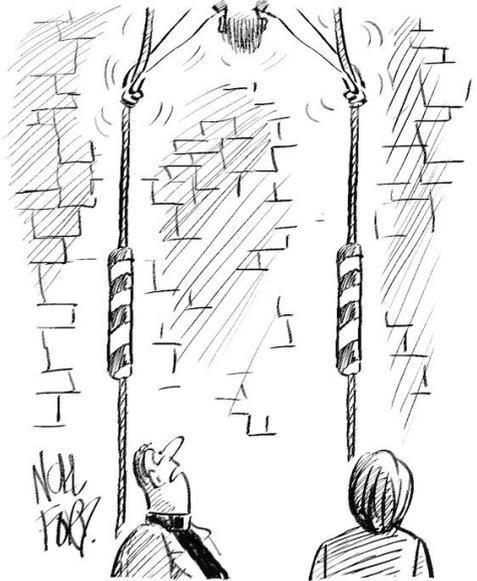
Smile lines

Neighbourhood Watch

In one small rural village the local vet also led the local Neighbourhood Watch group. Late one night the phone rang, and his wife answered. An agitated voice inquired, "Is your husband there?"

"He is, but tell me, do you need him as the vet or the Neighbourhood Watch?" the wife asked.

"Both!" was the reply. "We can't get our dog's mouth open, and there's a burglar in it!"



Eric took social distancing while bell ringing very seriously.

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WIDWORTHY— ST. CUTHBERTS



In normal years, our page of the Link for June would be full of our preparations for the Widworthy Fete which normally is our major fundraising activity of the year. This is the second year running when the COVID restrictions have prevented us from having the Fete so we have not had this income and while the church has been closed for long stretches, the expenses continue. Before any of our running costs for heating, lighting, insurance, fire extinguisher inspections and repairs to an ancient building, we are expected by the Diocese of Exeter to pay £7,678 annually to the Common Fund. They now insist on contributions to the fund from each of the 3 parishes before they will consider advertising for a part-time House for Duty Priest for our Benefice of Offwell, Farway and Widworthy. We now have been without a priest for four years and can only maintain our regular pattern of worship each Sunday through the brilliant and dedicated efforts of our retired clergy, Bishop Oliver Simon and the Revd Nigel Freathy. To try to redress the financial balance and maintain St Cuthbert's not only for regular worship but for all of those who would like to use it for weddings, baptisms, funerals, burials and quiet prayer, we have joined the Parish Giving Scheme. Please consider donating either as a one off (perhaps consider giving what you would have spent at the fete) or on a regular basis so we can keep this beautiful little church alive, well and open for generations to come.

Parish Giving Scheme

Donations to St Cuthbert's can be made through the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) The scheme enables you to:

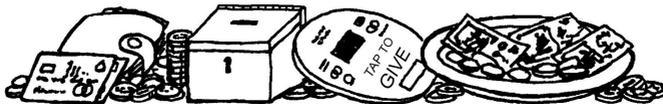
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- Via paper 'Gift Form' – available from your PGS parish representative (currently Tony Cooke 01404 831896)
- Via the PGS telephone service on 0333 002 1271, Monday to Friday, 9am - 5pm

Via the PGS website www.parishgiving.org.uk



Our services in June and July follow their normal pattern with a Lay led Family Service on the first Sunday, Family Services led by the **Revd Nigel Freathy** on the second and forth Sundays and a celebration of Holy Communion on the third Sundays by **Bishop Oliver Simon**.

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THE PRIEST'S DOOR AT ST. MICHAEL'S, FARWAY



While reading about St. Michael's on the Listed Buildings website I noted that: "... the south side of the chancel has a cusped lancet and small priest's door."



Throughout the Middle Ages the laity were regarded as inferior to the clergy. The great medieval authors had little time for the layman; when they did mention him it was usually to stress his subordination to the clergy or to note his excesses. It is little wonder then that a priest's door, set in the south wall of the apse, was used by priests to enter and leave the sanctuary, so separating them from the laity.

Much has been written about the symbolism of sacred doors. In Rome when you enter St. Peter's Basilica the last door on the right-hand side is the Holy Door. This door is bricked up on the inside until the first day of a Jubilee year when the Pope strikes the wall with a hammer and opens the door for visiting pilgrims. Walking through the door symbolizes the passing into the presence of God.

The once rare tradition of 'chalking the door' became an increasingly common sight in 2021. Christians used chalk, which had been blessed, to write the letters CMB and the calendar year on their doorway in a traditional Epiphany celebration. The letters represent the traditional names of the Magi: Caspar, Melchior, Balthazar – and could also stand for the Latin blessing: "*Christus mansionem benedicat*" meaning May Christ bless this house. The Revd. Arwen Folkes revived the tradition in his East Sussex parish: "*In January 2020 none of us knew how profoundly important reviving the tradition of blessing and chalking one's home would prove to be. Those little numbers and letters on the entrance became a reminder of faith and strength for the year that was about to unfold on us.*"

Revelation 3:8

'...behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.'

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