

THE LINK

*With St Leonard's in Swithland
in May 2021*



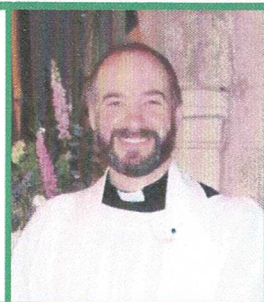
Revd. Colin Resch

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In a Panorama programme broadcast on Monday 18th April 2021 (still available on BBC iPlayer) Clive Myrie reported allegations of racism in the Church of England, sharing stories of racist abuse and claims of a culture that creates a hostile environment for Christians of colour. This programme titled 'Is the Church Racist?' comes hot on the heels of the contentious government-commissioned report on race in the UK - itself instigated following the murder of George Floyd in America and the Black Lives Matter campaign.



The Panorama programme was a difficult watch for those of us who are in positions of leadership and authority in the Church because it calls us to account for our attitudes and behaviours shown not just to those of colour, but to every individual with whom we have contact. The hurt and pain revealed by those interviewed in the programme was obvious to see and it is impossible to defend the behaviours that lie at the root of this racism. However, as the son of an immigrant myself, the Church revealed in the programme is not a Church I recognise. I have only ever found a welcome in the Church and a love of the people that I am pleased to call my sisters and brothers in Christ. Why? Because I happen to be the son of a white immigrant. But in writing this, I have to own up to my own failings and blindness in not seeing the pain and hurt that is being done to others.

In the parable of the sheep and goats recorded in Matthew's Gospel, chapter 25, Jesus says, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me". In my ignorance of the racism that is at work in the Church of England, I find that I am complicit in the offence and guilty as charged. Yet there is good news for Jesus also says in that same parable, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me".

My friends, let us strive together to create a Church where ALL are welcomed and ALL find a home; a place where ALL can thrive to achieve all that God has called them to accomplish. Let us be blind to colour and simply see one another as we truly are - created, loved and redeemed children of the same heavenly Father.

With every blessing, Colin Resch

Tolling of the Bells for the death of The Duke of Edinburgh

Following the death of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, on Friday 9th April, the bells at St Leonard's were rung on three occasions during the period of mourning, with the flag flown at half-mast from the tower.

According to the guidance from the Church of England, a bell was chimed at 6pm on Friday 9th April. The following day the number 5 was tolled half muffled by Nick Cunningham our steeple keeper. To half-muffle a bell, the clapper is encased in a muffle on one side - a fashioned piece of leather as shown in the photograph. When this side of the clapper hits the bell the sound is muffled.



All the bells are rung half muffled on Remembrance Sunday. Nick tolled the bell 99 times as part of a nationwide ring. Tolling is not easy and involves holding the bell up to leave a gap between strokes.

Prior to the minute silence at 3pm on Saturday 17th April for the Duke's funeral, Guy Jibson tolled half-muffled for 15 minutes, again as part of the nationwide ring. Thank you to both Nick and Guy for allowing the village of Swithland to be a part of this period of mourning.

On a personal note, I came along to learn to ring the bells when my daughter, Laura, learnt to ring as part of her bronze Duke of Edinburgh award. Indeed many young ringers from the village and parish learnt in the tower as part of their award. I was lucky enough to accompany Laura to St James' Palace to collect her Gold award and she was thrilled when the Duke spoke to her. The tower has great reason to be grateful to the Duke for his inspiration in creating the award scheme.

Janet Beeby, Tower Captain

ASCENSION DAY

THURSDAY MAY 13th



When I was a boy I collected stamps as a hobby but lost interest in it when I became a teenager. Somehow my stamp album survived my disinterest and I now look through it from time to time - in later life my once discarded hobby is again providing interest and enjoyment. One of my favourite stamps is from **Ascension Island** - it's such a wonderful name. A name the island acquired because it was discovered on **Ascension Day** in 1501. I wonder if it would be given the same appellation today? I doubt it! Like my stamp album when I became a teenager, **Ascension Day** seems to have been forgotten with the passage of time. Which is a great pity as the **ascension of Jesus** is so important - not just for Christians but for all mankind.

In the final three verses of Luke's Gospel he writes, "Then Jesus led them out as far as Bethany, and blessed them with uplifted hands; and in the act of blessing he parted from them. And they returned to Jerusalem full of joy and spent all their time in the temple praising God".

It's curious, isn't it, that the disciples should be full of joy - after all, Jesus had left them again. You would have thought that they would be downcast but they were full of joy. And the reason they were joyful was because the disciples knew that Christ had **ascended** to be with the Father. They also knew that they were connected to him. That gave them a great sense of confidence and boldness that would display itself after Pentecost.

Even though they did not know what the future held, they knew who held the future.

When Sir Edmund Hillary and his guide, Tensing, made their historic climb up Mount Everest, Hillary slipped, lost his footing and fell. Fortunately, Hillary and Tensing were tied together by a strong rope. Tensing pulled Hillary inch by inch back to safety. On their return Hillary spoke of their experience and his debt to his friend. Tensing was later asked about this event and said, "Mountain climbers always help each other." There was a bond that connected them figuratively and literally.

There was a bond that connected the disciples after the **Ascension** a bond that was stronger than any they had forged over the three years since Jesus began his ministry. Somehow they were beginning to be one body - the body of Christ. They were in one accord.

The disciples returned to Jerusalem full of joy. And why not? They knew that Jesus was coming back. They knew that Jesus had not forsaken them. And they had tremendous joy. It was the joy of anticipation.

The **Ascension** of Christ is an occasion for awe and adoration. It is a time for drawing together in one accord. It is a time for great anticipation. Jesus has gone to be with the Father, to speak for us, to prepare a place for us, to continue his redeeming work for us. To take charge for us.

Let's not forget **Ascension Day**. Instead let us, as the body of Christ, celebrate it and be filled with joy as we look to the future with confidence.

Gary Lee



You will be most welcome to
join us for our
Ascension Day Service
on Thursday May 13th
at 7.00pm at St Leonard's Church

SWITHLAND WATER MILL

I was reminded about Swithland's water mill recently when, listening to a local history talk, courtesy of the Woodhouse Eaves local history Society, I was surprised that the speaker didn't mention it!



There is, however, something of its history in our book 'Swithland: Church and Estate' (pp.272-3). This article is by way of a 'catch-up'.

Swithland did have a water mill, at one time two, the remains of one being now adjacent to the reservoir. In the 1658 survey of Groby Manor there is also a reference to a windmill. Sir John Danvers' 1752 marriage settlement makes reference to two water mills and a windmill. The sites of the 1752 windmill and the other water mill are unknown, though there is a 1622 reference to a close at the west end of the village, Mill or Milne Close, which may indicate that one of the mills was sited there. A conveyance of 1775 refers to 'that piece or parcel of arable land called west or windmill field containing one rood or thereabouts' but does not indicate where exactly that field lay.

The photo with this article shows the remains of the water mill (flour) adjacent to the reservoir, now on private land. I am grateful to Janet Beeby for, with permission, braving the overgrown vegetation around it and taking the photo.

Canon Anne

Editor's note:

Thank you also to Janet for providing the photograph on the front cover. A bird's eye view of the churchyard taken from the tower.



Launde Abbey

Re-opening on May 17th

A wealth of retreats have been lined up for the first few weeks after the doors of Launde re-open to welcome people back. These include a day on **Making Church Conflict Creative**, a **Bird Watching Retreat** and a **Cycling Retreat** for those who love the great outdoors. A retreat for exploring **Praying with Julian of Norwich** and a **Contemplative Intensive** with Martin Laird. An **Icon Retreat** and a **Painting Retreat** for those of a more artistic disposition - all these and more before the end of July!

For full details go to: www.laundeabbey.org.uk

You can also become a Friend of Launde Abbey

One of the joys of being a friend is the satisfaction of supporting a precious place - a place of sanctuary, retreat and renewal for so many people.

But there are other benefits to enjoy -

Friends receive twice yearly copies of the Launde magazine 'Launde Leaves', they have their own special retreat, are invited to special events and are sent various discount vouchers for events at the Abbey.

The annual subscription for Friends is £20 for individual members and £30 for couples. Again, details are available on the Launde website.

Future Plans of our Community Outreach Team

Although for obvious reasons we are unable to commit to any definite dates at the moment, we are hoping to organise Open Church Saturdays in August and September as well as a traditional Harvest Lunch, possibly on the first Sunday of October. Further details will be confirmed in next month's LINK.

Any comments or contributions to The LINK should be sent to the editor at maryselina@hotmail.co.uk



SERVICES IN MAY

All services continue to take place in line with the current restrictions. Please be assured that you are most welcome to attend and check our website for details of **Church at Home** services via Zoom.

Sunday 2nd

9.30am

Holy Communion

Rev Darren Walker

Sunday 9th

9.30am

Morning Prayer

Olga Harris & Gary Lee

Thursday 13th

7.00pm

Ascension Day

Holy Communion

Rev Darren Walker

Sunday 16th

9.30am

Morning Prayer

Olga Harris &
Rev Colin Resch

Sunday 23rd

9.30am

Whit Sunday

Holy Communion BCP

Rev Colin Resch

Sunday 30th

9.30am

Morning Prayer

Olga Harris &
Edmund Stacey



St Leonard's Church

www.stleonardsswithland.org



CHURCHWARDEN

Sally Allen 0116 2375704

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