

Seek



January 2022

The Church and Parish of St Mark Cambridge

www.stmarksnewnham.org

The Vicar's Letter



I had really hoped to be able to start this month's letter with a confident and resounding Happy New Year!

However, I suspect that happy seems a bit generous at the moment, or just rather glib. I suspect many of us are not happy about the ongoing Covid situation and are actually finding the transition into this new year rather difficult. I don't think any of us could have expected that we would be starting another new year with this level of uncertainty.

So I think I would like to wish everyone, instead, joy for this coming year. Joy, it seems to me is different to mere happiness. The Bible tells us to rejoice always, and so joy has to be something more nuanced and more profound than being happy – which no-one can really be all the time I think! I recently tried to explain joy to some year 1 pupils and found myself saying that 'Joy is something deep down inside you that knows that there is good news even when everything feels sad or difficult'. So I am going to go with that!

Just a few days ago we celebrated Christmas and, once again, I was reminded of the nativity story

being a tale of a family, in a complex and unsettled society, facing uncertainty – not so different to each of us. But it is also a tale of joy – the joy of a baby, the joy of God himself with us even in the difficult and the painful, the joy that really is about the good news!

One of the things about the Covid pandemic that I have observed is that people have noticed in new ways the good things, the often small treasures, as so much of what we have experienced has been difficult and uncertain. Much of what we perhaps previously took for granted has been appreciated in a new way. We have noticed and named the joy!

And so as we head into another year still unsure of what this pandemic is going to do, unsure of what lies ahead, I hope and pray that you will experience some genuinely happy times, but more than that, that we will each experience true joy. Maybe we each need to keep a 'joy journal', noting those moments of good news, those treasures that often get lost. Have a joy filled 2022!

Rachel

The Revd Rachel Rosborough

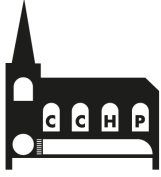
Charities of the Month for 2022



The group that meets to allocate the charities for the Charity of the Month collections will be convening soon. Do you have a charity you would like to propose for one of these collections? The charity could be local, national or international. It could be large or small. By proposing a charity you are enabling financial support (the congregation at St Mark's is generous in their giving) and also raising awareness of the charity. If it is a charity we have supported in a previous year you will be updating us about its work. You would need to be willing to write a bit for Seek and the weekly email and to put up a small display in the narthex.

Please contact Rachel if you have a proposal, or if you have any queries about what is involved.

CCHP : Charity of the Month



Cambridge Churches Homeless Project is a registered charity. It was set up in November 2017 to take over the winter shelter project (known as CCHP) started under Hope Cambridge.

The Cambridge Churches Homeless Project is hosted in a different church or venue each night and is essentially a temporary, pop up shelter that runs during the winter.

Initial referrals come from our partners Wintercomfort for the Homeless, Jimmy's Assessment Centre, Cambridge Mental Health and Street Outreach Team and the Dual Diagnosis Street Team.

Each night up to 15 homeless men are offered a warm welcome and a hot meal, friendship, pastoral care and a safe warm place to sleep. Guests leave in the morning to have breakfast and showers at Wintercomfort for the Homeless.

CCHP works in partnership with local homeless agencies, so that guests get the best chance to find the accommodation and support they need. CCHP acknowledges the generous support of many people who donate their time and money and relies on the prayers, generosity and good will of the 300 volunteers that are needed each winter to enable the project to happen.

CCHP is grateful for its many generous supporters. If you would like to support this work please give generously on the 16th January.

A prayer for the Cambridge Churches Homeless Project

As we create a space where we can share our food and stories together around the table

May our churches be home to those who have no home

May the warmth of our hospitality melt fear and mistrust

May we be transformed by our guests as they bless us,
holding a mirror up to us showing us who we really are

And may we let go of all that stops us from seeing Christ in the other. Amen.

St Mark's Church Mission Statement

To be the people of God in this place and to work to make God more real for our community.

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A Crimean Hero

A few months ago we asked readers if they had interesting family history to share. We were delighted that Cyril Pritchett of Gough Way contacted us with this remarkable story.

The Crimean War was fought in 1854 and 1855. It came about as a result of a joint decision by the British and French governments to stop Russian expansion southwards towards the Mediterranean following the collapse of Turkish (Ottoman) influence in the region. The principal objective was to capture and destroy the fortified city and naval base of Sevastopol on the Crimean peninsula in the Black Sea.

In the annals of British military history the campaign is notorious for the horrendous casualties resulting from our government's commitment of an army into a hostile climate without adequate clothing and equipment and poor subsequent support. It was the first occasion that 'The Press' were present in a theatre of operations: their reports of living conditions were damning.

This article summarises the involvement of William Pritchett and his family in this campaign.

William was born in Lambeth in 1828. He enlisted into the Army aged 19 and joined the 28th Regiment of Foot in December 1847. He met and married Margaret Cauckwell in 1853.

The Regiment was selected to join the Crimean expeditionary force and sailed from Liverpool in February 1854 accompanied by their wives. At this time a limited number of soldiers were permitted to marry and have their wives taken on to the strength of a regiment. They lived with the men and worked as cooks and laundrywomen. The force assembled in Malta and whilst there it was decided to limit the number of wives going forward: those chosen to go included Margaret. The whole force then sailed to Bulgaria where it was disembarked at Varna on the shore of the Black Sea. Here they endured the first of many challenges, living for several months in the intense summer heat without tents, pestered by mosquitos and suffering a cholera epidemic. There

were many deaths before they were re-embarked in August.

The force landed unopposed forty miles north of Sevastopol on the 14th September. A diarist noted 'this is where the marching and dying starts'. The opposing Russian force, holding a strong position, was overcome at the battle of Alma on the 20th September. The force then marched south and took up positions surrounding Sevastopol to lay siege to the city, fortress and harbour.



A contemporary photograph

For the next few weeks there was little activity on either side, the British consolidating their positions. Then on the 5th November the Russians launched a surprise dawn attack with 42,000 men and 134

guns against 16,000 allies with 56 guns. Our outlying pickets were able to raise an alert and as a consequence of early morning fog and undulating ground the attack failed to develop as planned. Instead there were a series of uncoordinated actions against our positions resulting in heavy fighting at close quarters. The positions were held and the Russians retreated having suffered huge casualties and with their will to re-engage destroyed. British losses were also substantial. The battle was named Inkerman, after a village on the northern outskirts of Sevastopol that was at the centre of the action.

About this time Margaret gave birth to a boy. In her book about the Crimea, *No Place for Ladies*, Helen Rappaport writes, 'It is doubtful if the sickly infants born to army wives survived the harsh conditions'. This boy did survive and subsequent English census documents record him as a British citizen born in Crimea, Russia. He is unique in this respect. He was named Inkerman Richard Pritchett and would have been baptised by the Regiment's

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chaplain. No record of this now exists but other documents indicate the birth was in late 1854. The baby would have aroused interest and a degree of affection among the men closest to the family – being a symbol of humanity beyond their harsh world.

In the months that followed the battle of Inkerman there was little military activity beyond manning the siege trenches and defensive positions. Winter had arrived, the ship bringing equipment was sunk in a storm and the routes from the harbour became quagmires. It is difficult to describe the terrible conditions adequately. One statistic does it best: in February 1855 a report noted that of the 800 men of William's regiment who left England only 50 were still present. There had been some battle casualties but the vast majority of losses were victims of the weather, disease and malnutrition.

With the arrival of spring, conditions improved and the allies began a series of skirmishes, backed by naval bombardments, against a vigorous defence. Throughout this period William's army record shows him as 'Before Sevastopol'. He eventually became unfit and was evacuated on the 29th August 1855, a few days before the surrender of the city on the 9th September. The final assault had just started as he departed - he was among the last of the original contingent to leave. He was shipped to Scutari, the hospital where Florence Nightingale established her nursing methods and her reputation. He was there for a month so it is probable they met during her ward rounds. He reached England on the 18th October and the army records show his award of the Crimean medal and a £10 gratuity for distinguished conduct; mention is made of his involvement in battles of Alma and Inkerman. When the medals were received his compatriots had a silver copy made for the boy with the reverse side inscribed

**Presented by Captain Bell and the men of
No 5 Company, 28th Regt.,
To Inkerman Richard Pritchett, the
Crimean War hero.**

It was presented with the ribbon and clasps implying a presence at Inkerman and Sevastopol. Like William, Captain Bell had served throughout the whole campaign.

William was discharged a year later with a pension. The discharge paper states 'he is unable to perform the duties of a soldier, suffering from general disabilities caused by exposure to cold and the hardships of the campaign in the Crimea'.

After the campaign William and Inkerman, the 'hero', received recognition. Margaret should not be forgotten. She endured the same hardships, lived with the sound of gunfire and the threat of attack, gave birth and nurtured a son and worked in support of the men of her Regiment: she deserves the accolade Heroine.

Cyril Pritchett

William was my great grandfather's brother and hence the little boy, our hero, was my grandfather's cousin. After his discharge from the army William, his wife and the baby returned to London and moved in with his brother while his health improved. He subsequently found work and became a near neighbour. They were a close family. After some years times were hard so the boy's medal was sold and ended up in the Whitaker collection: William wrote to his mother and enclosed a carefully mounted extract of the entry in the collection catalogue. This has passed down through the generations to me. William lived to be 55; Inkerman moved to Lancashire and contact with him was lost.

Although in one respect it is a 'war story', for me, and I hope readers, it is a remarkable story of survival. William was among the couple of per cent who survived the whole campaign; we cannot put a figure on the odds for Margaret's survival and the census records show the boy was a unique survivor. I'm not a mathematician but put those odds together and the whole family's chances of survival become vanishingly small.

The February Issue of SEEK

Please send your contributions by Sunday 16th January to Jane Plows at
janemp@virginmedia.com (350120) or contact any member of the committee.

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Decluttering a Hoarder?

Q. How do you declutter a hoarder?

A. With great difficulty.

Q. How do you declutter a pair of hoarders?

A. Don't know. Work in progress!

Well, it all started with my granddaughter. "Granny, please could you look after some more of my books. Mummy is doing a 'declutter' and says that all my children's books should go to a charity shop." I imagined the bookcases in her room stacked high with books from Beatrice Potter to that series about Greek myths. "YOU gave me lots of them and I would really like to keep them." she pleaded. "OK." Don't they just know how to pull the heartstrings?

A few days later my daughter arrived with a rather triumphant-looking daughter of her own and boxes and boxes of books. "Where are we going to put all those books?" my husband asked. "In the loft?" "Not sure the joists can take much more." "Under the bed in the spare room?" "Have you SEEN under the bed? It's already packed with stuff." We had a cup of coffee (too early for a G&T) and decided that perhaps we needed to declutter too.



We started by looking at our own books. Lovely books about art and artists and music as well as a decades old collection of 'Penguin Classics' and decided this probably wasn't the place to start. So,

we decided to attack the piles of stuff in the spare bedroom instead. "How about the child's bed? It's taking up a lot of room and our granddaughter wouldn't even fit on it anymore." "Good idea." I replied.

Isn't there a saying about uncovering a nest of something or other (hornets)? It is quite amazing what one can pile on the top of and below a small bed. Old pillows and duvets for a start. "We need a skip." Hubby said. "Oh, we CAN'T do that! Think of the environmental impact. Surely we can recycle things." I looked up Cambridge Council recycling and it suggested sending bedding to an animal charity orputting them in the black bin! I was horrified with that last suggestion.



"Could we use them as loft insulation?" "Fire hazard." However, I discovered we have some large 'vacuum-pack' bags bought from John Lewis. They are amazing. You stuff the duvet in, seal the end and put the nozzle of the vacuum cleaner over a valve on the side, switch on and hey presto the duvet shrinks to a fraction of its size. Problem solved..... or maybe not. What's that hissing noise?

Anyway, we decided to pop the squashed duvets up in the loft with the boxes of books for now. However, we were aghast when we got up there and saw how much 'stuff' we had accumulated

Domenic

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over the years. We are just going to have to find new homes for all these things.

I know! I'll give Teresa (Green) a call. Well as you might guess, my friend had lots of ideas. "You should upcycle them! Cut up synthetic duvets or pillows and stuff them into old tights as draught excluders. Perhaps your daughter would like some as their house is older." I wondered what their dog would think of that. Imagine a labrador trotting around Newnham with what seems to be a woman's leg in its mouth! Teresa's next idea was.... "Filling potholes." Evidently not those in the road but dips in the mattress on the bed. Yes, that is definitely a possibility. So, there you go. Not exactly getting rid of stuff though. I think I should give the people at Emmaus a ring.

This year, whether you are decluttering or putting together a new home please do your best to take care of yourself and the planet too.

Good wishes for the New Year.

Rosemary (Ley)

Upcycling, also known as *creative reuse*, is the process of transforming by-products, waste materials, useless, or unwanted products into new materials or products perceived to be of greater quality, such as artistic value or environmental value. [Wikipedia](#)

See weavergreen.com for throw blankets each made from up to 300 recycled plastic bottles and John Lewis Eco sportswear and equipment. There are lots more out there too. The more the demand for use of recycled materials the more there will be. You never know, the 'fast fashion' industry might catch on too!



Emmaus Cambridge, a homeless charity that provided a home and meaningful work for those experiencing homelessness and social exclusion. They upcycle and repair goods to sell to the public.

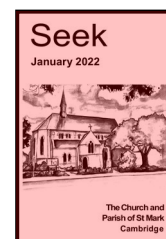
To Make You Smile

Peculiar Plants - True or False?

1. A town in California has planted trees in an attempt to lower its crime rate. The town's officials believe that vandalism, the dropping of litter, and domestic violence will be alleviated by the addition of more trees. Their decision is based on the fact that trees release chemicals which can help to reduce blood pressure, relieve anxiety, and combat pain.
2. In the early 2010s, scientists from Lincoln University carried out extensive research into the intelligence of garden plants. Among other things, they discovered that most peas are more intelligent than most beans (though they lack the intellectual capacity of the carrot). The scientists came up with a list of the brightest plants in our gardens and allotments, the top three being, in ascending order, spinach, courgettes and raspberries.
3. 19th Century Spanish painter Alejandro de Leon spent most of his artistic life painting pictures of oranges. His paintings (he called them portraits or, in some cases, group portraits) were much sought after and fetched huge prices. The fact that he was such a painstaking and slow worker added to the value of the paintings. When, in his seventies, de Leon rashly decided to paint a potato, the collecting world was shocked and the price of the paintings plummeted, almost overnight.

Nick Warburton asks which of the above stories is true. Go to page 9 to find out.

SEEK for 2022



This is the opportunity to thank all our distributors who, month by month, ensure that over 200 copies of SEEK are circulated throughout the parish, and to thank, especially, Sue Wagner who coordinates this distribution.

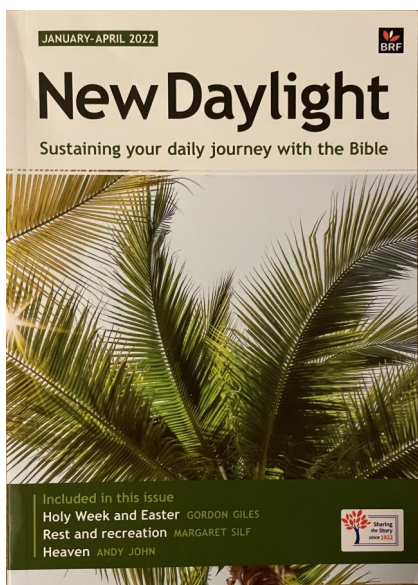
It is a good time too to thank our printers, Chris and Barbara Wright, for their helpfulness and efficiency. We never cease to be amazed by how quickly they get Seek ready for publication.

February is the month in which we begin to review and reformat our advertisements. If anyone is interested in advertising in Seek in the coming year, do let Nicola, our Church Administrator, know.

The annual subscription for 2022 will remain at £5.00 (10 copies at 50p and the October issue free).

Please would you give this to the distributors who will ask you for it when they deliver the February issue. **This is an early warning. You do not have to do anything now.**

Bible Reading Fellowship Notes



This is a reminder that in early February I shall be renewing our church-rate subscription with the Bible Reading Fellowship, who produce a number of publications to "sustain people in their daily journey with the Bible". Subscription rates apply from May 2022.

For busy people the most accessible of these is probably **New Daylight**. Each issue provides four months of daily Bible readings and comment, with a team of regular contributors drawn from a range of church backgrounds and covering a varied selection of Old and New Testament biblical

themes, characters and seasonal readings. Each issue contains nine topics of fortnightly readings and is published three times a year in January, May and September. Available in regular and large-print editions, a **single regular copy costs £4.85**, the **large print edition £6.00**. By taking out the church-rate subscription from May 2022, you get a valuable saving of **3 issues for £14.55 postage free** for the regular edition, and **£18.00** for the large-print version, whereas an individual subscription costs £18.00 and the large-print version £22.50

Another publication, **Guidelines**, also at £4.85, is aimed primarily for Today's Ministry and Mission, with the subscription prices the same as for New Daylight.

Owing to current Covid restrictions I have not left samples of New Daylight and Guidelines in the Narthex as usual, but am very happy to supply you with some past issues on application.

If you have any questions or would like to find out more, please do get in touch (01223 366988 or tinahelenwilson@gmail.com). You can find out more about BRF on their website: <https://www.brfonline.org.uk> and <https://www.biblereadingnotes.org.uk>. I shall be asking current subscribers if they are happy to continue with their subscriptions.

Tina Wilson



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Epiphany Collects : Prayers for January

O God, who by the leading of a star
manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth:
mercifully grant that we,
who know you now by faith,
may at last behold your glory face to face;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Creator of the heavens,
who led the Magi by a star
to worship the Christ-child:
guide and sustain us,
that we may find our journey's end
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Almighty God,
in Christ you make all things new:
transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace,
and in the renewal of our lives
make known your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Eternal Lord,
our beginning and our end:
bring us with the whole creation
to your glory, hidden through past ages
and made known
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Chosen by Esther Stanton

Peculiar Plants

Nick writes,

This month's answer is a slight cheat: number one is true in the sense that trees do release positive chemicals which can lead to reduction in crime rates. However, I don't know if there's a town in California that plants them for that specific purpose. (There might be.) Numbers two and three, though, are complete nonsense.

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Services at St Mark's Church, Newnham in January

Communion (BCP) at 8.00 am every Sunday

Morning Services

2nd January at **9.30 am** Communion
9th January at **9.30am** Morning Worship (streamed)
16th January at **9.30 am** Communion
23rd January at **9.30 am** Communion
30th January at **10.00 am** Joint Communion service at Grantchester

Tuesdays

Communion (BCP) every Tuesday at **11.00 am**

Regular Groups

Monday Bible Study

10:30am, alternate weeks – contact: Sue Wagner, 01223 563435

Tuesday Home Groups

7:30 pm, weekly – contact: Andrew Watts, aa.watts@hotmail.co.uk or Mike Thompson, michaelangelot99@gmail.com

Prayer group

Times to be confirmed – contact: Anne Howie, 01223 356140

Choir

The choir normally sings on the first three Sundays of the month at our 9:30 am service. Rehearsals are 6:00 pm – 7:15 pm on the first and third Fridays of the month and from 9:00 am on Sundays. Contact: John Wyatt. mandyandjohnwyatt@gmail.com

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