

*Services at St Margaret's Underriver
during December 2015 & January 2016*



In the Church, every Thursday at 08:30, Morning Prayer (said) - CW

Sunday	6 Dec	11:15	All Age Service	
Sunday	13 Dec	08:00	Holy Communion	BCP
		11:15	Holy Communion	BCP
Sunday	20 Dec	18:00	Carol Service	
Thursday	24 Dec	16:00	Crib Service	
		23:30	Holy Communion	CW
Friday	25 Dec	10:30	Family Celebration Holy Communion	CW
Sunday	27 Dec	11:15	All Age Family Service	
Sunday	3 Jan	11:15	All Age Epiphany Service	
Sunday	10 Jan	08:00	Holy Communion	BCP
		11:15	Matins	BCP
Sunday	17 Jan	11:15	Short Family Holy Communion	CW
Sunday	24 Jan	11:15	Parish Communion	CW
Sunday	31 Jan	NO SERVICE - Joint Service 09:45 at St Lawrence		
Sunday	7 Feb	11:15	All Age Family Service	

*St Lawrence, Seal Chart Parish Magazine
December 2015 & January 2016*



Vicar

The Revd Carol Kitchener
St Lawrence Vicarage
Stone Street
Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 0LQ
01732 761766

Reader

Mrs Gretel Wakeham
The White House
Bitchet Green
Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 0NA
01732 761534

Church Wardens

Ron Drury
Garden Cottage, Rasput Hill
Ivy Hatch
Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 0PE
01732 810214

Rob Otto
23 Hillingdon Avenue
Sevenoaks
Kent TN13 3RB
01732 457442

Copy for the next issue should be sent, preferably by e-mail, to the editor,
Brian Sutton (01732 450873) at manofkent99@yahoo.com
to arrive by 08:00 on Wednesday 20 January 2016

The next issue of the Parish Magazine will be in Church on **Sunday 31 January 2016**

Edited and Typeset by Brian Sutton, 50 The Crescent, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 3QY (01732 450873)
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Our Vicar's Page

I don't know how good you are at waiting for things – as a child I remember how the days stretched out as I waited for my birthday to arrive. Time seemed to stand still, when I waited to see someone, who had been away for a while. Waiting for something we want to happen is not easy for an adult and it is even harder for a child.

In the Church calendar the first four weeks of December are called Advent - Advent means arrival, or coming. In December we are in a season of waiting, preparing for the arrival of Jesus at Christmas.

It is difficult for us to wait until December 25th for Christmas - shops have been decorated for weeks, school children have been rehearsing Nativity plays and Christmas parties have taken place! Not to mention the many Christmas adverts on TV. How are we expected to live in anticipation of Christmas, when we seem to be experiencing it all of December?

We could try to stop our headlong rush into Christmas in early December - if we succeed we might feel differently about Christmas when it finally arrives. We might experience the joy of knowing that Christ has come into the world as a little baby at Christmas time.

Do come and join us for one, or more, services over the Christmas season – you will find the times of our special services elsewhere in the magazine.

Christmas does not end on 25th December. Over Christmas we will hear about the shepherds greeting baby Jesus in the stable, but the Wise Men will still be travelling. On Sunday 3rd January, in both churches, we will be celebrating their arrival at Epiphany – come and join us to hear more of the Christmas story.

The church's season of Christmas finally draws to a close on Sunday 31st January when we will celebrate Candlemas. This is when Joseph and Mary took their baby son to the Temple to thank God for his safe arrival. We will have a joint service that Sunday at St Lawrence's at 9.45 am and we will be lighting and extinguishing candles in recognition of the end of the season of Christmas.

I hope that you, and the people you love, will have a blessed and joyful Christmas and that you will also have a happy New Year.

Yours in the love of Christ

Carol

For the Children



Dec15 ©deborah noble • parishpump.co.uk

Parish Magazine Subscriptions for January 2016

Prices remain the same as last year!

£7.50 per year for hand-delivered
or copies collected from the Church.

£14 for posted copies

Please pay your delivery person directly, UNLESS you collect them from the back of the Church or have them posted, in which case send an appropriate cheque to Rosemary Attenborough, Coldhanger, Seal Chart, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 0EJ.

All cheques to be made payable to ST. LAWRENCE (SEAL) PCC. No cheques will be paid in until January 2017, but the earlier they arrive and the delivery people are paid, the quicker we can close the magazine accounts for 2015 and not have them dragging on until mid-Summer!

THANK YOU SO MUCH! Rosemary

If you would like to be added to the lists of subscribers to the St. Lawrence Parish Magazine, please contact Roz Morris.



Your Prayers are asked for . .

*Those who are separated from their families at this
Joyous Christmastide;*

*the recently bereaved, the sick, the lonely and the
homeless, particularly homeless ex-servicemen;*

the destitute and those who would work if they could find a job.

Lord, in Your Mercy, Hear our Prayer



Church Christmas Clean

Wednesday, 2nd December 9.30-11.30 a.m.

Please do come and join in!

The more, the merrier!!

*And it also means we could have longer
to enjoy the mince pies and coffee!!!*

Carol McL

Parish Magazine - Thank you

Once again, it is that time of year when one says 'thank you' to all those who have made it possible for us to have a Parish Magazine.

On your behalf, I should like to say a very big **THANK YOU** to the distributors who push it through your letterbox no matter what the weather and to Roz Morris and Robin Kiddell who have stapled the copies and inserted flyers as necessary. Thanks to Rosemary Attenborough who sends out the postal copies (and collects the cash); to Julian Gilchrist who prints the copy that I deliver to him and who then gets it back to me so promptly. Above all I should like to thank all those who have contributed copy for publication, particularly Carol and Tim who provide several pages between them each month. During the year no fewer than 24 parishioners (fewer than last year) have between them contributed 84 items and we have also welcomed three new contributors. I am certain that someone out there has something they would love to share, an enjoyable weekend, a lovely holiday. I am grateful, too, to Ann Coombes and her colleagues who run the Parish Pump website upon which I rely for some of the fill-in material and many of the one-liners.

**The following is the timetable to which I hope to work in the coming year:
copy by 08:00 on these dates, please.**

Jan	No Magazine	May	Wed 13 Apr	Sept	Wed 17 Aug
Feb	Wed 20 Jan	June	Wed 18 May	Oct	Wed 14 Sept
Mar	Wed 17 Feb	July	Wed 15 Jun	Nov	Wed 19 Oct
Apr	Wed 16 Mar	Aug	Wed 15 Jul	Dec	Wed 16 Nov

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CAROL SINGING

Meet at the Barn at Foxbury Farm, Stone Street

at 17:45 on Tuesday 15 December

for Mince Pieces and Mulled Wine

(sustenance for and lubrication of the vocal chords)

before singing Christmas Carols

At 19:00 We re-convene at Chart Farm, Seal Chart

for more singing and refreshments.

We hope you will be able to join us for the festivities.

The Spring, the Spring!

Springtime and Harvest did not fail again this year. In fact at our Harvest Supper both exceeded most of our expectations! Tables were laden with the tastiest of Cottage Pies and salad followed by a choice of puddings to rival any 5-star meal. We were enjoying coffee when suddenly we heard “Chemi Chemi” in the midst of the hall. One by one choir members joined in and keeping near perfect time, made their way towards the stage.

“Chemi Chemi” is Swahili, meaning The Spring The Spring. The words translate in to “The spring, the spring of eternal life is within me, it is bubbling”. It was first sung in Tanzania by the Bukini choir. I am sure that if they had heard it as it was sung at the harvest supper in beautiful harmony they would have been as impressed as we all were. What a bonus to hear it again in Church during Harvest Festival.

Further contributions from the choir were rounded off with the traditional singing of “Bringing in the Sheaves”.

The proceeds from the supper, a total of £441.28 will be donated to Farm Africa. This is one of the overseas charities supported by St Lawrence and helps African farmers to provide food for themselves and their families. John Carlisle applied himself very efficiently to organise a raffle and auction to raise a further £229 for SSL Church funds.

At our Harvest Festival service Gretel focussed on words which could be made from the letters in “HARVEST”. The community at RDM Parakkanvilla a rural project in rural India may HAVE very little but they do not STARVE. Indeed they feed off their faith to enrich their lives in the face of real poverty. St Lawrence collected £310 at the harvest festival to be sent to RDM. *Eric*

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Short Mat Bowls

Have you booked to hire the village hall?

Are you thinking of doing so?

Are you interested in short mat bowls?

If so, the committee would be pleased to hear from you, as they have two sets which are available for hire. It seems such a pity that this kit should lay around unused.

Would it be possible to put something into the magazine again for the village hall, advertising the fact that they have two sets of short mat bowls available for hall hirers if anyone is interested ?

The committee feel that they are rather wasted without use, and the magazine has a good coverage. There may be some interest from readers ?



Church Flowers



Sunday	6 Dec	Kate Clark
Sunday	13 Dec	Sheila Jackson
Sunday	20 Dec	Sheila Jackson
Sunday	27 Dec	Kate Clark
Sunday	3 Jan	Kate Clark
Sunday	10 Jan	Kate Clark
Sunday	17 Jan	Kate Clark
Sunday	24 Jan	Kate Clark
Sunday	31 Jan	Kate Clark
Sunday	7 Feb	Sheila Jackson (?)

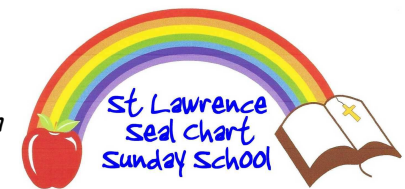
***Children meet promptly at 09:45
in St Lawrence School Hall on the dates
shown below***

*They will rejoin their parents in the church
towards the end of the service.*

All children aged 3 and upwards are welcome

13 Dec	Advent	Lyn and Sam
17 Jan	Epiphany/Christian Unity	Sam and Sally

For further information contact Hilary Darque [01732 453929]



Rosmarinus officinalis, var. Gethsemani

When Mary and I were last in Jerusalem we walked down the side of the Mount of Olives and in the adjacent Garden of Gethsemane one of the gardeners was hard at work pruning a low hedge which was of sweet rosemary, the sort that goes so well with roast lamb.

I chatted with him for a few minutes and as a result collected about half a dozen sprigs of the shrub, wrapped them in a moist paper tissue and when we got home again potted them up in my greenhouse. Three of the six survived and rooted and these I transplanted in our garden where they have flourished. Over the years, I have taken more cuttings from these bushes and have given them to a number of friends. A few weeks ago I was able to give John and Anthea Carlisle some rooted cuttings to be planted in the border in front of the church. *Brian*

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To cure sometimes - To help often - To comfort always

Sue and Harry invite you to a Coffee, Tea and Cake Event

at

At Styants Barn, Seal Chart, Sevenoaks TN15 0ET.

on

Thursday 3rd December, drop in 10.30am to 2.00pm.

All proceeds to the

Hospices and Services of Children in Distress, Romania.

(www.childrenindistress.org)

Raffle, Bring and Buy Cakes, Card & Gift Sale.

Contributions welcomed!

Contact: 01732 667815 or hcward51@aol.com

Services in 2016

As you are aware we are still waiting for the Church Commissioners to complete the paperwork to join St Lawrence's and St Margaret's together as a Joint Benefice. Hopefully this paperwork will be completed soon and sometime in the New Year we will be able to celebrate our new status as a Joint Benefice.

Over the coming year we will hold some joint services, as we do now. Our annual Ash Wednesday Holy Communion service alternates between churches, as does our Ascension Day service. During Holy week, we hold joint services on Maundy Thursday and on Good Friday, together in one church on the Thursday and in the other the next day. Our Dedication and Patronal services in June and July are always joint services and we enjoy refreshments together as part of our celebrations.

In 2016 there will two other occasions when we will hold joint services – Candlemas on the 31st of January and a further joint service on the 30th October. Both of these occur on fifth Sundays in the month, so we will be returning to service patterns we kept some years ago.

After the Joint Benefice has come into being we will continue to have the service pattern we have now. Meeting week by week at St Lawrence's at 9.45 am and at St Margaret's at 11.15 am with 8'oclock services on the first Sunday of each month at St Lawrence's and the second Sunday of the month at St Margaret's.

Carol K

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Some Legends (and facts) of Christmas

Where did Christmas stockings come from? No one is really sure, but a story is told of St Nicholas, a bishop who lived in the 4th century, who may have started the custom by accident. St Nicholas was of a wealthy family, and of a generous heart. As Christmas approached one year, he wanted to help a poor family whom he knew, but he did not want them to know it was him. So he climbed up on their roof on Christmas Eve and dropped some coins down the chimney.

The next morning the coins, to the great surprise of the family, were found in the stockings of the ladies, who had hung them to dry by the fire the night before. Every year after that they put their stockings out, in the hope that some more money would fall into them. They told the story of this amazing appearance to their friends and neighbours, and the custom caught on.

World's oldest fake tree: Did you know that it is a family in Wiltshire, the Parkers, who claim to own the world's oldest artificial Christmas tree? It was bought in 1886, and is still put up every year.

It's an ill wind

It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good was first recorded by John Heywood in 1546 but remains true to this day! Wind certainly did not blow out the candles lining the footpath to the Church on the first Sunday evening in November. This attractive and thoughtful illumination was just a foretaste of what proved to be a most enjoyable and successful evening concert. The "Ill wind" from Flanders & Swan was just one of the arias and renditions performed by the renowned tenor Greg Tassell.

Greg was brought up on a hop farm in Kent and attended Exeter University. He is renowned for oratorio appearances in the UK and abroad and also teaches at the University of Kent. Seated comfortably on the pew cushions provided through a legacy from the late Peter Wilson, we enjoyed performances from Handel, Mozart, Gurney and Vaughan Williams. Greg was accompanied by David Flood, the organist and Master of the Choristers at Canterbury Cathedral.

We had the privilege of hearing David played Elgar's Pomp and Circumstance March No.4 on the beautiful St Lawrence organ. Later in the evening we heard recitals by Jean-Jacques Vierne and Eugene Gigout.

Time for a break; a small group of ladies had prepared and decorated attractive punnets of light refreshments. Efficiently and quickly distributed throughout the Church together with a glass of wine, the refreshments were appreciated by all recipients.

Greg resumed with pieces from Benjamin Britten and later followed with Noel Coward's I Travel Alone, Flanders & Swan's The Gasman Cometh and Ill Wind, concluding with Lloyd Webber's Love Changes Everything.

The evening was well supported by over 100 members and friends of St Lawrence who thoroughly enjoyed a very varied and interesting programme which contained "something for everyone". It proved again how members of the St Lawrence family can pull together to deliver a truly successful event.

Carol Lambert had the original concept for this evening which raised over £1,000 for Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust (SAYT) one of the local charities supported by Seal St. Lawrence. SAYT is a Christian Trust which, employs, manages, trains and supports Christian Youth Workers in the Sevenoaks area. They undertake detached youth work in the streets and parks in local towns and villages – wherever young people meet.

Carol and I attended a recent SAYT update meeting in Sevenoaks and came away with the very firm impression that the money will be well spent!

Eric

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require intensive support for basic needs such as feeding or breathing. June was able to increase the independence of two children, to their great delight, by providing a new wheelchair for one and by simply raising the seat position for the other. The children soon treated us as old friends. The difficulty of maintaining the service was soon illustrated when two of the children were admitted to hospital, each requiring a member of staff to stay with them in hospital. We met the physiotherapist and speech therapists who provide services to the hospice and children in the community. A paediatrician reviews the children twice a week on top of her hospital job.

While in Bucharest we visited St Michael's school for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. We were welcomed into each small class and the amazing physiotherapy room. The staff here are key to professional training of other staff throughout Romania.

We were then taken to Pitesti, a large industrial city, to visit St Andrew's hospice which cares for sixteen severely disabled children. Sue was able to meet and take gifts for Nicoleta, the child she supports. Nicoleta was a normal child who suffered severe brain injury from encephalitis and her parents are no longer able to look after her. We modified a wheelchair for a child with a tool kit previously provided by June. This site also provides a community physiotherapy and speech therapy service. From here we visited St Christopher's in Curtea De Arges, a village in the hills. Originally a centre for children with hydrocephalus and spina bifida this is now a centre for remedial teaching for school non-attenders and serves the community with education and welfare programmes for children. It is particularly strong in arts and crafts and we came away with lovely souvenirs as well as apples from the orchard! It is also a sheltered holiday centre, but sadly there were insufficient funds this year.

Our final trip was to Cernavoda, near the Black Sea, where the charity began. We were privileged to meet eighteen young people in their twenties who survived AIDS with antiretroviral treatment and now live independently in four (very tidy!) bungalows. It was great to see how they cared for each other and they were very welcoming to us. We visited the cemetery overlooking the Danube where those children who did not survive are buried in a special area marked by simple iron crosses.

We benefited hugely from the visit and would like to thank all the staff from CID and Copii In Dificultate who made the arrangements and were so hospitable. We asked Valentina Zaharia, Executive Director, how we can make a difference. Her main wish was that we make more people aware of the charity so that their work can continue and develop.

We are holding a Coffee, Tea and Cake event on December 3rd. (See poster). Please come and support us and learn more about CID.

Sue and Harry Ward

A Visit to ‘Children in Distress’ Romania

We were introduced to the charity ‘Children in Distress’ (CID) by June Hurn, a priest at our former church in Chislehurst. June, a former PE teacher for children with special needs, was an early volunteer and Trustee. She provides and adapts wheelchairs for the children. Sue has supported a child for several years and in 2014 we visited St Margaret’s Hospice in Bucharest. Harry is now a Trustee for CID. In October this year we went with June to all the centres set up and supported by CID.

Children in Distress was set up in the early 1990’s in response to the crisis in paediatric care services exposed following the Popular Revolution that swept Romania’s communist regime from power. The Charity pioneered the treatment and care provision for those infants and children who had been infected with the HIV virus and associated opportunistic life threatening infections. The Charity set up the first paediatric hospice offering respite palliative and end of life care for children living with full blown AIDS.



Children in Distress and its sister Foundation Copii in Dificultate now provide hospice care for children with life threatening conditions as result of accident, infection, genetic disorders and birth defects. They pioneer life changing multiple therapies for those with disabilities and pioneer education and welfare for those living with Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

Educational opportunities are offered to children from disadvantaged backgrounds and training is made available to educational, medical, nursing and therapy professionals to develop and improve the quality of opportunity and care available throughout Romania and a range of medical and social welfare programmes provide disability, food, clothing, educational material and opportunity to those suffering discrimination and disadvantage.

We stayed at St Margaret’s Hospice in Bucharest and were struck again by the dedication of the staff and the friendly, caring atmosphere. The hospice accommodates twenty children aged one to sixteen years with a wide range of problems. The most capable attend school. Others with very severe disabilities

A Major New Report on how the C of E manages its 16,000 Churches

As part of its *Reform and Renewal* programme, which was debated in the General Synod in February, the Church of England has now published a report and launched a consultation on proposals to improve support for its 16,000 church buildings.

The report is the first attempt in many years to undertake a comprehensive review of the Church of England’s stewardship of its church buildings. It includes a wide range of statistics, a substantial theological reflection and a survey of various initiatives being taken in individual dioceses. It identifies a number of principles that should shape the Church’s approach and makes some specific recommendations.

The report comes from the Church Buildings review group, chaired by the Bishop of Worcester, the Rt Revd Dr John Inge. Certainly the group found some big challenges: more than three quarters of the Church of England’s churches are listed, and the Church of England is responsible for nearly half of the grade I listed buildings in England. More than half of churches are in rural areas (where 17% of the population lives) and more than 90% of these are listed.

Bishop John says: “Our 16,000 church buildings are a visible sign of ongoing Christian faith in communities throughout England, as well as being an unparalleled part of our country’s heritage. This report looks at how we can best support the thousands of local volunteers who care deeply for and about churches and offer wonderful service to their communities using their churches.

“There is no single solution to the challenges posed by our extensive responsibility for part of the nation’s heritage. We hope therefore that this work will be a catalyst for discussion.” The consultation period runs until Friday 29 January.

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The Cover Picture

Each year the children, the school (Y5 & 6), the Sunday School or the Brownies in rotation are asked to provide a picture appropriate for the cover of our Christmas Parish Magazine. Carol and I select the best and that is what you see on the front of this month’s magazine.

This year’s winning picture was drawn by Rupert Dartnell, aged 9 years, and his effort will be suitably rewarded after Sunday School on Sunday 13 December.

Ed

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Services and Events at The Church of St Lawrence Seal Chart during December 2015 and January 2016



Every Tuesday at 08:30, in the Church
Morning Prayer (said) (CW)

Sunday	6 Dec	Second Sunday of Advent		Sunday	3 Jan	Epiphany	
	08:00	Holy Communion	BCP		08:00	Holy Communion	BCP
		Malachi 3: 1-4	Luke 3: 1-6			Ephesians 3: 1-12	Matthew 2: 1-12
	09:45	All Age Family Service			09:45	All Age Epiphany Service	
		Malachi 3: 1-4				Matthew 2: 1-12	
Sunday	13 Dec	Third Sunday of Advent		Sunday	10 Jan	First Sunday of Epiphany - Baptism of Christ	
	09:45	Family Communion	CW		09:45	Family Communion	CW
		Zephaniah 3: 14-20	Luke 3: 7-18			Acts 8: 14-17	Luke 3: 15-17, 21-22
Sunday	20 Dec	Fourth Sunday of Advent		Sunday	17 Jan	Second Sunday of Epiphany	
		No morning service			09:45	Family Communion	CW
	16:00	Carol Service				1 Corinthians 12: 1-11	John 2: 1-11
		† b a		Monday	18 Jan	Prayer Time - Lasts about an hour, all are welcome	
					10:00	at 50 The Crescent, Sevenoaks	
Thursday	24 Dec	Christmas Eve		Sunday	24 Jan	Third Sunday of Epiphany	
	17:30	Christingle & Crib Service			09:45	Matins	BCP
		Luke 2: 1-7				1 Corinthians 12: 12-31a	Luke 4:14-21
	23:30	First Communion of Christmas	CW	Sunday	31 Jan	Presentation of Christ in the Temple	
		Isaiah 9: 2-7	Luke 2: 1-14		09:45	Candlemas Service (Joint Service)	
						1 Corinthians 13:	Luke 2: 22-40
Friday	25 Dec	Christmas Day		Sunday	7 Feb	Sunday next before Lent	
	09:45	Family Celebration Holy Communion	CW		08:00	Holy Communion	BCP
		Luke 2: 1-14				2 Corinthians 3: 12-4:2	Luke 9: 28-36
Sunday	27 Dec	First Sunday after Christmas			09:45	All Age Family Service	
	09:45	Joint Service at St Margaret's				Luke 9: 28-36	
		Micah 4: 1-5					