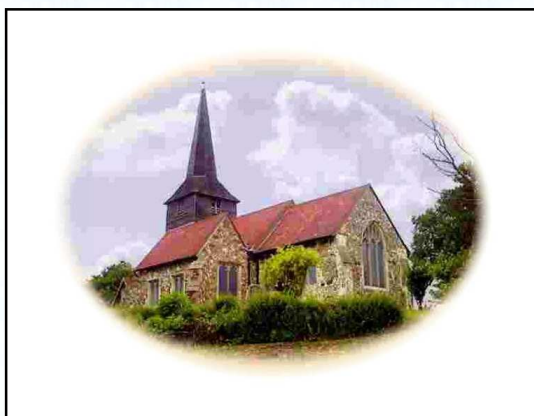


St Nicholas Church, Laindon

Parish of Laindon with Dunton, Essex



St Nicholas Church, Church Hill, Laindon

Parish Magazine

January 2012

... A New Beginning ...

50p
donation

Diary for January 2012

Sunday 1st The Naming and Circumcision of Jesus

10.00 a.m. Family Service

6.30 p.m. Evensong

Tuesday 3rd

9.30 – 11am Nippers (Pram service with toys, crafts, story & singing)

Sunday 8th The Epiphany

10.00 a.m. Holy Communion

Monday 9th

8.00pm PCC Meet in the Vicarage

Tuesday 12th

9.30 – 11am Nippers

Sunday 15th Second Sunday of Epiphany

10.00 a.m. Holy Communion

Tuesday 17th

9.30 – 11am Nippers

Wednesday 18th - 24th

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Sunday 22nd Third Sunday of Epiphany

10.00 a.m. Holy Communion

Tuesday 24th

9.30 – 11am Nippers

Sunday 29th Candlemas

10.00 a.m. Holy Communion

Every Tuesday at 9.30 – 11.00am St Nicholas Nippers. A pram service for the very young with their parent or carer in church.

Every Tuesday at 1.30pm—3.00pm Tuesday Tea. For anyone who has been bereaved or who wants to chat and share some good company. At Manor Mission, Manor Road, Laindon (near Lidl). Hosted by St. Nicholas Church.

Every Saturday at 10.00am E100 Bible Readings + tea/coffee in church.

Bookings

All enquiries for weddings, baptisms and funerals should be made to
Revd. Diane Ricketts 01268 411190
38, Claremont Road, Laindon, Essex SS15 5PZ

From Diane's Desk



I can hardly believe we have come to the beginning of another year – is it something to do with getting older I wonder?

Anyway, it's a good time to look back and forward to see what we have achieved in the past twelve months and prepare to meet the next twelve months.

This time last year I was encouraging you to join in the E100 Bible readings (reading the "essential" 100 passages in a year). Well, we didn't start on January 1st because of the snow and ice and so we haven't quite come to the end yet, but there are only a few more readings to go. Quite a few of us have met on Saturday mornings and some very interesting discussions have taken place, I have certainly found it stimulating.

What are we going to challenge ourselves with this year?

Well, one of the things that struck me in the last year was the number of people who came into Church and remarked on how lovely it is and then went on to say they had never been inside before even though they live quite near. So let's get our thinking caps on and come up with some ideas for making it easy for people to "come in" and experience the warmest welcome.

Our Church building and churchyard are indeed lovely - but lovelier still are the friendships that exist here amongst the people and more importantly with the God we worship. That friendship can and does transform lives. Let us do all we can to help the people of Laindon and Dunton to discover that for themselves this year.

I pray that God will richly bless us as we walk with Him and with each other in 2012.

Diane

January Birthdays

Happy Birthday to you,
Happy Birthday to you,
Happy Birthday,

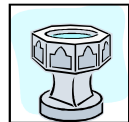


Judy Burston on 1st
Florrie Rogers on 9th
Patricia Hickman on 11th
Chris Graves on 13th
Doreen Williams on 15th
John Farrant on 18th
Marissa Downton on 19th
Maurice Eldridge on 22nd
Davina Webb on 25th
John Kingsley on 30th
Happy Birthday to you!

From the Parish Registers...

We welcome you into the fellowship of faith...

4th Sheri Anne Davis
11th Arabella Lily Emma Ottens
18th Kadie Ellis Harmsworth



May they rest in peace, and rise in glory...

2nd James Alfred Moses Simmons
22nd Edna Wiltshire



dawn.knox@gmail.com

www.stnicholaslaidon.co.uk



I've never been any good at predicting what's going to happen in the future. I carefully consider all the possibilities and then, discover

that something I hadn't even thought of actually takes place!

So, I'm finding it very hard to imagine what 2012 is going to be like - especially since as I type this, it's the week before Christmas. If you listen to the media, times are going to be hard but we also have the excitement of the London Olympics and the celebrations of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee to look forward to. I expect that like most other years, 2012 will be filled with highs and lows for all of us. Here's hoping your 2012 will hold many more highs than lows! Happy, Healthy and Peaceful New Year to you all!

Magazine News

If you are a regular reader of our magazine, you may notice over the coming months that the St. Nicholas Gallery is either absent or much depleted. Unfortunately, printer ink has risen sharply in price and as photographs use up a lot of ink, I've had to restrict the number of them

considerably. I will be putting more photos on our St. Nicholas Church Facebook pages, if you want to see what goes on in our church <https://www.facebook.com/groups/116809441680697/> and more on our website <http://stnicholaslaidon.co.uk>

If you normally have a paper copy of our magazine and you would consider receiving an online copy, either via email or from the church website or Facebook, please let me know.

RSPB Birdwatch

The RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch—the world's biggest wildlife survey—celebrates its 33rd year and takes place on 28th and 29th January 2012.

All you need is a pen, some scrap paper (or, a printout of the RSPB bird ID sheet), and an hour to spend watching the birds in your garden, or local park, on either Saturday 28, or Sunday 29 January 2012. Simply make a note of the highest number of each bird species seen on the ground (not flying over) at any one time, and submit your results on the RSPB website .

With results from so many gardens, the RSPB are able to create a 'snapshot' of bird numbers in each region. This is important because

they've been able to see that some of our birds are disappearing in scary numbers.

We've lost more than half our house sparrows and some three-quarters of our starlings. And our results have helped the RSPB to highlight these dramatic declines.

However, it isn't all doom and gloom - the surveys help the RSPB spot problems, but more importantly, they are also the first step in putting things right.

Stamps and Postcards

Most of us receive more post from friends and family at this time of year, so, don't forget to save the stamps off your Christmas card envelopes and give them to **Ken Porter**. He also collects postcards for charity too.

EasyFundraising

We now have eleven members who use EasyFundraising to raise money for our church. If you're off to the January sales, you might like to avoid the crowds and buy online! If you're not a member of our EasyFundraising group, please consider joining. Details can be found on page 38, or ask me, thanks.

Thank You Summerhill!

If you were able to attend any of our Christmas services at St. Nicholas Church, you will have noticed our lovely Christmas tree. You may even have hung a bauble on it with a label to remember those you weren't able to spend Christmas with. We are very grateful, once again to **Summerhill Garden Centre** for furnishing us with a splendid Christmas Tree! Thank you to all at Summerhill!



The church looked magnificent for our Christmas services, so thanks to everyone who cleaned and decorated. Thanks also to the choir who sang beautifully at the Carol Service on Sunday 18th December.

As I type this, the Christingle, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services are still to come but if they are anything like the Carol Service, they will be wonderful too.

There's only room now, to wish you and your families a wonderful 2012. Every blessing!

Dawn

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The Bishop's New Year Message

The Olympic year has arrived. The whole world is coming to the Chelmsford Diocese.

What does this mean for us? What will people be looking for?

Well, the lucky ones who have tickets won't be doing much more than enjoying the games. But most of us didn't get tickets. We want to watch what's happening and cheer our competitors on, but I think, intuitively, we are rather hoping that it will be something more than just sitting in front of the telly with a pizza on our lap and a beer in our hand.

The Olympics is a great world-wide festival of sport and culture. It is happening on our door step. We want to feel as if we're joining in the celebrations, not just observing them. This is where the church comes in. We have an opportunity here to use the excitement and the anticipation of the Olympics to bring people together, to create in our own communities a place of celebration, where just watching the event together, with others, can make us feel part of it.

Building community is a vital ministry for the church. Many of us lead isolated lives. Often we know the names of the people who live in Albert Square, but haven't spoken to our own next door neighbour for years. But loving your neighbour is basic to the Christian faith. It is also what people crave. We long to live in warm, supportive and cohesive communities. So drawing people together in community celebrations is good in itself: it is also the indispensable prerequisite of any Christian service or mission. Unless we know people and people know us there can be no effective witness.



So make the most of the Olympics. Enjoy them. Think how we can use this opportunity to build community and nurture friendship. From it God can do all sorts of other wonderful things; and in itself it is a sign of God's hospitality and God's longing for the world to live in peace. This might be a good New Year's resolution: what can I do to get to know my neighbour and to serve my community?

What's On?

Monday 2nd January – Langdon Hills Country Park, Westley Heights – 'Walk off that Turkey' with the rangers – 7.00pm

Tuesday 10th January – At the Cliffs Pavilion, Westcliff on Sea – Katherine Jenkins with Nathan Pacheco 7.30pm – Sorry sold out!

Tuesday 17th to Saturday 28th January – At the Cliffs Pavillion, Westcliff on Sea – 'Legally Blonde—The Musical' Tickets from £20.50p. 01702 351135

Saturday 14th January – Barleylands Farmers' Market – 8.30am-12.30pm

Tuesday 17th January – Queen's Theatre, Hornchurch – 2.30pm – 'Music Hall'- an afternoon of traditional entertainment – 01708 443333

Saturday 21st January – Wickford Library 2.00pm-3.00pm – Paws and Claws – Listen to story telling and learn how to draw your favourite book characters – suitable for 4-11 year olds

Friday 27th January – Laindon and District Community Archive Group – Memory Day at Laindon Library-10.00am to 12.00 noon.

Saturday 28th January – Barleylands Farmers' Market – 8.30am – 12.30pm

CRUNCH TIMES

Saturday 28th January – Laindon Link, Bluehouse Community Centre- 9.00am to 12.00noon.

St. Nicholas Snippets

Essex Media Workshop

The Essex Media Workshop, (EMW) based in Pitsea near Northlands Park is a small charity dedicated to bringing the media of television and video to all. It offers the 7502 Diploma in Media Techniques free to disabled adults. It also offers training sessions for school and colleges in their full broadcast standard studio. They cover such things as filming, editing, scripting, media transfer, CD and DVD art work design, studio hire, encoding for the web etc:

They have in the past couple of years produced their own educational DVD's for schools on the 'Women's Land Army' and on the 'Civil Defence'. They are currently working on a DVD on evacuees from the Second World War and are

therefore looking for people who might have been an evacuee. If you were one and are happy to be interviewed and possibly filmed by Richard and Andy please contact them on 01268 55571 or let me know.

The Only Way is Essex.

I have never watched an episode of the television programme `The Only Way is Essex` but I understand that it has a very large following. Well, it would appear that a new show `My Essex Girls` is on its way to rival it.

Comedian and television presenter Graham Norton has been filming scenes in Basildon. He was filmed being shown around Pitsea Marshes, Pitsea Railway Station and Festival Leisure Park.

The show's producer Reece Jackson lives in Dry Street, Langdon Hills and the programme is being jointly funded by Essex Media Workshop (above), Bardot Media and Canvey based construction firm, Paul Masters.

It is hoped with Graham Norton being one of the stars of the programme it will be as successful as the current television show. A pilot episode will be aired on ITV2 next summer.

Proud Grandparents.

Kayleigh, my nine year old granddaughter, is full of energy, noisy, the first one to put her hand up if a question is asked and then the next minute she appears to be completely ignoring you but in fact she has taken in every thing you have said. She is lovely but also she is frustrating but then she will come up with the something like the following:-

Christmas Shopping

Waiting at the station it's taking so long,

is the train late or might I be wrong?

The sun is bright the sky is clear,

how I wish the train was near.

Getting on the train now a long journey ahead,

I'm so tired I wish I'm in bed.

Arriving in London, lots of people around,

there's a real atmosphere here, a real buzzing sound.

Going Christmas shopping, Hamleys for the day,

We won't get lost we'll all find our way.

By Kayleigh Elizabeth Porter

She typed this up on her Dad's Blackberry while on the train, not quite sure where this talent comes from - certainly not from me. Watch this space there

are more to come.

The Vicar's Spot (Sport)

England won their first ever Netball tournament (The World Series Fastnet) when they defeated New Zealand 33-26 after defeating Australia in the Semi Final, the Echo Arena, Liverpool on the 27th November.

Next year, the United States will be added to the Formula 1 racing programme. It will be the first in the United States since 2007 and will be held at Austin, Texas.

Watch out for Basildon AC's Gemma Kersey, she has just won a place in the Great Britain Team for the European Cross Country Championships. She is currently coached by our Eamonn Martin.

Ken Porter

Message from Audrey Pegrum

Teddies for Tragedies

Dear Teddy Friends,

Thank you all so much for all the support you have given to me throughout the year either by knitting, crocheting, sewing squares together to make blankets, giving teddies tender loving care before they are sent out, making teddy bags, filling margarine boxes with toiletries, or giving me toiletries, collecting clothes and shoes, helping with the Shoebox appeal and last but not least helping to sponsor children to give them an education and a chance in life.

It is wonderful to spread joy and happiness to many people who have so little and I take this opportunity to wish you all peace, joy and happiness at Christmas and in the coming year. May God bless you always.

Yours in Christian love.

Audrey



Questions and Answers

Here are some questions that are reported to have been asked by lawyers in Massachusetts, USA and the responses given by the witnesses.

Q. Did he kill you?

Q. How far apart were the vehicles at the time of the collision?

Q. You were there until the time you left, is that true?

Q. How many times have you committed suicide?

Q. She had three children, right?

A. Yes.

Q. How many were boys?

A. None.

Q. Were there any girls?

Q. You say the stairs went down to the basement?

A. Yes.

Q. And these stairs, did they go up also?

Q. Mr Slatery, you went on a rather elaborate honeymoon, didn't you?

A. I went to Europe, Sir.

Q. And you took your new wife?

Q. How was your first marriage terminated?

A. By death.

Q. And by whose death was it terminated?

Q. Can you describe the individual?

A. He was about medium height and had a beard.

Q. Was this a male or a female?

Q. Doctor, how many of your autopsies have you performed on dead people?

A. All my autopsies are performed on dead people.

Mona Secker

You've Been Frymed!

John Kingsley can breathe a sigh of relief this month after being the focus of attention recently.

For this edition, I have delved into the archives once again, to unearth a gem from a garden party at the Vicarage, in June 2008. Hetty Eldridge and Chris Graves are being entertained by sausage-eating Associate Minister Helen Bryan.

Doesn't it make you just want to stab one tonight?

If you would like to challenge me to come up with a caption for one of your photos, it's just a £1 donation to church funds. Send your pics by email to the editor at dawn.knox@gmail.com.

Caption: Helen's explanation helps Hetty and Chris to understand how her Sunday sermon was like the peace of Christ and the Kingdom of God. It passed all understanding and went on for ever and ever!



Graham Fry

The Story of Your Life

Imagine you are editing the story of your life. What parts of the plot are essential? Which settings are necessary? Which characters are indispensable? And what could be left out? What parts of your life feel like filler?

Now stop imagining, because you *are* editing the story of your life. Every choice you make -- the home you live in, the furniture you buy, the knickknacks on the mantelpiece, the relationships you keep, the career you choose, the activities you engage in, the media you consume -- shape your story.

We all want our lives to be good stories. We want beautiful settings, an interesting plot, great characters and a good message. But good stories need good editors. That can be difficult for many of us. Good editors must be willing to let go of everything that doesn't move the story forward; this includes letting go of things they might have strong emotional attachments to. But they know that great stories can be ruined when crowded out by unnecessary elements.

Two hundred years of industrialisation has brought us to a point where we can produce products, services and information at an overwhelming rate. The story of our civilization in 2012 is like one big, rough draft. It is a great story, whose meaning is often obscured by unimportant and unnecessary stuff.

2012 is the time to edit. We edit for the sake of the planet, for the sake of our wallets, for the sake of our happiness.

Your personal edit might be participating in a car share, or buying one less pair of jeans, carefully considering friendships and relationships or perhaps thinking about our leisure activities.



The specifics are not important. Simply remember that everything you add to your life that is not important, detracts from everything that is.

Shauna Jones

John's Achilles Tendon

It's a name that we have all probably come across at sometime in our lives but haven't really given a lot of thought to.

It's a name that you may hear in the news where, for example, a famous sportsperson has been stuck down or in some extreme cases where it has ended a promising career.

I'm here to tell you that you don't need to have an interest in sport to suffer from this long and painful injury, it can happen to any one of us at any time. In my case it happened in work performing a relatively simple task.

At first I thought that some one had given me a "dead leg", a throw back from my childhood days where your leg goes numb with a "pins and needles" sensation, but I very soon realised after the acute rush of pain and the inability to walk that it was a lot more serious than that.

I was duly dispatched to Basildon A&E where I was questioned, poked and prodded and eventually told that I had ruptured my Achilles Tendon.

What was that? I knew that it was something that ran down the back of my leg that operated certain parts of my foot but that was the extent of my knowledge on the subject. What I was told was that I faced spending the next twelve weeks in plaster.

For the first time in my life, after my leg was placed in a full plaster cast, I felt slightly lost and out of control. The thought of not being able to walk, drive, work or do so many things that most of us take for granted, was very unsettling.

During the day my wife, Diane, became full time nurse, head cook and bottle washer to which I am eternally grateful, not so sure how she feels though! (Please spare a thought for her in your prayers).

But during the night I would often wake up with all my worse thoughts and fears magnified ten fold - what I now know to be Panic Attacks.

Three things have helped, one, a short course of sleeping tablets, two, knowing a friend of a friend who has been there, done it and got the T shirt! Through them I know that panic attacks are a very common experience and, reassuringly, I am not losing my mind (contrary to common belief), and thirdly having the faith to be able to ask for the strength of our Lord.

I have now come to terms with it and I'm counting the days when I can once again leap up St. Nic's steps (Ok, walk one at a time) to join you all in

prayer and music.

Achilles Tendon is a tendon that joins the calf muscle to the ankle and is encased in a tube. When ruptured it tears and forms a blood clot. By angling the foot into a pointed position this helps to close the tear and speed-up recovery time.

John Dennis

Lifelong Learning

I've learned ... That the best classroom in the world is at the feet of an elderly person.

I've learned ... That when you're in love, it shows.

I've learned ... That just one person saying to me, 'You've made my day!' makes my day.

I've learned ... That having a child fall asleep in your arms is one of the most peaceful feelings in the world.

I've learned ... That being kind is more important than being right.

I've learned ... That you should never say no to a gift from a child.

I've learned ... That I can always pray for someone when I don't have the strength to help him or her in some other way.

I've learned ... That no matter how serious your life requires you to be, everyone needs a friend to act crazily with.

I've learned ... That sometimes all a person needs is a hand to hold and a heart to understand.

I've learned ... That simple walks with my father around the block on summer nights when I was a child did wonders for me as an adult.

I've learned ... That life is like a roll of toilet paper. The closer it gets to the end, the faster it goes.

I've learned ... That we should be glad God doesn't give us everything we ask for.

I've learned ... That money doesn't buy class.

I've learned ... That it's those small daily happenings that make life so spectacular.

I've learned ... That under everyone's hard shell is someone who wants to be appreciated and loved.

I've learned ... That to ignore the facts does not change the facts.

I've learned ... That when you plan to get even with someone, you are only letting that person continue to hurt you.

I've learned ... That love, not time, heals all wounds.

I've learned ... That the easiest way for me to grow as a person is to surround myself with people smarter than I am.

I've learned ... That everyone you meet deserves to be greeted with a smile.

I've learned ... That no one is perfect until you fall in love with them.

I've learned ... That life is tough, but I'm tougher.

I've learned ... That opportunities are never lost; someone will take the ones you miss.

I've learned ... That when you harbour bitterness, happiness will dock elsewhere.

I've learned ... That I wish I could have told my mum that I love her one more time before she passed away.

I've learned ... That I should keep my words both soft and tender, because tomorrow I may have to eat them.

I've learned ... That a smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks.

I've learned ... That when your newly-born grandchild holds your little finger in his or her little fist, that you're hooked for life.

I've learned ... That everyone wants to live on top of the mountain, but all the happiness and growth occurs while you're climbing it.

I've learned ... That the less time I have to work with, the more things I get done.

Andy Rooney



Jan Revell

Computer Bits

If you're using the Internet and you find that you're waiting a long time for a webpage to load or indeed, the webpage refuses to load, try refreshing or reloading the page, so that it can try again. There are several ways to do this.

In Internet Explorer, click on the button with two green, curved arrows.



In Mozilla Firefox, click on the blue curved arrow button.



Alternatively, press the F5 key, which can be found in the top row of your keyboard and your page will reload.

Incidentally, if you click on the 'house' button (see above), you will go back to your home page i.e. the page that opens when you first open your browser.

Keyboard Shortcuts

Ctrl + A— Highlight and select all

Ctrl + C—Copy

Ctrl + V—Paste

Ctrl + X—Cut

Ctrl + B—Embolden text

Ctrl + U—Underline text

Ctrl + I—Italicise text

Ctrl + Home key—Takes you to the beginning of your document

Ctrl + End key—Takes you to the end of your document

Ctrl + Page Up or Down keys—go up or down one page at a time

Ctrl + N—Open a new page

Ctrl + P—Print menu

Ctrl + S— Save

And if it all goes horribly wrong, Ctrl + Z undoes your last action!

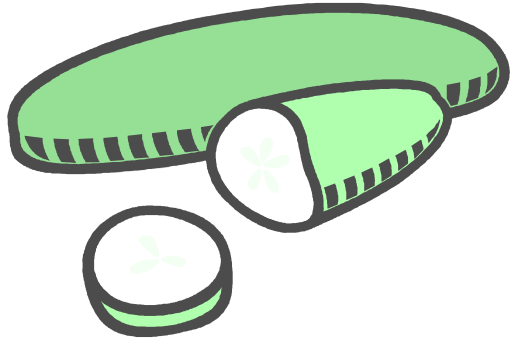
New Year Cleansing!

If you've over indulged during the festive season, you may like to take a fresh look at something that might be in your fridge now—a cucumber! But according to Freda Happé's friend, Rita Butterworth, this wonder food is extremely versatile and can be used in a variety of ways, other than just eating it. If you use any of these tips and find them effective, please let us know! Or perhaps you have some other uses for the humble cucumber?

1. Cucumbers contain most of the vitamins you need every day, just one cucumber contains Vitamin B1, Vitamin B2, Vitamin B3, Vitamin B5, Vitamin B6, Folic Acid, Vitamin C, Calcium, Iron, Magnesium, Phosphorus, Potassium and Zinc.
2. Feeling tired in the afternoon, put down the fizzy drink or coffee and pick up a cucumber. Cucumbers are a good source of B vitamins and carbohydrates that can provide that quick pick-me-up that can last for hours.
3. Tired of your bathroom mirror fogging up after a shower? Try rubbing a cucumber slice along the mirror, it will eliminate the fog and provide a soothing, spa-like fragrance.
4. Are grubs and slugs ruining your planting beds? Place a few slices in a small aluminium pie tin and your garden will be free of pests all season long. The chemicals in the cucumber react with the aluminium to give off a scent undetectable to humans but drive garden pests crazy and make them flee the area.
5. Looking for a fast and easy way to remove cellulite before going out or to the swimming pool? Try rubbing a slice or two of cucumber along your problem area for a few minutes, chemicals in the cucumber cause the collagen in your skin to tighten, firming up the outer layer and reducing the visibility of cellulite. Works great on wrinkles too!
6. Want to avoid a hangover or terrible headache? Eat a few cucumber slices before going to bed and wake up refreshed and headache free. Cucumbers contain enough sugar, B vitamins and electrolytes to replenish essential nutrients the body has lost, keeping everything in equilibrium, avoiding both a hangover and headache!
7. Looking to fight off that afternoon or evening snacking binge? Cucumbers have been used for centuries particularly by European trappers, traders and

explorers to prevent starvation.

8. Have an important meeting or job interview and you realize that you don't have enough time to polish your shoes? Rub a freshly cut cucumber over the shoe, its chemicals will provide a quick and durable shine that not only looks great but also repels water.



9. Out of WD 40 and need to fix a squeaky hinge? Take a cucumber slice and rub it along the problematic hinge, and voila, the squeak is gone!

10. Stressed out and don't have time for massage, facial or visit to the spa? Cut up an entire cucumber and place it in a pot of boiling water, the chemicals and nutrients from the cucumber will react with the boiling water and be released in the steam, creating a soothing, relaxing aroma that has been shown to reduce stress in new mothers and in college students during final exams.

11. Just finished a business lunch and realise you don't have gum or mints? Take a slice of cucumber and press it to the roof of your mouth with your tongue for 30 seconds to eliminate bad breath, the chemicals will kill the bacteria in your mouth responsible for causing bad breath.

12. Looking for a 'green' way to clean your taps, sinks or stainless steel? Take a slice of cucumber and rub it on the surface you want to clean, not only will it remove years of tarnish and bring back the shine, but it won't leave streaks and won't harm your fingers or fingernails while you clean.

13. Using a pen and made a mistake? Take the outside of the cucumber and slowly use it to erase the pen writing, also works great on crayons and markers that the children have used to decorate the walls!

14. Cucumber water is also very nourishing for the kidneys and keeps the body hydrated in extreme heat

Rita Butterworth

The Parish Magazine—1951

Recently, Peter Hartgrove lent me a copy of the March 1951 edition of the Laindon-cum-Basildon Parish Magazine, which makes very interesting reading. It is a similar size to the parish magazine that we have today with fewer pages although the text was much smaller and is quite hard to read. It was also cheaper - costing three old pence!

I had assumed the magazine would be full of information about our church, Laindon or Basildon but was surprised at the scope of items—from articles such as *'The Cross in Art and History'*, to the sixth instalment of a story entitled *'The Dividing Line, the Strange Story of a Feud'* by V. M. Methley. Has anyone got the next instalment? I'd love to know how the story ends!

The magazine contains information about various churches, from all round the country, such as Porthcawl in Wales, Stogursey in Somerset, Lavendon in Buckinghamshire. My favourite snippet is entitled *'The Dog Door'*

'At Mullion, in Cornwall, there is a small door about the size of an entrance to a dog kennel in the front door of the parish church, known as the dog door through which in the olden days, dogs could go in and out as they pleased during the service. If they proved noisy, they were carried out by the verger with a pair of tongs big enough to get hold of them round the body. One of these is preserved in St. Asaph Cathedral in North Wales—The Rev A.B. Mosley.'

Another animal-themed item entitled *'Perch on the Pulpit?'* appeared in the *'Church News and Views'*

'Swallows are not to be banned from flying about the 12th Century church of St. John's, Newton, Porthcawl, during services. Some people claimed that the birds, which nest in the roof of the porch, distracted the congregation and suggestions were made to the rector that the doors be closed.

"I will not allow the door to be shut," said the Rector, the Rev. W. Roach. "If our feathered friends want to join us in worshipping they are welcome. If they want to perch on my pulpit they may do so" - Miss Best'

One of my favourite parts was the *'Weekday Pages for Women with Homes'*. The double page spread had tips for each day of the week. Here are some excerpts from those pages:

Monday's Washing

Washing your Skirt

Here is a hint for people who like to wash their own skirt. Squeeze the skirt gently through soapy, not too hot, water, rinse several times in clean water, then take a wooden curtain rod or a straight stick and slide the skirt on to it. Let the opening lie along the stick, do not wring out, lay the stick on to the line and leave until the skirt is dry. You will find that it will dry a good shape and need very little pressing. Miss G. Grey.

Tuesday's Sewing

Everything Handy

Make an attractive coat hanger for your little girl. Cover it with pretty material with a deep pocket for gloves, scarf and purse. When she is ready to go out, there need be no searching for these. Mrs Peate.

Wednesday's Nursing

Sallow Complexions

Two teaspoonfuls of flowers of sulphur mixed in a pint of new milk and allowed to stand for a short time before being used. This is recommended for clearing the skin. Dab on with a piece of cotton wool. Miss E.M. Harding.

Thursday's Cooking

A Change

Spread slices of bread with your favourite brand of meat and vegetable extract. Dip these into beaten egg and milk, then fry. A tasty addition is grated cheese. Miss A. Lewis.

Delicious!

An excellent scramble to serve on buttered toast. Simmer celery in milk after cutting up in small pieces, add a tablespoonful of grated cheese with pepper and salt, cook until the celery is tender, then break in an egg and stir quickly. It is really delicious. Mrs Peate.

Friday's Household

A Simple Way

A brooch can be safely worn on a thin dress or blouse by fastening the pin through a piece of cotton wool placed inside the garment. This will keep the brooch upright. Mrs Goodwin.

Saturday's Children

Blepharitis

This is very common among children. Very often caused by dirty hands rubbing the eyes. It may occur after measles, sore throats or bad teeth. The eyes should be bathed with weak bicarbonate of soda, a teaspoonful to a pint. At night, use ointment which should be smeared round the edges of the lids. Miss E.M. Harding.

DAWN

St. Nicholas Gallery



The children's Messy Christmas afternoon took place on Saturday 17th December 2011 and twenty-seven children took part in the Christmas activities, carol singing and tree dressing. Photos of the event can be found on our website on the [gallery](#) page.



Cookery with Valerie



My first recipe of 2011 was given to me by one of my dear friends from the Mothers Union
Thank you, Ada.

Malakof Gateau

Ingredients:

2 packets sponge fingers
2 oz sugar (50g)
½ oz flour (10g)
4 oz butter (110g)
Yolk of egg

¼ pint milk (150ml)
1 level tbsp coffee powder
2 oz ground nuts (50g)
A few flaked almonds
Cream to cover

Method:

Put flour in a saucepan.
Mix in yolk and milk.
Bring to the boil and simmer for 1 minute.
Leave to cool.
Cream sugar and butter.
Add nuts and coffee.
Add mixture from saucepan and beat.
Stand sponge fingers around a loose bottomed 7" tin.
Put in half the mixture then a layer of sponge fingers (quick-dipped in the milk).
Then add a layer of mixture.
Then add more fingers.
Finish by adding the remaining mixture.
Keep in the fridge at least for 24 hours.
Remove from tin and cover with cream and top with flaked almonds.



Church Wardens' Report

The external church walls damaged by graffiti have been repaired by Bakers of Danbury and they have kindly plastered the sanctuary walls where the two brasses were. The brasses have been taken away for cleaning and will be returned and re-fixed in new places in the New Year.

The area around the bicycle rack has been landscaped with shingle.

Stuart and Maurice have completed the boarding out of the container and the first of the church yard equipment has been placed inside. Shelving has still to be done and also the outside landscaping.

Stuart and Peter have planted two more trees, Persian Ironwood (*Earrotia*) this time in the northern boundary hedge row.

All the various gardens are looking neat and tidy for this time of the year, thanks to Corinne and Brian. There is still however a lot to be done in the church yard in particular the cutting back of brambles before they get a hold especially in the northern church yard.

Several months ago Jim had to give up helping out on a Saturday morning because of hip problems but he is making good recovery and hopes to back in the New Year.

Church Wardens

Freda's Tips

Tea in the Garden

To prepare your garden for a lovely show of flowers next year, scatter used tea bags on your soil, they make cheap, effective fertiliser.

Mobile Memory

If you can't remember your mobile phone number, write it on a piece of paper and sellotape it to the back of the phone, so it's always to hand.

Bubbly Bride and Groom

Instead of throwing confetti at a wedding, why not blow bubbles? It won't create any mess and it's something different.



It seems very strange to write to you now, in December. When you read this, Christmas will be over and we will all be recovering from the excess of New Year and probably have a much lighter pocket!



The ladies and I spent a very enjoyable afternoon last month having lunch together.

It is our custom to book into a local eating house and this time it was the Toby Carvery at the Festival Leisure Park for our Christmas luncheon. We had not been to the Carvery before as it has only just changed hands. John and I have been to other carveries and on visiting this one, we thought that it was big enough to accommodate all our ladies.

Sitting together, all on one table, pulling Christmas crackers and chatting enjoyably together, was the order of the day. The food was pretty good too! We had starters, the usual choice—prawn cocktail, garlic mushrooms or soup, followed by the Carvery itself or salmon. Then the for indulgence you get with a special meal - the dessert. Christmas Pud of course, treacle pud, (wow!) or profiteroles and the ever-popular, ice cream.

Our waiter was very attentive and we all left there several hours later ready for a good sleep.

Thank you all very much for your company and of course we will do it all again this Christmas—2012.

If anyone would like to join our happy band of ladies (and gents!) we will be meeting at a new time next month, **February 6th at 2pm** in the afternoon at St. Nicholas Vicarage. The ladies have had a vote and decided that it is safer to come out in the afternoon during daylight than in the dark. So please if you would like to have a cup of tea, a biscuit and listen to some very good speakers one afternoon a month, do visit the vicarage, you will be more than welcome.

A very Happy New Year to you all and please keep yourself warm and safe.

God Bless
Val

This Month in History

1st January 1909 – The first old age pension payments to half a million people are made. Payments were between one shilling and five shillings a week, payable to men and women over the age of 70 whose annual income was under £31 a year.

7th January 1558 – France recaptures Calais from England after 200 years under English control. The town had surrendered to Edward III in 1347.

8th January 1940 – Food rationing is introduced with bacon, butter and sugar being the first foodstuffs.

16th January 1991 – The first Persian Gulf War begins, when a United Nations deadline calling for Iraq to withdraw its army from Kuwait ended.

17th January 1820 – Anne Bronte is born in the Yorkshire village of Thornton.

17th January 1929 – Popeye the Sailor makes his first appearance in the Thimble Theatre comic strip

18th January 1778 – Captain Cook discovers the Hawaiian Islands. He names them the Sandwich Islands after John Montague, Earl of Sandwich.

22nd January 1879 – The British invasion force is defeated at the battle of Isandlwana by a Zulu army. The first battle of the Zulu War and it took place ten miles east of the Tugela River in Zululand, South Africa

24th January 1965 – Sir Winston Churchill dies at the age of ninety.

25th January 1759 – Robert Burnes (Burns) is born in Alloway, Ayrshire.

30th January 1948 – Mahatma Gandhi is assassinated.

30th January 1649 – Charles I is beheaded on the scaffold outside the Banqueting House in Whitehall.



Ken Porter



Histories, Memories... Part 73

Mary Hawkins story continued (4):-

I had quite a lot of friends although they all lived about 15-25 minutes away from our house. We had a shed which Dad turned half into a playhouse for me with a settee and table. I kept all my dolls and toys in it and I was able to have food in there and play mums and dads when my friends came round. In the summer, Mum would take us to the pond and catch tiddlers and if it had been raining the ground was often covered in tiny frogs. We also went for lots of walks; blackberry picking and collecting sloes along the hedgerows for making wine.

One of my special friends was Rosemary, Aunty Grace's niece and then there was Peggy, Fay and Alan, Aunty Grace's son. We were all of the same age and often played in the shed or garden. Quite often Mum would make us a picnic and we would have it at the bottom of the garden. We had a swing and on the large cement yard we would chalk out games to play. Occasionally we went into the nearby field to play in the hay. Mum would often come with us if we went further a field and on the way back she would buy us ice cream.

When I went round to Rosemary and Alan's to play, I would stay for tea. Rosemary had lived with her parents in India for a few years and all their furniture came from there. It always fascinated me as it was very different from our English furniture.

A friend of Mum's, Mrs Mudd used to play in the band that my parents had got together to play at dances at the Entertainment Hall in the Lower Dunton Road. Mrs Mudd had a monkey as a pet which she kept in her loft at night but during the day it was allowed out although it was kept on a long lead. It was lovely but a little devil and one day it got one of their kittens took it up into the loft and sat at the window cuddling it. Unfortunately she held it too tightly and squeezed it to death. She would also walk along the top of the settee and grab the big cats' tails or take coals out of the fire and drop them on the floor because they were too hot. So eventually she had to be kept out of the lounge and any other rooms where she could get up to mischief. I went round there one day and took one of my dolls with long blonde hair with me she loved playing with it but when I went to leave she grab my hair and hung on to it making me cry.

The local milkman told me that on one occasion after he had filled the jug that Mrs Mudd had left under the porch at her side door, he saw the monkey who was sitting on the roof of the porch go to the toilet straight in to the jug. He did not like the monkey or Mrs Mudd so he never told her. I never drank a glass of milk there again.

Mr Mudd played the violin, Mrs Mudd the accordion, Dad the drums and Mum the piano in the local band that played every week at the dance in the Entertainment Hall. The hall was always full with refreshments being made and served by the local women. Mum usually made cakes and sponges.

The local Vicar, the Reverend Isbistor would always put in an appearance and it was quite a joke that he always came at the interval when tea and cakes were being served. One day when the vicar came, my mum knocked his panama hat off the draining board where he had put it, into the sink of water. Our headmaster, Mr Newman was a man of six foot tall and as big as he was wide, but he was a nice and gentle man, grabbed the hat and stretched it over one of the kettles. He said that was what his mother used to do to turn her hats into different shapes. The vicar carried on eating, oblivious to what he had done. When the hat was dry it was placed back where he had left it and when he collected it, he remarked 'My hat looks cleaner, I think it must be these shaded lights' to which we nearly all keeled over with laughter.

The dances in the hall were great and everybody was very friendly. There was never any trouble and all ages mixed together for all forms of dancing. Once a month a coach was hired and took many of us up to Hammersmith Palace near Barking. We all danced old time dances in our Sunday best, a great time was had by everybody and we often got the chance to dance with professionals.

In the winter we still had our dancing and Thursday night church clubs but to get to the venues was quite a task as it was, to get to the school. Without proper roads the footpaths used to get over run with water. One winter, the snow was so deep it was up to our hips in some places but we still went to school where we changed into dry clothes and shoes. Looking back I often wonder how mothers coped with no washing machines or dryers to get our cloths ready for the next day. When the snow went it left large puddles and we could paddle without getting told off, though this was not so good on shopping days when we had to carry the shopping from the main road.

The church club was very good, we learnt how to carve, weave, arrange flowers, cook simple things and many other crafts, all taught by local people. Twice a year we would go on outings to the sea side and to a show in London. There were always people willing to help out, we never got bored, we always had things to do...

The milkman's horse was called Snowy, like the monkey he was a bit of a devil and often escaped from the field he was kept in. He was not the friendliest of horses and whenever he escaped a hue and cry went up and mothers would run and get their children to take them indoors. Many a time you would see the milkman running after him down the road calling him everything other than a horse until he tired and just stopped to eat grass!

To be continued next month:
Ken Porter 01268 546179
k.kfp@btinternet.com



The View From My Pew

The View from my pew



A monthly offering

The Prologue: St Nicholas Lottery:

Ultimately it's all just luck! If it were at all predictable then millions of people would win the lottery every week! Have fun, risk 50p and try to predict the bonus ball number!

Happy New Year

How strange, 2012 is here. This will be the year of; The Queen's Diamond Jubilee, Euro 2012 Football and the London Olympics. How could any self-respecting Brit NOT be happy with these prospects in 2012?

Many will be looking at changes to their personal circumstances and wondering why so many people are throwing a party for this and that, whilst others are:

- Losing hope about keeping their job
- Fearful of maintaining a roof over their heads or putting food on their table

Many people will be wondering how, with all the predicted doom and economic gloom, just how it is that many million pounds will be used on just the three headline events mentioned above.

In his brief meeting with Pilate, Jesus said that He had come to testify to the Truth

John 18:36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom does not belong to this world. If my kingdom belonged to this world, my servants would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But for now my kingdom is not from here."

John 18:37 Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. I was born for this, and I came into the world for this: to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth ***listens to my voice.***"

John 18:38 Pilate said to him, "What is 'truth'?" After he said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no basis for a charge against him.

The truth, you see, is a very hard thing to track down, capture and state exactly. Opinions however are freely available and many would have you believe that their own opinion is THE TRUTH. Pilate was quite a wise old bird when he decided that the Sanhedrin's opinion was just that!

Although the truth is an elusive butterfly that will always just escape us if we let it, Jesus claimed that He was the Way, the Truth and the Life.

This year, please just put aside a little bit of time to look at the scriptures to identify exactly what Jesus said and search for Him and His ways whenever you encounter some severe dose of doubt in 2012. The year will be just like any other year in that it will be full of questions. You now know where a lot of the answers lie and where the truth always is.

See also "Seek ye first the kingdom of God"

I have just re-read the best sermon ever written, which is Charles Dickens' *'A Christmas Carol'* and the truest quote from it, is an earnest, small plea from an equally small boy that "God Bless us all – everyone" which is made by the *almost lost* Tiny Tim.

It just remains this month to wish

"A Happy New Year" to all our Church Magazine readers.

Paul – *see you at my pew anytime for a chat*

Easy Fundraising

If you ever buy anything online, please would you consider joining EasyFundraising, so that St. Nicholas Church can raise badly needed funds. This won't cost you a penny. All you need to do is to go to <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/> and register, stating **St. Nicholas Church, Laindon with Dunton** as your chosen charity.

Then, you can choose from over 2000 of the UK's best-known retailers including many popular names such as Amazon, M&S, Argos, John Lewis and HMV, and when you shop using the links on the EasyFundraising site, up to 15% from every purchase you make is donated to St. Nicholas Church. Simply go to the EasyFundraising site, log in and find the retailer from whom you intend to shop. Click on the link to that retailer and shop as normal.

It doesn't cost a penny extra to shop and raise funds for St. Nicholas Church using the EasyFundraising site, and as many retailers now give extra discounts when you buy online, you can even save money!

If you would like any further information, please let me know.

Dawn

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Basildon Council	01268 533333
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Rota for January 2012

Sunday	New Testament	Reader	Gospel	Reader	Inter-cessor	Chalice	Sides-person
1 st January 2 nd Sunday of Christmas		Family Service					
8 th January 1 st Sunday of Epiphany The Baptism of Christ	Acts 19 Ver 1-7	Martin	Mark 1 Ver 4-11	Dawn	John K	Graham	Peter & Ros
15 th January 2 nd Sunday of Epiphany	Revelation 5 Ver 1-10	Liz	John 1 Ver 43-End	Diane D	Graham	John K	Maurice & Daph
22 nd January 3 rd Sunday of Epiphany	Revelation 19 Ver 6-10	George	John 2 Ver 1-11	John K	Chris	Graham	Charles & Doreen
29 th January 4 th Sunday of Epiphany	Revelation 12 Ver 1-5a	Jean	Mark 1 Ver 21-28	Graham	Charles	John K	John K & Maureen

Fund Raising

£75,000!

It's a daunting task to raise such an enormous sum but the necessary repair work to St. Nicholas Church has to be completed—and completed soon, before more damage is sustained.

Many events have been held over the last few years to raise money—one notable and very successful event was the 'Laindon's Got Talent' Festival on the weekend of 11th and 12th September 2010. Many more are in the process of being organised in 2012, so please check our website regularly for details.

If you would like to help us to preserve this beautiful building for future generations, there are several things that you can do.



If you would like to help support or organise an event or donate a sum—large or small, please contact Revd. Diane Ricketts at 38, Claremont Road, Laindon, Essex SS15 5PZ or telephone 01268 411190. You can also contact Revd. Diane via our website <http://www.stnicholaslaindon.co.uk/Contact/contact.htm>

If you ever buy goods online, please consider registering with Easy Fundraising and nominating St. Nicholas Church as your charity. If you log in to Easy Fundraising <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/> and then go to whichever site you want to purchase items from, Easy Fundraising will credit our church with a percentage of whatever you spend. This won't cost you a penny and effectively raises money for doing very little!

If you spend a lot of time surfing the Internet, please consider using the Easy Fundraising search engine. If you have nominated St. Nicholas Church as your charity, every search that you make using the search engine raises money for us too.

[http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/how it works: easysearch/](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/how_it_works:easysearch/)

Please keep in touch either via email or on the St. Nicholas Church Facebook page on <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=116809441680697>