



# The Buzz

February 2022



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

## Monthly information for the Parish of Ifield

### Thought for the Month



Happy Saint Valentine's Day!

I have always felt that Valentine's Day is yet another commercial enterprise by the retail world to get money out of us by insisting that the only way you can show your love for another is by helping with their profit margin! Perhaps I am a cynic! But I would like to offer something of an alternative look at Saint Valentine of Rome.

What you may not hear about him is that St Valentine was a proper 'holy agitator'. A 3rd century religious menace living and working in the heart of a very oppressive Roman world under Claudius II.

Valentine lived in Rome at a time when Christians were often persecuted. The reason for the persecution was the Christian claim of Christ's sovereignty, which inevitably clashed with Caesar's claim of his own exclusive power and self-proclaimed godlike status. There was an expectation that all citizens would adhere to all the practices of the state religion by attending numerous feast and festival days throughout the year.

There are many legends of Valentine - that he courageously refused to pay homage to the imperial gods remaining faithful only to Christ; and that he was a war resister, subversively marrying young couples preventing the men from going to war (the emperor Claudius believed unmarried men made better soldiers so married men were spared the horrors of war). His subversive behaviour ended with Valentine being clubbed, beaten and stoned to death, and finally beheaded on February 14th, 269CE. In the year 496, February 14 was named as a day of celebration in Valentine's honour.

So what should we be marking on the day of his death? And what has being clubbed, beaten, stoned and beheaded got to do with love! So far, his story wouldn't make for a good wedding sermon or an endorsement for love or marriage would it?!

Well I know one story of Valentine which might help.

Just before Valentine was executed by Claudius' order, whilst imprisoned, Valentine became friends with the daughter of his captor and judge. While under the arrest of Judge Asterius, and discussing his faith with him, Valentine discussed Jesus. Asterius put Valentine to the test and brought to him his adopted blind daughter.

If Valentine succeeded in restoring the girl's sight, Asterius agreed to do whatever he asked. Valentine, praying to God, laid his hands on her eyes and the child's vision was restored. Immediately humbled, Asterius asked Valentine what he should do. Valentine replied that all of the idols around Asterius' house should be broken, and that he should fast for three days and then undergo the Christian sacrament of baptism. Asterius obeyed and, as a result, freed all the Christian inmates under his authority. Asterius, his family, and his forty-four-member household (family members and servants) were all baptised.

Then, as the legend goes - on the day of Valentine's execution, he left Asterius' daughter a note signed: "*Your Valentine*" ... instigating what has become a classic Valentine's tradition around the world - of sending little notes to people we love (or people we would like to love)!

So this month I task you in memory of Valentine's remarkable courage and following the last two years of pandemic to make sure you say with all your heart how much you love those who mean the most to you, your wife, husband, partner, family members, closest friend.

Whoever it might be to you, make sure you take the time to say how much you love them; because surely if the pandemic has taught us anything it has shown us how fragile life can be and how important human relationships are.

But don't feel you have to buy into the retail world's commercialism, as you really don't have to wait for February 14<sup>th</sup> to tell someone that you love them, and you can say it more often than once a year!

Now that sentiment does often feature in my wedding sermons!

With best wishes

*Christine*

Rector

## **A CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE**

on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> February at 11.00 am

**EVERYONE IS INVITED TO BRING ALONG A WEDDING PHOTO FOR DISPLAY**

## SERVICES AT ST. MARGARET'S

|  |                     |  |
|--|---------------------|--|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday                         | 8.00 am<br>11.00 am | Said Eucharist<br>Non-Eucharistic Service  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday                         | 9.30 am<br>11.00 am | FIISH for young families<br>Sung Eucharist |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday                         | 9.30 am<br>11.00 am | All-Age Worship<br>Sung Eucharist          |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Sundays      | 11.00 am            | Sung Eucharist                             |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesdays | 9.30 am             | Said Eucharist                             |

Current guidelines are that masks must be worn in church.



## PARISH HOUSE GROUPS

Besides being a way of deepening our faith, being a member of a house group is a great way to get to know other members of the congregation in an informal setting. If you would like to know more about any of these groups, please contact the person named below, or speak to our Reader, Jill Bell, on 01293 521699 ([reader@ifieldparish.org](mailto:reader@ifieldparish.org)).

| Day & Time           | Contact                       | Venue                      | Study Topic                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Mondays<br>10.30 am  | Chris and Jill Bell<br>521699 | Tree House,<br>Rusper Road | The Seven Signs of<br>John's Gospel |
| Thursdays<br>7.30 pm | Ian Edgson<br>552662          | Please check               | The Shack<br>(book and movie)       |

# GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS

The initial meeting with our twinned parish, Pound Hill and Worth, was held at St. Margaret's on 27<sup>th</sup> January. This will be followed by weekly meetings during February and March. Please do pray for church growth, using the bookmark prayer which you will find in church.

## PRE-LENT COURSE

Over the four weeks leading up to Lent, Christine will be leading a course looking at what we are really asking when we pray the Lord's Prayer. The course will be held at 2.30 pm on Wednesdays 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> February, probably in Lychgate Cottage.

## LENT COURSE

Full details of our Lent Course will appear in the March issue of The Buzz



The FSW Crawley Support Group (of which Christine and Jill are members) met on 20<sup>th</sup> January together with the Director, Martin Auton-Lloyd and Crawley Practitioner, Becky Long. Becky is currently supporting 21 local families, and from February will be running a fortnightly drop-in centre at Broadfield Community Centre. With the planned 2021 Christmas party cancelled due to COVID, she took toys and gifts for parents round to individual homes in her car, and these and the food hampers were very gratefully received. Martin reported that FSW is currently advertising for six more practitioners, which will result in its presence in 19 of the 21 deaneries in the Diocese. A Sponsored Easter Walk will be held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> April over the Downs around Alfriston.

## NEWS FROM THE EASTER TEAM

As always, your donations left in the basket in church are much appreciated.



Items most needed currently are  
Cereal  
Tinned potatoes  
Tinned meat

# WHO'S WHO IN IFIELD PARISH

|                     |                         |              |                               |
|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| Rector              | Revd. Christine Spencer | 561283       | rector@ifieldparish.org       |
| Curate              | Revd. Jamie Gater       | 852763       | curate@ifieldparish.org       |
| Curate on Placement | Revd. Lizzi Green       | 07565 126233 | curatelizzie@ifieldparish.org |
| Reader              | Jill Bell               | 521699       | reader@ifieldparish.org       |
| Parish Wardens      | Rob Pudney              | 437038       | rob@ifieldparish.org          |
|                     | Chris Bell              | 521699       | chris@ifieldparish.org        |
| PCC Secretary       | Clare Wilson            | 416438       | pccsecretary@ifieldparish.org |
| PCC Treasurer       | James May               | 529146       | treasurer@ifieldparish.org    |
| Safeguarding        | Andy Cottee             | 202167       | safeguarding@ifieldparish.org |
| Youth and Children  | Naomi Gater             | 852763       | ycofficer@ifieldparish.org    |
| Lychgate Bookings   | Lisa Hull               | 532337       | lmhull@virginmedia.com        |

## OUR RECTOR'S REST DAY

Please note that Friday is our Rector's rest day

## PLEASE NOTE

St. Margaret's weekly notices can be viewed on the parish website

## IFIELD PARISH WEBSITE

[www.ifieldparish.org](http://www.ifieldparish.org)

Please send any information/photos for publication on the website to  
Carl Peirce [carl@ifieldparish.org](mailto:carl@ifieldparish.org)

Follow us:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/stmargaretsifield>

## IFIELD PARISH OFFICE

**Mondays-Thursdays 9.00 am – 12 noon**

1 Lychgate Cottage, Ifield Street, Crawley, West Sussex, RH11 0NN

Parish Administrator: Mave Eshun Tel: 537578 Email: [office@ifieldparish.org](mailto:office@ifieldparish.org)

Please send any updates for the March 2022 issue to Jill Bell  
[reader@ifieldparish.org](mailto:reader@ifieldparish.org) by 21<sup>st</sup> February