

REFOCUSSED

News from St Etheldreda's
and St Luke's Churches
July/August 2021



**BISHOPS
HATFIELD**



**THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND**

Inside this month:

Kate Douglas: About Moving On

Rev'd Sue Stillwell:

Shares thoughts on Covid

Jo Roscoe interviews George

▲ St Luke's Flower Team

Parish of Bishop's Hatfield St Etheldreda with St Luke

St Etheldreda's Church Service

SUNDAY: 9.30^{am} Holy Communion

WEDNESDAY: 10^{am} Holy Communion

THURSDAY: 7^{pm} Holy Communion/Compline

St Luke's Church Service

SUNDAY: 11.30^{am} Holy Communion with Hymns

St Luke's Church is open on:

Saturday & Sunday from 10am to 4pm

For private prayer and contemplation

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Parish of Bishop's Hatfield St Etheldreda with St Luke : Registered Charity No.1152011

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Editorial



Editor of Refocused

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Dear readers, welcome to this summer issue of Refocused. The next issue will be in September as we approach autumn and there will be a back to church BBQ in the churchyard on 5th September.

This July is an exciting time in our parish as Kathryn, our curate, will be priested on June 27th in St Eth's. Also Kate, an ordinand, will be ordained at St Albans Cathedral on 26th June.

On page 4, Kate writes about the vast array of clerical vestments she has bought and her thoughts as she plans to move on and we say 'au revoir' but not goodbye.

Lovely young George agreed to an interview with Jo Roscoe; you can read more on page 5.

We are also featuring in this issue a really interesting article from

Rev'd Sue Stillwell on reconciling with others after the separations endured during the lockdown.

Then we have Peter & Margaret Reeve, who I met whilst pottering around in church recently. They have sent us a heart warming article about their 50 years of marriage which began with their wedding at St Eth's in May, 1971.

The Flower Team at St Lukes are planning (Covid rules allowing) a Flower and Art Festival at St Luke's over the August Bank Holiday weekend (28th-30th Aug). Read more about this and the Flower Team on page 8.

Our cover features the beautiful lychgate at the entrance to St Luke's Churchyard which has a plaque from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) on the wall beside it.

Find us on 

www.stetheldreda.org

Refocused July/Aug 2021—Page 2

What's on at Hatfield House

HOT AIR BALLOON RIDE

1 MARCH—31 OCTOBER

LORD BURGHLEY EXHIBITION

3 JUNE—30 AUGUST

LIVING CRAFTS

17—20 JUNE @ 10AM— 5PM

TUDOR LEGACIES – THE LEGACY CONTINUES

4 JULY @ 11AM—4PM

VITALITY 10,000

11 JULY @ 9AM—3PM

BATTLE PROMS

17 JULY @ 3:30 PM—10:30 PM

FOLK BY THE OAK

18 JULY @ 12PM—10:30 PM

EXCLUSIVE HOUSE & GARDEN EXPERIENCE

21 JULY @ 11AM—4PM



HATFIELD PARK

BEEKEEPING EXPERIENCE

1 & 22 AUGUST @ 9:30—3PM

TUDOR LEGACIES

1 AUGUST @ 11AM—4PM

IMMERSION THEATRE

THE JUNGLE BOOK

2 & 3 AUGUST @ 2—4PM

EXCLUSIVE HOUSE TOUR

4 AUGUST @ 6—8PM

IMMERSION THEATRE – THE THREE MUSKETEERS

9 & 10 AUGUST @ 2—4PM

CLASSIC IBIZA

21 AUGUST @ 5:30—10:30 PM

Find out more about all these events:

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e: visitors@hatfield-house.co.uk

Lychgates serve to differentiate consecrated and unconsecrated space. In the Middle Ages, before mortuaries, and at a time when most people died at home, the dead were placed on a bier and taken to the local lychgate where they remained, often guarded against body-snatchers, until the funeral service, which may have been a day or two later.

The lychgate kept the rain off, and often had seats for the vigil watchers. Bodies at that time were buried in just shrouds rather than coffins. At the funeral, the priest conducted the first part of the service under the shelter of the lychgate.

After World War I a number of lychgates were built as war memorials, St Luke's lychgate was already in place at that time.

However, in 2019 CWGC installed a plaque beside it, drawing attention to the War Graves in the churchyard as part of a National scheme marking the centenary of WW1. There are 22 such graves at St Luke's recorded by CWGC. The earliest dates from 1915 and the latest from 1947. Behind those 22 names lie some fascinating and tragic stories.



We wish you all a calm, peaceful and beautiful

With kindest regards from all at St Eth's and St Luke's

Find us on 

www.stetheldreda.org

Refocused July/Aug 2021—Page 3

Clerical vestments – a sign of being clothed in Christ (Gal 3:27)

and moving on: written by Kate Douglas

I never realised that ordination to the diaconate would have presented such a marvellous opportunity to indulge my passion for retail therapy! Such is the number of new and very different clothes I have purchased for my life as a Curate, that I have cleared my wardrobe and put many of my 'normal' clothes into storage.

But not every one of my new purchases has been put tidily away because, as I write, I have still to try on my black Cassock Alb and my white Alb which I am fearful to do lest my ordination feels too real and imminent! There is also something to dread in the setting aside of the white Alb I currently use, because it belonged to Margaret Campbell who many of you will remember as one of St Etheldreda's finest.

The daffodils that Margaret planted in the Church grounds, in memory of her late husband, spring up every year and are an enduring expression of love; indeed, it feels as though that love runs through every thread of the white Alb that I 'borrowed' many years ago. In setting aside Margaret's white Alb, I will pick up my own and will no doubt feel the loss of the church that I call home, but which others now call my 'sending church'. Loss is a major part of change but with God's help I will bear it while at the same time rejoicing in serving the Church in ordained ministry, a gift that both humbles and surprises me.

As well as the Albs, I have a Surplice (for 'choir dress') and a Cotta, which is a more ornate Surplice that Darren encouraged me to purchase! Both garments are worn over a black Cassock Alb and serve the same purpose liturgically, being worn for non-sacramental ministry.

Which brings me onto the Stoles which identify a Bishop, Priest or Deacon and were re-introduced in 1833 as a result of the Oxford Movement which moved some churches towards the more Catholic end of the worshipping spectrum.

A Stole denotes the calling of the wearer to preaching and you will likely already know that different

colours are worn at different times of the year (black, green, purple and red) or for different occasions. My red stole was very kindly gifted to me by the St Etheldreda's and St Luke's community and to say that I will treasure this forever is an understatement. I also have a white Stole for ordination which will also be used for celebratory occasions including Christmas, Easter and weddings; like the other Stoles I will wear this diagonally across my chest until I am Priested, when it will be worn around my neck, falling to the front.

Matthew 6:31-33 compels us not to worry about the minutiae such as what we will wear; instead, we are to 'seek first the kingdom of God' and all will be well. Of course, this is right, but my vestments are important to me, not least because they are an outward expression of a change in my ministry through the authority vested in me by the Bishop at ordination; an authority under which I will be clothed in Christ both physically and spiritually.

With love, Kate



Do you know George?

He was recently interviewed by Jo Roscoe

George is one of a group of young people who have joined the congregation at St Etheldreda's over the last year or so. Covid has interrupted the natural process of getting-to-know one another, but George joined and established himself in Fr Darren's zoomed 'Explorer' course. He agreed to meet me for a chat with a view to an article in Refocused.

Now I should explain that George was known to me as 'Thomas's Grandson'. Thomas is very well known to me. So when George appeared at my garden gate with Mary (editor), I greeted him with 'Hello Thomas'. And Thomas he became until Mary whispered 'Jo, this is George'. But I'm afraid Thomas he remained for a little longer until after much laughter I'd got it fixed in my mind and we settled down to proper conversation.

I had somehow formed an impression that George was a shy person, but in fact he presents as very relaxed and together. I knew that he had come through a very serious illness, resolved by a period of intense chemotherapy. There is no doubt that this has taken its toll; but he is not defined by it.

After our silly beginning, I asked 'So then George, tell me about yourself'. He replied that he was an apprentice digital consultant with Deloitte. Mary and I exchanged glances—not at all what we expected. We both sat up a little straighter. It was clear we had a man of substance here! He explained more about his work and where it might take him.

He spoke about his illness and his treatment at the Macmillan-NHS Centre in London, where he was an in-patient at the same time as Spencer McCall (see back page). Encouraged by nursing staff, patients would get together in their chairs, wheel-chairs and beds in the centre of the ward and have a time of banter and chat. It takes a lot to rob us of our sense of humour when we are with others in the same boat. But of course there were times when he just could not take it. He faced death several times. And this is when he found he had a faith; not a frantic fearful plea for God to save him, but a peaceful knowing that God was there. It was humbling to hear.



I sensed in him a maturity of the kind that has been hard bought, and not only by way of his illness. That is his story to tell. He lives happily with his mother, stepfather and siblings in Welwyn Garden City where he attended Sir Frederick Osborn School, rising to head-boy

And then he wowed us again: he would like to be an author. In fact he has already written a book. He had kept a journal throughout his illness and this has been published and is available from Amazon.

Turning to his spiritual development, he will go forward for baptism and confirmation in September. I think I'm right in saying that he doesn't have ambitions to evangelise, but likes the idea of informal groups where people can talk about their faith honestly and openly. Among his close work colleagues are people of different faiths, and they speak openly and with mutual respect of each others' beliefs.

A surprising young man our George; and I don't think I can end without mentioning Shannon, his girlfriend and now fiancée who has walked alongside him throughout the difficult times.

As he got up to leave, I asked if he was ever called 'Tom'. 'Not often', he replied with a straight face, 'People usually call me George!'

Separation and Reconciliation Rev'd Sue Stillwell

For some people, the effects of the pandemic have had a great negative impact and has been a period of unwanted change and huge personal challenge. For others, it has been viewed as little more than a great inconvenience and a period of time they would certainly not want to repeat. For an even smaller number, this entire episode has been nothing but a hoax.

The question now facing us is—where do we go from here? How will we use this entire experience as an opportunity to reflect on our own lives as we navigate the next months, even years of a Covid-19 world? Do we yearn to return to a pre Covid-19 world?

As we hear about the Government's road map to the lifting of lockdown restrictions, we too will need to move into the next phase of our own pandemic recovery. This may be a good opportunity to write

and reflect on our own experiences of the pandemic. Perhaps we may wish to reflect on how we have been affected personally: the ways in which this has impacted on the way we view the world and what strategies we have developed personally to deal with a situation that we have not always felt within our control. It could be that we have developed new fears and anxieties and may like to consider ways in which we may be supported with these. Perhaps pre-Covid-19 anxieties have been faced up to, meaning that we now can look forward with new hope.

How have we managed our work, families and ministries and how has this affected our relationships with others? What are we observing about our feelings towards others? Is there any resentment felt towards friends, family, work colleagues, neighbours and politicians who have approached the pandemic differently us?

Meet Peter and Margaret Reeve

On 1st May 1971, Margaret and I were married at St Etheldreda's Church. The Rev'd Preston officiated and made it such a memorable occasion.

Margaret was from London and I from Bishop's Stortford, but we met at the old Police HQ in Hatfield in 1967 where Margaret worked and I was a Police

Cadet; two teenagers who were in love but didn't know they had such a fantastic journey ahead of them. We lived in Stevenage and later Hitchin, had three wonderful daughters and now live in Cornwall.

We celebrated our Golden Wedding by visiting various locations which brought back so many happy memories including St. Eth's and The Lord William Cecil Memorial Hall, where we held the reception all those years ago.

People keep saying, 'What's the secret?' There is no 'secret'. We love each other, we're good mates and we're a team. I could write pages but we just wanted you to know that St Eth's on the 1st May 1971 was the start of a journey filled with love and happiness.

Kind Regards to you all, from Peter and Margaret.



How do we deal with all the contradictions, the duplicities, the societal injustices, the craziness of some of the stories we have read or conversations we have had? Could it be that we have actually enjoyed a bit of peace and quiet, a slower pace of life, quiet roads, not having to commute to work, the freedom of working from home, more time with our families at home, or simply a quieter pace of life, without packed diaries and relentless demands made on our time by others? By now we may even be finding the positive effects at the beginning of the pandemic negated.

The task ahead of us may feel huge, so how exactly do we eat an elephant? Bit by bit, is the usual response! That's how we hope the simple approach we've developed may help us to explore beyond, what we hope and pray, is the last lockdown in the UK.

A good starting point for reflection is usually ourselves! My own musings started at 4.30 one morning! Different situations were buzzing through my mind, preventing me from getting back to sleep that particular morning. I heard myself repeating two words... separation and reconciliation.

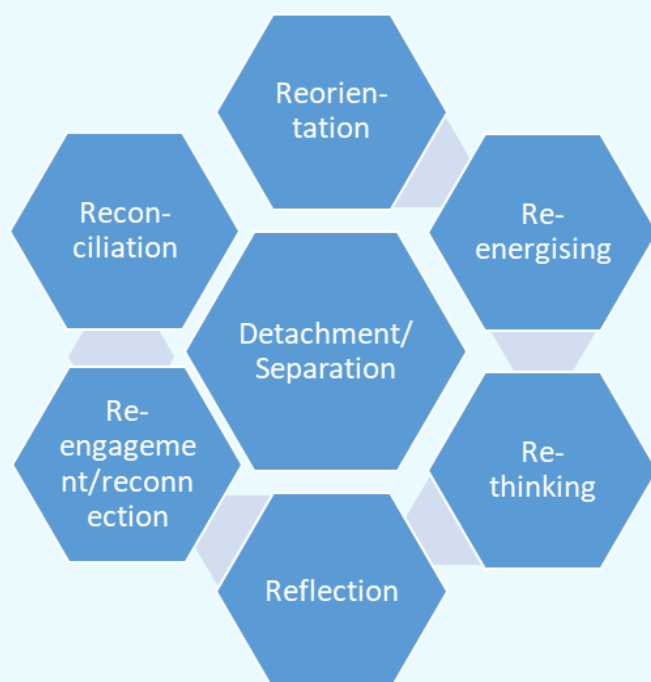
Where these words came from at 4.30am I do not know, but it was enough to start putting pen to paper when I got up. It felt as if I was trying in those early hours, to make sense of my own experience of the last year. It was as if I were trying to make sense of how the pandemic had affected me personally and professionally. It was as if those two words held for me the answers as I searched for a common denominator to all my experiences, something that could hold all the things I felt in tension, something that could encapsulate all that I had experienced.

But why these two words? I guess at its simplest we have all experienced a separation or detachment in one way or another from what we knew up to March, or thereabouts, of 2020. What came after a rather abrupt ending of a very short, but until then, a normal year, was not anticipated. None of us (in the general public anyway) could have predicted what would unfold, but what did unfold, was quite unprecedented, having far reaching consequences for everyone, albeit affecting us in so

many different ways. We may be more bruised than we think.

As we start to navigate the government's new 'road map' our focus will be on recovery; we shall do so from the perspective of our life and work, our communities and nation and the world.

The diagram (below) helps to describe what we may need to do within ourselves to move from where we are now (as a result of nearly a year of living with the pandemic) towards recovery. Think of them as 'paving stones', although they come in no particular order, are of equal importance and can be 'stepped over'.



It may be useful to imagine that we are sitting at the centre of the diagram, feeling in some way or another detachment/separation as a result of our experiences of the last year. We are surrounded by six 'stones', all or some of which, offer us ways to look at our experiences and help us to connect to the new journey ahead.

During the last year, there may have been situations that made you feel excluded, ignored or even disregarded. There may have been situations that made you feel resentful. What made you feel that way? Would you like to address any of these situations in order to repair relationships or rebuild bridges? Is there any pain or hurt that needs to be acknowledged? What steps need to be taken to work towards **reconciliation**?

St Luke's Flower Team



Whilst we have all accepted that lockdown was essential to control the spread of Covid and this at times needed to include the suspension of communal worship, for many of us it has been hard to think of any positive side-effects.

However, St Luke's has over the last few months benefitted in an unexpected way.

Since churches reopened last summer, St Luke's has been open every Saturday and Sunday for private prayer. One afternoon when going to lock up I exchanged a few words with a lady who had come into church for a little quiet contemplation.

She made some appreciative remarks about the church. This led onto a mention of flowers in church. I explained that, as with many things at St Luke's in the recent past, these were usually down to Eve Lloyd.

Our visitor expressed a willingness to help and now several months down the line we have our own flower team of 3 – Caroline, Zanna and Ann.

If you have visited St Luke's in recent months you will have seen their lovely handiwork, which is much appreciated by the congregation and visitors. If you are not able to drop by in person you can see their work on their Facebook page, St Luke's Hatfield Flower Team.

Photos of their work can also be seen on the Facebook pages of We are Hatfield and Hatfield of

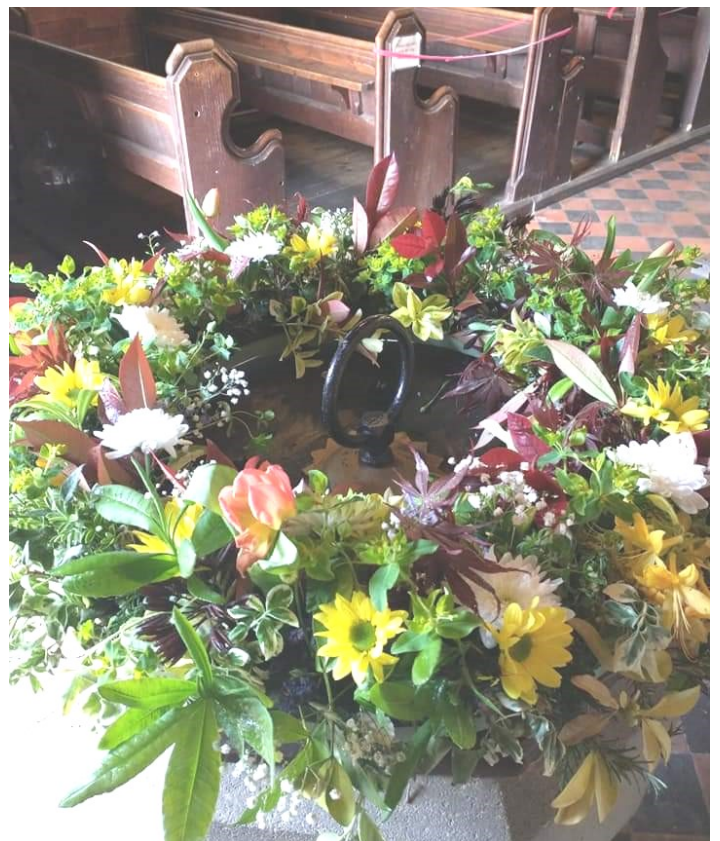
Yesteryear, where many other people have shared memories of St Luke's.

We cannot say how grateful we are to the ladies.

Caroline says 'Going to St Luke's and arranging flowers is the highlight of my week. I adore arranging flowers, but even more importantly I've come to make the best of friends in Zanna and Ann on the flower team, and also Eve, Michelle and Alison. I truly feel part of a community of wonderful people, doing their best to bring light and love into the community. Such a blessing.'

If you have a special occasion which you would like to mark with a floral arrangement at St Luke's please contact Eve Lloyd at 07785 510875

Stop Press: Covid regulations and advice permitting we are hoping to hold a Flower and Art Festival at St Luke's over the August Bank Holiday weekend (28-30th August). For further details see Facebook pages – St Luke's Hatfield Flowers and – St Etheldreda with St Luke Hatfield.



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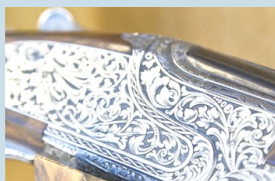
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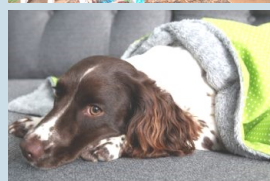
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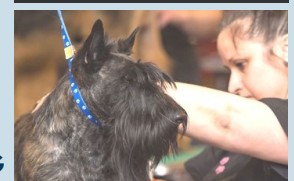
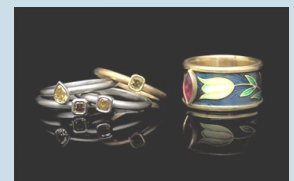
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Please contact—maryrathbone@icloud.com if you have any editorial contributions.

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The Lifeline service is open to everyone - of all ages - that would like to feel safe, protected & independent in their own home

Get in touch

Contact the control centre on **01707 357 696** and request a **LifeLine application form**.

For more information, visit our website: www.welhat.gov.uk/housing/lifeline

Lifeline is a service provided by Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.

- 24/7 365 day emergency response service
- Average 12 minute response time
- Regular monitoring visits
- Locally based control centre
- Free installation & competitive weekly charge
- Immediate action
- Holiday packages available

Crowdfunding to help Spencer McCall fight cancer

Spencer McCall, aged 26, has been on our prayer list for some time. He has Ewing's Sarcoma, a cancer that occurs in bones or soft tissue.

After extensive cycles of chemotherapy with the NHS, Spencer was given the all-clear. But in February 2020 he was advised that the cancer had spread to both lungs which had multiple tumours.

Further gruelling chemotherapy treatments failed to slow progression of the cancer. There is no further treatment available for Spencer on the NHS and he is now in Mexico where he is having treatment. A recent scan has shown that the number of tumours in Spencer's lungs have decreased by 60% and that there is hope of more improvements with further treatment.

If you are able to help Spencer or would like to find out more, please visit his funding page: www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/spencer-mccall Thank you. Lynn Bish

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