

Church of St Margaret of Antioch
Lime Avenue, Leigh on Sea SS9 3PA

Bulletin

Autumn 2021



www.saintmargaretsleigh.org

Church Services

Worship at St Margaret's Church

- Sunday:** 08:00-08:30 **Public Said Mass**
10:00-11:00 **Public Mass with music**
Live Streamed & available on web site
Sermon written copy online
17:30-18:10 **Public Mass** with music for family groups
- Wednesday:** 09:30 Non-public Mass
- Thursday:** 09:30-10:00 **Public Said Mass**
14:00-16:00 **Church open for personal prayer**
- Friday:** 09:00 Non-Public Said Mass
- Saturday:** 09:00 Non-Public Said Mass

Attendance at services is on a 'first come' basis.

The limit at the moment is 60.

Details and services are correct at time of publishing.

For up to date arrangements for all services and festivals please see the web site. This is updated regularly.

www.saintmargaretsleigh.org

Summer views from the vicarage:

In the last three months or so we have experienced some “summer views” but many have been frustrated by bizarre weather patterns no doubt due to climate change and the continued fallout from the pandemic. Many of you have been denied your normal summer views of France or Greece and have either settled for being at home or some more local travel now it’s “allowed.” What an extraordinary thing it has been to have our basic freedoms compromised like wartime by an imported and probably man made virus from the other side of the world where such freedoms have no value to those in authority anyway. Some of course have used it as an excuse to withdraw from patterns of life and work not high on the priority list and many others have carried on bravely adapting in the face of tragedy and constraint. As we now hopefully try to return to some sort of normality the light of truth will be shone on each. The restoration and right use of freedom is the great biblical theme from creation and exodus through the prophets to the coming of Christ and God’s desire to restore true freedom which is found in His service rather than the self. It is a theme that has come into much of my reflection on the last three months or so.

We have been mercifully spared through God’s grace and

due diligence any cases of Covid and death arising through use of our Church and buildings through the pandemic. Nevertheless we have seen life events good and sad in due measure. Amongst our deaths this recent period have been Diana Chisnell, Nancy Jenkins this last week and Susan Gibbons. Diana for 20 years had been a member of our congregation, a faithful long time clergy widow and life long supporter of the Mother's union. 60 people were able to attend her funeral and some of her beloved plants have been transferred to the church garden in loving memory. Nancy died just short of her 96th birthday and was a down to earth Yorkshire delight to those of us who gave her communion at home and to the many that knew her in her abler years in the parish. Susan Gibbons much younger and her funeral like others at the time was more restricted and live streamed. She may be remembered by some of you from the days she assisted with children and young people programmes in the parish. May they all rest in peace.

At the other end of Life we have welcomed Alexander MacLeod in to the world as son to Fraser and Emma who were married last year in the first wedding of my time in the parish. He is due to be baptised on 15th August. I've had quite a few weddings outside the parish whilst supporting other local churches and in my role with the Navy but it would appear this side of parish life is picking up! This week



Eloise Gibbons and Paul Lloyd are getting married and two of our younger members have announced their engagements. Firstly Chris Dowsett to Kavita and also Phoebe Hull to Alex. Chris and Kavita will likely get married in the West Country where he is working with the Navy as a medical assistant whilst Phoebe and Alex will be in church here next year. Noah Cockett has completed successfully his first year at theological college and we wish all these young people every blessing in their respective vocations and lives.

On the Diocesan front it can be described as change of personalities but no change in the pocket. We have a new Diocesan Bishop (Gulli) although she has remained in Loughborough looking after her children and doing her Job at a distance by zoom until the autumn. The no change in the pocket continues to be a major issue for the real life of parishes not least our own on the ground. The planned reduction of ordinary clergy by nearly a third over the next year will hurt many. We of course have to get real with our giving and the Diocese with reform of its own functioning and calculation of parish

share in a fair, transparent and consistent way that has been lacking hitherto. For our part we have determined to have a stewardship review and campaign over the year and there will no doubt be more of that in future issues. We also have to work much more closely together with our collegiate parishes. For my part I have supported St.Mary Benfleet, St.David's Eastwood and St.James the Great with weddings, funerals, masses and advice arising from their gappings due to retirement, death or suspension. It was gratifying that this year St. Margaret's Day saw a good turnout on a Tuesday evening of



around 80 including representatives from those parishes with wine and food in the gardens after mass. We need to support each other in the real world on the ground and demonstrate the

value of the parish system in spite of efforts to undermine it within the wider church.

Of my other strands of ministry, of note has been the conclusion of two years as Chaplain to the Mayor and

council. This has included some special events and helped put the parish back on the local map. John Lamb as mayor has coped commendably with doing the mayor job differently in the pandemic and his wife Pat ably assisted by her hats and engaging personality has brought fun and unity across age groups cultures and political divides. Well done to them both. Another strand is schools ministry obviously, and this last month saw some return to use of church for school masses and presentations which was a start. There is a long way to go before we are back to



where we were a couple of years ago in this and much else.

As I said at the start of the pandemic our parish was founded in the aftermath of the Great War and in the teeth of the crippling Spanish Flu pandemic and came through to flourish. By God's grace and with Easter hope may we do so again and use the freedoms given us by God wisely lest we lose them.

The Revd Fr.David Wylie RN

July 31st 2021.

From a Corner of the Cotswolds

Dear Friends

Having experienced and enjoyed a beautiful Cotswolds Spring and now Summer, something has become very clear to me. In a time when we seem to expect to know exactly what will happen and when, especially in the light of lockdown, it is evident being so close to nature that actually in this wonderful world God has created man is not in control of everything.

Blue tits and their young ones who were nesting very comfortably in our nesting box undisturbed by humans or predators, fledged earlier than usual. One minute they were darting in and out of their new home feeding their young the next they were gone enjoying the field adjoining their new found home.

Much earlier than expected the fields were ready for harvesting and farmers were working at a pace to get the fields ploughed and baled up ready for the winter months to come, providing the cattle with



nourishment to see them through what could be a long season. This in turn immediately brought the predators, red kites and suchlike making the most of a ploughed field

soaring the skies ready to swoop down on an unsuspecting field mouse.

Bell ringing at St Peters Church had not been allowed until this morning and boy did they make up for the long absence. It made me wonder if the bells were rung in a similar way after the First and Second World Wars. Village fairs and agricultural shows have all had to be cancelled but the Church doors have continued to stay open. It has been such a gift to be able to walk in anytime of the day and sit quietly. There is a very old Mother's Union banner by the altar of this 14th



Century Church and that was my focus on the day of the funeral of our friend Diana Chisnell. I was so glad to read about some of the St Margaret's Mother's Union mothers and daughters including Diana.

I take comfort in the fact that we don't know everything and that God has a plan for all of us how ever we try to orchestrate our lives.

Until next time , My love and prayers, **Alison (Whitby)**

An Answer to a prayer

Mr Hawker was walking one day on the cliffs near Morwenstow, with the Rev Vincent, when a gust of wind took off Mr Vincent's hat, and carried it over the cliff.

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Within a week or two a Methodist preacher at Truro was discoursing on prayer, and in his sermon he said:

"I would not have you, dear brethren, confine your supplications to spiritual blessings, but ask for temporal favours. I will illustrate bmy meaning by narrating an incident, a fact that happened to myself ten days ago.

I was on the shore of a cove near a little insignificant place at North Cornwall named Morwenstow, and about to proceed to Bude. Shall I add, my Christian friends, that I had on my head at the time a shocking bad hat, and that I somewhat blushed to think of entering the harbour, town and watering place, so ill adorned as to my head?

Then I lifted up my prayer to the Almighty, that He would pluck me out of the great strait in which I found myself, and clothe me suitably as to my head; for he painteth the petals of the polyanthus, and colours the calyx of the coreopsis.

At that solemn moment I raised my eyes to heaven: and I saw in the spacious firmament on high, the blue, ethereal sky, a black spot. It approached, it largened, it widened, it fell at my feet. It was a brand new hat, by a distinguished London maker. I cast my battered beaver to the waves, and walked into Bude as fast as I could, with the new hat on my head."

Sabine Baring-Gould: *The Vicar of Morwenstow* (1876)



## Havens Hospices

You may have seen a number of giant hares around the Southend area and along the seafront. The Hares About Town sculpture trail of 30 hares has been let loose, raising money for Havens Hospices.

This event is the first sculpture trail of this kind that has been seen in the town, and the art on the sculptures reflect a range of topics from local history, science and the environment to fun characterful puns based on the hare and hare-mazing fun facts!

Working until 3am on the morning of the launch on 1<sup>st</sup> July, the installation team ensured Southend woke up to a town filled with colour. The hare sculpture trail will remain in place until 12<sup>th</sup> September.

Natalie Solomons from Kiwi Productions Project Management said, “It was so nerve racking when the first few were installed, using two different types of forklift trucks. Crowds were watching the hares swinging in the air so the pressure



was really on! We are just thrilled that all were planted safely thanks to our logistics partner Atlantic Pacific. To wake up the next day and drive along the seafront to see so many people enjoying them already is just amazing!”

The free trail is made up of small and large hares and it is an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors, meet up with friends and enjoy

the town. The large hares have been sponsored by businesses and individually designed and created by a selection of local and national artists.

The 57 leverets (baby hares) are part of a Learning Programme and they have been created in a range of schools and community groups from nursery age to young adults. These will graze alongside the main trail giving additional fun and colour to the event. They can be found in clusters and individually around the town in cultural hotspots such as The Beecroft Art Gallery, Southend Pier and many more locations to be enjoyed before they return to their creators at the end of the trail.

The list of locations along with the associated groups who have created them may be found at [www.haresabouttown.co.uk](http://www.haresabouttown.co.uk). This includes further information and where maps showing all the hares may be obtained.

The Harequarters is located at The Royals Shopping Centre. There will be hare themed merchandise for sale as well as artwork from the artists involved in the project. There will be an area for children's arts and crafts as well.

The trail ends with an auction to raise funds for Havens Hospices which provides palliative care and support for adults and children that have been diagnosed with an incurable disease.

For more details visit [www.havenshospices.org.uk/auction](http://www.havenshospices.org.uk/auction)

**Peter Maddox**

# Church competition 2021

This year we shine a light on churches across the UK – their bright ideas and success stories, community heroes and ingenuity in the face of adversity.

## **Make your good news a headline story!**

After a year marked by extraordinary changes, limitations and isolation, we've seen church communities going through incredibly challenging times. But, as is so often the case, times of difficulty can bring out the best in people and pull communities together.

We have seen how good news and good ideas have the power to redefine how we all experience life, community and the church; with this in mind we wanted to find a way to share your good news stories.

**Share your Good News for a chance to win £1,500 for your church plus £6,000 if you win the national prize.**

## **What makes Good News?**

Has something been done in your church community that made life that little bit better, or easier for others? Then that's a good start.

It could be a project that actively engaged with younger or older members of the local community; or a digital initiative – like a WhatsApp group – that kept people connected. Maybe you have managed to carry out a successful fundraising campaign.

Or maybe you've done really well in building your links to your local community, despite all the hurdles COVID-19 has put in your way. Of course, it might be something completely different – but whatever your story, we'd love to hear it, and to share it to help inspire others. It could be any story you feel deserves to be recognised.

## What makes a winning story?

We are looking for:

- **Creativity** - What is new, different or imaginative about the way you help your church community?
- **Effectiveness** - How has your church community been supported?
- **Inspiration** - Will your idea inspire other places of worship?

Think of your entry as a news article – write a newspaper-style attention-grabbing headline and a ‘news’ piece of no more than 250 words to tell your story. Send in a photo or video to include in your story just as you might see on a news site.

## How to enter

Think of your good news story that needs to be heard and fill in the [competition form](#).

If you can't use the online form; you can [download a form](#) and send it via email together with your photo to: [churchcompetition@ecclesiastical.com](mailto:churchcompetition@ecclesiastical.com).

Video submissions will not be possible by post.

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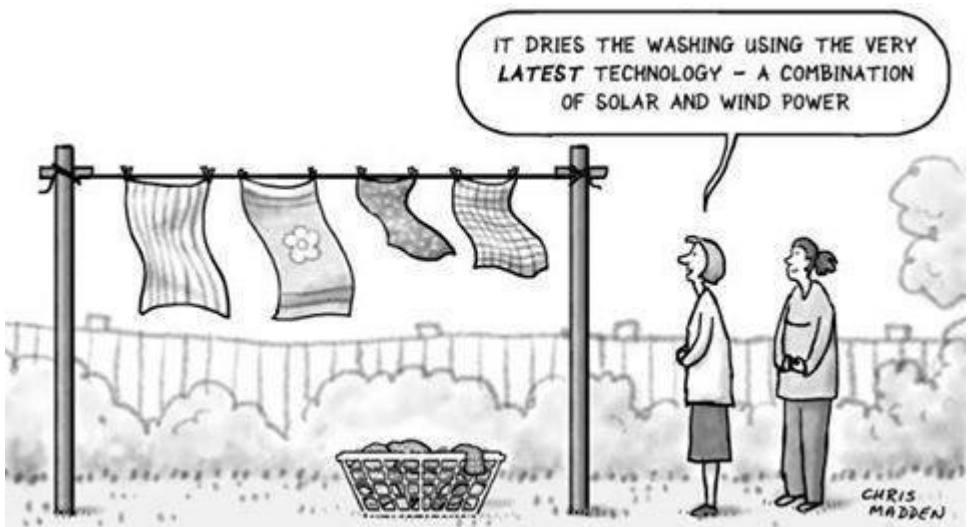
Once you submit your entry, your church will automatically be entered into the regional competition where each winner will receive a prize of £1,500. The grand final of the competition will see one of the regional winners be crowned the national winner and receive an additional £6,000.

That is two chances to win!

**All entries must be submitted by the closing date  
17 September 2021.**

Good Luck

Donald Fraser







## Bumblebees Pre-School

Wow, what an amazing first year at Bumblebees at St Margaret's.

We have had our ups and downs with Covid but we fought our hardest to make our first year a success.

I could not be more proud of the ladies at Bumblebees working so hard to make sure this year despite Covid really was a success.

We have sent our first little ones off to big school with confidence and independence. We can't wait to get back and start our second year at St Margaret's.

**Preschool returns on September 1st.**

Sessions are 9am to 3pm Monday to Friday

For any enquires please call our Manager Sam 07936 436623



## **Bill Griffiths continued...**

When he was a prisoner of war in Java, Bill Griffiths lost both his sight and his hands while dismantling a booby trap. When he returns home, life seems meaningless until he became a St Dunstaner. He is helped to set up his own road haulage business. Unfortunately, the advent of nationalisation forces him to sell up. Then an attractive woman called Alice enters his life and introduces him to the world of singing. Bill decides to extend their partnership and they are married. Shortly afterwards he is offered a challenging new post.

When strangers learn that Bill Griffiths is coming to give them a talk on the work of St Dunstan's they often expect a weepy evening. No wonder it comes as a surprise to them when the only tears shed are ones of mirth. "People who haven't heard us before think it's bound to be dreary listening", laughs Bill. As a speaker in the North of England for St Dunstan's – his area stretches from the Scottish Border to the Midlands – Bill gives more than a hundred lectures a year to all types of audiences from parish workers to prisoners.

It's twenty-four years since Bill first went to St Dunstan's himself as a war shattered blind and handless airman. From

the dedicated staff there he not only learned to overcome the practical difficulties of being blind, but also took the vital step of learning to live again. Now life has turned full circle, for Bill himself is teaching blind people to overcome the problems of living in the dark. He also tries to strengthen understanding between those who have sight and those who have not. Bill explains how he tries to do this in his talks.

“ I chat about my own experiences. I tell them the funny incidents to show them life isn't all dreary just because you can't see. Then I explain about the work of St Dunstan's, how they train people for practically every job going. I also tell them how sighted people can best assist us in a quiet way. For instance, don't be afraid to approach us. I know we have a reputation for being independent, but often we do need your help. When we are dithering on the kerbside, or when we're fumbling around for something we've dropped, then you know we do want help. When you are talking to a blind person, just try to forget they're blind. Don't restrict your conversation or be afraid of saying the wrong word. Often people who have known me for years say to me ' Isn't the sky a lovely blue' or 'Isn't that a lovely dress that girl is wearing?' To me and to most blind people, that is a great compliment. It's an indication we are being treated normally.”

It's the little things the sighted members of the local

community can do that make life so much easier for the blind – things like lopping off overhanging branches which could bring an afternoon's stroll to a tragic end for a blind person.

Bill's lucky for he has Alice to steer him along, but even so, it's a bit like an obstacle course – a swerve here to miss a pram, a quick side-step there to dodge a car parked half on the pavement, half on the road! It's not that the general public don't care. We just don't think. Till someone like Bill lets us into his world, we really have no idea what life is like for the blind and how we can help.

With all his singing and lecture tours, you'd think Bill would have quite enough to cope with. But he still has time to be a keen sportsman. Last November (1969) The Sports Writers' Association voted him Disabled Sportsman of the year, for his performance with the St Dunstan's teams at the Stoke Mandeville games, and also for his efforts at Kerpape, France, in the International Games for the Disabled. Bill passes off his title as being an award more for his 'stickabiliy' than for any fantastic records. It must have taken some 'sticking at' though, to perfect his diving technique, to sprint in a straight line and to throw a javelin.

“It’s simple, really” says Bill, “Take swimming. It was the one thing I enjoyed when I had my sight, so the first thing I did when I came home was to dive into the local baths”, He does remember one unpleasant moment when he got into the deep end and instinctively put out his arm to clutch the rail. Then he remembered he hadn’t anything to clutch with!

It is understandable that it took him several months to regain his water confidence after that, but he simply refused to give up. Bill says he can tell where he’s going by listening to the voices at the side of the pool. If he goes off course Alice is always there to call directions to him.

Sprinting apparently presents no problems either. “I just run like mad towards the noise of an electric buzzer” Bill laughs. For sports minded readers he clocked 12.7 seconds in the 75-yard sprint at the Ovingdean Sports last year and carried off several firsts and seconds. “I haven’t tried to compete for records though” says Bill “because I just can’t compare with able bodied sportsmen”.

The standing long jump, where you jump without doing a run-up, isn’t easy even for a sighted person. Alice knows that, for she tried it! Six years ago, Bill could jump 5 feet 9 inches. Today he can jump not far short of 7 feet. He is understandably proud of this improvement.

“I’ll have a bash at throwing the javelin and discus, ten pin bowling and rifle shooting too” he adds. Bill explains how it is possible for a blind person to take aim at rifle shooting. “You shoot by sound. The rifle is based on a tripod, but it is electronically connected to a target. You wear earphones and tune in very, very carefully. When you get a certain pitch of note you know you are on the bull’s eye.

Now he’s looking forward to a new sporting adventure – fishing. St Dunstan’s have started their own angling club and their research department has already designed a special fishing rod for Bill. “It fastens to my chest” Bill explains” I can get my arm in it and wind the line in or out myself. We hope we’ll soon be able to meet with other fishing clubs and mix with ordinary sighted fishermen. Deep sea fishing is great for blind people. Once you are out there in a boat you are on equal terms- the fish don’t discriminate. As long as we put the right bait on the right hook, we’re ok.”

Many people think that when you lose your sight your other senses immediately become keener but Bill says there is no miraculous substitute for eye sight. Your other senses develop over a period of years. It takes a long, long time before you are able to tell someone’s mood by

the sound of their voice. Bill has reached that stage now. He can always tell if their local minister is reading his sermon from notes, or when a television announcer is feeling off-colour. "The voice is a great give-away. If a person is happy their tone is always higher pitched. And it doesn't take long to find out if a person is superficial. You can often detect strength and sincerity in a quiet voice".

Bill isn't the sort to sit and wonder if a miracle could restore his sight. "It has gone for ever and that is that".

There have been so many great events I would like to have seen in the last 28 years, but I suppose the greatest I missed was the men landing on the moon. I'm very lucky though, Alice has described so much to me. No man could have better eyes."

What advice would Bill give to somebody who suddenly lost their sight? "First of all they must get in touch with a responsible organisation which will help them. They must meet older blind people. I found them a great source of encouragement to me in the early days. You see I 'm just an ordinary sort of chap" says Bill modestly. "There are plenty of sightless people all over the world, holding down jobs and leading a family life. Being handless as well is a disadvantage, but just learning how others have coped has spurred me on to do things – and has helped me never to

give up. Taking up a hobby which involves mixing with sighted people is a tremendous help in settling down in society again. Try to forget about yourself. Find something useful to do and get on with doing it. I've always found the radio invaluable. I try to get interested in a serial because it's something to look forward to.

My final piece of advice would be not to let your social life come to a standstill" says Bill. He himself is always attending reunions and his house is open to any number of friends and ex-POWs who have found their way to his home from all over the world. "And nowadays there are so many gadgets to help blind people that life around the home goes on pretty normally." Bill's favourite of all these is his radio – he has several scattered around his bungalow. With a quick twist of his lips he can switch on the set. A few turns and he's changed the wave lengths.

He is also very proud of his toilet, which is specially adapted and provided by St Dunstan's. At the base of the pedestal is a pedal which, when pressed down with the heel, sends a jet of warm water. Release the pedal and the water is replaced with warm air.

In Bill's den is his typewriter. The keyboard is encased with a metal cover with holes drilled over each key. To type, Bill



pokes a steel spike, attached to his arm, through the appropriate hole. That's how his correspondence is tackled. A telephone stands next to his typewriter. He dials with his tongue and the receiver is mounted so he can receive calls without having to pick it up. On a side table sits his talking book which he also switches on with his lips. The taped book is in the form of a cassette which can run for more than two hours and be turned over with a flick of Bill's arm.

Then it was time to go. After a quick flick of his tongue over his braille-face watch, Bill worked out my trains. And as Alice drove us to the station Bill gave me a whistle-stop guide to Blackburn. It was difficult to remember that the man sitting next to me could not see the sights he was busily pointing out. As I waved goodbye to this happy couple standing arm in arm on the platform, I felt sure the story of Bill and Alice would always stand out as an example of what can be achieved with faith, courage, and devotion.

For although Bill Griffiths lives in a world of utter darkness, to thousands of blind men and women everywhere he has brought a beacon of hope.

The End

## **St. Margaret of Antioch Leigh-on-Sea Notes to Users of St.Margaret's Church, QR Code Halls, Rooms, Grounds and Vicarage**

### **Public worship in Church.**

The Vicar, Wardens, PCC and Congregation of St.Margaret's seek to give the highest degree of confidence for the Covid 19 Security for attendees of the "advertised public worship and open church" on Thursdays and Sundays complying with government law and guidelines

### **Other use of church property**

Hirers and users of any of the church property outside the space of the church designated for public worship and outside of the designated times do so at their own risk. It is part of the contract of use that users of the Church, Church Hall, meeting rooms, grounds and vicarage outside of these events and times must self- caretaker; cleaning and sanitizing all areas and items they are to use and repeat this at the end of their event or visit. They are to keep a full register of their users according to current law. Times, organisations and people using these spaces outside of the Thursday and Sunday Public acts of worship may be obtained from the Vicar who is to be informed of all activity with 24 hours notice until further notice.

The Revd Fr.David Wylie RN 23rd September

## **Covid and other protocols**

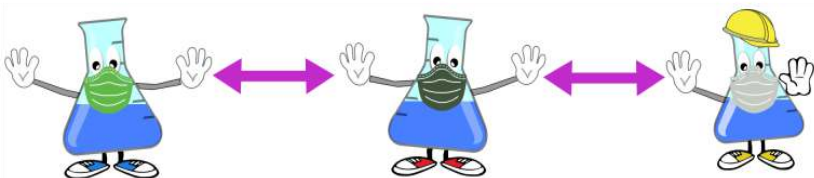
**Facemasks** – whilst these are discretionary please remember their purpose: to mitigate you infecting someone else within 1-2m in an enclosed space. If you are in an enclosed space and within that distance we advise you to wear one unless previously exempt or leading worship in any way. There is space within the church for you to distance without. They serve little purpose outdoors unless you are getting very chummy

**Sanitisation** – please make use of the stations at the entrance and exit to the church, continue to observe our other protocols as advertised for good practice.

**Singing** – please feel free to sing but do so with restraint unless you are part of the singing group.

**Communion** – please note during live streamed masses for safeguarding, privacy and benefit of worship enablers, this is received at the end of mass after the blessing (in one kind currently). Please make your way down the central aisle and return to your seat via the appropriate side aisle.

Social distance, please



# Who's Who at St Margaret's

## **Parish Priest:**

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## **Churchwardens:**

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Mrs Lorrina Cockett 07952 431 690

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## **Hall enquires:**

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## **Organist & Director of Music: & Church bookings:**

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## **Webmaster:**

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