

Peninsula Post 8

An occasional magazine from the
Church of England Parish of Harwich
May/June 2026

From the archives

As cupboards and rooms get cleared, amid a lot of debris for the tip or recycling are some gems. In St Nicholas bound copies of the parish magazine 1917-26, 1932-49 were found. Reading a previous Vicar's letters and looking at some of the items is fascinating, though can be time consuming. These will be offered to the Harwich Society or the Museum, depending where is the best place for them to join others that have been found.

The August 1917 edition shows a Vicar, the Rev. Arthur Mills and Curate, G.A. Graham. The magazine cost 1d. Arthur had only just been appointed. The Curate was about to leave. Each Sunday at St Nicholas there were services at 8am Holy Communion, 11am Matins and Holy Communion 1st and 3rd Sundays and Matins and Litany other Sundays. At 3pm there was the Children's Service, at 3.45pm baptism and 6.30pm Evensong. Baptism was also available at 6.15pm on Friday.

June and July saw 12 baptisms, 1 wedding and 5 funerals. The July collection was just over £24. Adverts included Grice and Son the family grocer; Denny the fish, poultry and game merchant; John Self was ironmonger; W.G. Lewis was named as the builder and undertaker; R. Creswell offered pastry and confection and W.B. Greenwood and Sons were the butchers.

It is hard to think that while the parish life went on and the magazine recorded the minutiae of the town's life so many were being killed in the trenches and battlefields and many would be recorded on the boards and monuments that would appear on walls and in streets marking their deaths. Those deaths were usually mentioned in the Vicar's letter, but he first mentions the Harvest Festival (14th October). There is a cryptic reference to gratitude that there may be a considerable improvement in the choir as clearly the very best had not been offered to God for a while by them. There was a Wednesday evening service, and it was a time of earnest prayer. It was pointed out with sadness that there was no parish church school (this is for Harwich St Nicholas) and pointed out with greater surprise that the former Curate, Mr Graham had not gone North after all but Ingatestone. There was a hope that another curate might be found however the curate's fund was not all it could be and at present without more giving even if someone was found they couldn't be paid.

The November issue clearly went to press with no sense the war was ending. The Vicar was proposing to preach in Advent on; 1. why do we believe in God? 2. why do we believe in Christianity? 3. why are we members of the church? 4 is eternal life a reasonable hope? St Nicholas Hall was now open to soldiers and sailors and contained an adequate piano. The last thing mentioned was the support for Church Reform! The Church of England was to get more say in its affairs and not always need Parliament ...

oh and the choir was showing much improvement. (This would not come until 1919 when a National Assembly was formed).

Finally, the year concluded with Christmas Day services (none on Christmas Eve) at 7am, 8am, 11 and 12. Finally there was Evensong and yes ... the choir now showed a very great and real improvement. 1918 was clearly going to open well even if there was a war on.

Where was your X placed?

We had the opportunity to cast a vote. Hopefully you used the postal system or went to your local polling station as I did, with my ID! Why should we vote, even if at times we feel our vote won't make a difference?

1. Voting publicly recognises that we submit to the authority of the political system in our nation as established by God. (Romans 13:1-7)
2. Voting recognises the equality of all people and their right to speak and be heard. (Deuteronomy 10:17-19)
3. It is one way that we can obey God's command to seek the good of those around us and our nation as a whole. (Jeremiah 29:5-6)
4. It shows that we care deeply about who our leaders are as we are urged to offer prayer and intercession on their behalf. (1 Timothy 2:1,2)
5. It is a simple yet significant way we can do something about politics in our nation. 'All that is required for evil to prevail is for good men to do nothing', Edmund Burke. (Psalms 34:14)
6. It makes a difference the way a grain of salt makes a difference, and that is how we are to influence our society for good. (Matthew 5:13)
7. It is a privilege not to be taken for granted. Those of us who reap the benefits of living in a democracy should play a part in upholding democracy.
8. Not voting is a form of voting, as it will influence the outcome. We need to take responsibility for our actions, as well as our lack of actions. (Luke 10:25-37)
9. Voting has biblical precedence for example Acts 14:23 describes that the early Christians elected elders by voting.
10. Voting is part of our stewardship to use all the resources we have been given in ways that honour God; to waste a vote is to squander a gift.

By Dr Krish Kandiah who is President of London School of Theology, founder of the fostering and adoption charity Home for Good and a contributing editor to [Christian Today](#), where this article first appeared about the 2015 election.

And as the votes are counted and announced ... what might we hope for in those elected locally?

Well, do we care about what God cares about? His priorities transcend left-versus-right party politics. He commanded humankind to 'work' and 'take care' of the land (Genesis 2:15), to 'administer true justice', 'show mercy and compassion', and to 'not oppress the widow, the fatherless, the foreigner, or the poor' (Zechariah 7:9–10).

Even though politics may be pretty far down on your watchlist, I know I need to think about these issues. Which policies will best align with God's pattern for human flourishing by celebrating good, punishing evil, pursuing peace, and protecting the oppressed? The coming days may well reveal a lot about our nation and how we pray and respond as people of faith may be critical.

A General Prayer for Local Officials

Almighty God, we lift up the leaders of our local community—our mayor, council members, and city officials.

Grant them wisdom beyond their own, to make decisions that bring peace, prosperity, and justice to our town, District and County.

Shield them from external influence or selfishness, instil in them a deep commitment to truth and righteousness.

May they work with integrity, serving all residents with kindness and protecting our community.

We ask for your blessing on their efforts and for the betterment of our local area. Amen.

Prayers for our community

you may like to keep this page near you for your own prayers.

PRAYER FOR FLOURISHING COMMUNITY

A flourishing community prioritises collective well-being, promotes unity and solidarity, and maintains a connection with God. Through these prayers, communities can share vision of prosperity, harmony, and fulfilment for all its members.

Heavenly Father, I pray for the flourishing of our community — spiritually, socially, and economically. May we work together to create a place where all are valued, where justice and righteousness prevail, and where the needs of the most vulnerable are met.

I pray for those who are in positions of leadership within our community. Grant them wisdom, discernment, and humility as they serve the needs of the people. May they be guided by your truth and by your love.

Finally, Lord, I thank you for the gift of community and for the bonds of love and fellowship that unite us. Help us to be instruments of your peace, shining your light and spreading your love wherever we go. Amen.

PRAYER FOR COMMUNITY AND UNITY IN OUR NATION

Praying for strength and unity in one's national community promotes healing, peace, and the fulfilment of God's call for his people to live in harmony and love one another.

Heavenly Father, I come before you with a heart burdened by the divisions and discord that plague our nation.

I pray for unity to prevail in our nation. Help us to set aside our differences and to come together as one people, united in our common humanity and shared values. Give us the strength to bridge the divides that separate us and to build bonds of trust and understanding with one another.

I pray for our nation's leaders, that they may be instruments of reconciliation and healing in our nation. May they govern with integrity and justice, working tirelessly for the well-being of all citizens.

Lord, I ask for your forgiveness for the times when we have contributed to division and strife through our words, actions, or indifference. Help us to repent of our sins and to seek forgiveness and reconciliation with one another.

Lord, we know that true unity can only come through you. Pour out your Holy Spirit upon our nation, filling our hearts with love, compassion, and empathy for one another. Help us to see each other through your eyes, as beloved children deserving of love and grace.

In your name, God, we pray for unity for our nation. Amen.

Prayers for the community play a crucial role in bringing people together, inspiring collective action, and offering peace during challenging times. These prayers can encourage people to look beyond themselves and work towards the well-being of the community as a whole. By embracing the power of prayer, we can foster a stronger, more compassionate, and more resilient community.