



Cobham & Luddesdowne News

June 2026

£1

PARISH of COBHAM with LUDESLOWNE and DODE

Priest-in-Charge – The Rev'd Canon Alyson Davie

For all enquiries, including Weddings, Baptisms and Funerals, please contact Alyson.

Phone no. 01474-812068 email:- alyson@stjohnsmeopham.co.uk
(Rest Day: Friday)

Pastoral assistant- Janet Weaver, 36 Highview, Vigo Village, DA13 0RR
01732 823936

Church Safeguarding Officer - Hilary Savage - 01634 723027

Church Office Phone no. 01474 813495

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PCC Secretary	Vacant	
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SUBMISSIONS Cobham and Luddesdowne News is a community magazine produced by and for the residents of Cobham, Sole Street and Luddesdowne. - Please note new email address.

Please send material for inclusion by the 15th of the month preceding publication to clnewseditorial@gmail.com

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Looking to God for the future - The Rev'd Alyson Davie

One of the most well-known Psalms is Psalm 121, the first four verses of which run as follows:

I lift up my eyes to the mountains, where does my help come from?
My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot slip, he who watches over you will not slumber; indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

When the Psalm was written the mountains were the place where the shrines of the pagan gods were situated. What the Psalmist is saying is, that he will not look to any of these gods for help. Instead, he will put his trust in the Lord God of Israel, the almighty creator of heaven and earth, who watches over and guides his faithful people 24/7.

The words of the Psalm 121 have a particular importance for the parishes of Cobham with Luddesdowne and Meopham with Nurstead in view of my forthcoming retirement as Priest in Charge and Rector.

It has been a great privilege and honour to serve these parishes of Cobham with Luddesdowne over the last three and a half years and to know your support and prayers for Martin and I. We will continue to pray for the future of all these parishes as we move to East Sussex and a different way of life to that of the last 38 years.

Humanly speaking, there are no guarantees about the future of these parishes. We simply do not know what will be decided between parishes and diocese about what the future should be, when there will be any new pattern of ordained ministry to replace me, and what this pattern of ordained ministry will look like.

The truth is that only God knows what will happen next. The good news is that God **does** know, does care and has a good plan for the future of Christian life and worship in these parishes already in place. Our job is to continue to look to him and to continue to worship and serve him to the best of our ability, confidently trusting in the words of another biblical writer, Paul, apostle, pastor, teacher:

'For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' (Romans 8 v 38-39)

With our continuing prayers and thanks,
Alyson & Martin Davie.





Did you know we have about 270 kinds of bee in the UK, including 24 types of bumblebees? Here are just six of them:

Early Bumblebee: - Found through out the UK. Rather small, with distinctive lemon-yellow bands on thorax and abdomen, and an orange tail. An important pollinator of our soft fruit.

Common Carder Bee: - One of our most common bees, and often still feeding in November. Fluffy, brown and orange, with sometimes darker bands on the abdomen.

Tree Bumblebee: - Found in England and Wales, and recently Southern Scotland. A fuzzy bee, with brown-orange hairs on its thorax, a black abdomen, and a white tail.

Red-tailed Bumblebee: - The female is very large, with a big red 'tail', while males are smaller.

Garden Bumblebee: - A scruffy-looking large bee, with a long tongue and face. It has yellow bands at the collar, rear of the thorax and at the first segment of the abdomen, and the tip of the tail is white.

Buff-tailed bumblebee: - The biggest of our bumblebees, with a yellow collar near the head and another on the abdomen. The queen has a buff-coloured 'tail', while the workers have white 'tails' and black hair on their faces.

Be kind to our bees. They are in steady decline across the UK.





Spring Show

What a great Spring Show we had - 224 exhibits ...44 more than last year. We had plenty of visitors who all enjoyed the show and the great selection of homemade cake that was on sale. Don't miss our Summer Show on Saturday 13th June.

There is plenty going on within the Society -

Summer Show & Plant Sale on Saturday 13th June 2026 at 2:00pm to 3.30pm in the Meadow Room, Cobham. See page 6

Wednesday 13th May 6.30pm for 7pm

Interest In The Garden All Year in the Meadow Room

Paul Grimmer of Plants N Gardens will talk about how to achieve interest in the garden all year. He will bring with him a selection of topical plants of varying styles and sizes, with a variety of foliage, flower and colour. He will illustrate how the different combination of these can be planted in groups or styles, for different aspects in the garden such as shade, dry, wet or sunny aspects to achieve interest all year. Members free, non-members only £3. For more information email cobhamgs@hotmail.co.uk

Summer is on its way!

As bulbs fade and herbaceous borders grow in leaps and bounds, it is now clear that summer is approaching. Sowing and planting out bedding can begin, depending on regional weather variations, and you can take softwood cuttings. It's also time to get back into the lawn mowing regime, as the lawn will be loving the warmer temperatures this month brings.

Here's the RHS Top 10 Jobs for June.

- 1 Watch out for late frosts. Protect tender plants.
- 2 Earth up potatoes and promptly plant any still remaining.
- 3 Plant out summer bedding at the end of the month (except in cold areas)
- 4 Collect rainwater and investigate ways to recycle water for irrigation.
- 5 Regularly hoe off weeds.
- 6 Open greenhouse vents and doors on warm days
- 7 Mow lawns weekly
- 8 Check for nesting birds before clipping hedges.
- 9 Lift/divide overcrowded clumps of daffodils & spring-flowering bulbs.
- 10 Watch out for viburnum beetle and lily beetle grubs.

You can buy Membership of Cobham Gardeners at any time. You can apply for membership at the talks or via email cobhamgs@hotmail.co.uk only £10 for the year – money you get back from free entry into all Gardeners' expert speaker talks & massive savings of up to 50% on plants at local garden centres.



Meetings & Shows at the Meadow Room in Dickensian Cobham, Kent
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Saturday 13th June 2026 - 2:00-3.30pm
Cobham Gardeners' Society

Summer Show & Plant Sale

Adult & Junior Show Categories
Flowers, Vegetables, Preserves & Photographic
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Sharing a love of gardening ... locally!
cobhamgs@hotmail.co.uk



Come and join us for a summer luncheon of assorted sandwiches, delicious cake and tea/coffee all for just £5 per person.

A warm welcome is awaiting you and we look forward to seeing you on Thursday 18th June between 12.00pm and 2pm
In St Mary's Church Room.



Local Funding Group '24



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2ND THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH at 10.30am

Meet old Friends and make new Friends

THE TUESDAY POP IN

Meetings are held at the Leather Bottle on the second Tuesday of the month from 10.30 till 12 noon; all are welcome to join us for a relaxed chat and coffee.

Next pop-in 9th June

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Thursday Fellowship.

For our next meeting, 25th June, we will be going on a visit to Spadework in Offham. Spadework is a Charity that provides activities for adults with learning difficulties and is well worth supporting.

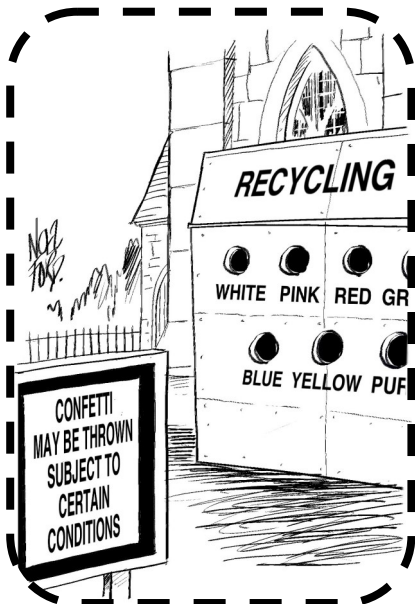
There will be a choice of coffee, snacks and cakes and a chance to browse around the nursery and shop. The lunch options range from soup to a meal; baked potato with salad, quiche, chips and salad etc. There is plenty of seating outside if the weather is good.

We will be sharing cars and plan to arrive at Spadework at 11.30.a.m. Each car group can decide to make their way whenever they wish. If you would like to join us and you are not a member please contact me on 01474 812706 and we can discuss arrangements.

Jennifer

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Sole Street WI



On 21st April, members celebrated our birthday lunch at The Railway pub in Sole Street. Seventeen ladies attended, enjoying good food, and great company. It was especially nice to catch up & celebrate with some of our long-standing members.

On 24th April, eight ladies from Sole Street WI made our way to the River Darent at Horton Kirby to take part in the Great UK Water Blitz; supported by the Women's Institute and Earth watch Europe. This citizen science initiative brings volunteers together over a weekend to test local water quality and build a picture of freshwater health. Participants monitor for pollutants such as excess nutrients and identify potential pollution hotspots. The day was finished off sitting in the sunshine with a pub lunch.



Litter Picking  on 12th May; seven members took part in a litter-picking activity as part of the National Federation of Women's Institutes, "Million Acts of Hope" campaign week (13–20 May). The initiative encourages community action, volunteering, kindness, and connection across the UK, helping to spread hope through positive local activities.



On Tuesday 26th May, Sole Street WI will hold its Annual General Meeting (AGM) where we will discuss resolutions before voting on whether it should go forward to the National Federation of Women's Institutes Annual Meeting in June.

For further information about our meetings, walking group, and craft sessions, please email: Solestreet@wkwfi.org.uk

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Dates for your Diary

The dates for the Cobham Parish Council meetings are:

Tuesday 2nd June St Mary's Church Room at 7.30pm

Tuesday 7th July Meadow Rooms at 7.30pm

Tuesday 8th September St Mary's Church Room at 7.30pm

Tuesday 6th October Meadow Rooms at 7.30pm

Tuesday 3rd November St Mary's Church Room at 7.30pm

Tuesday 1st December Meadow Rooms at 7.30pm



The dates for the Luddesdown Parish Council meetings are:

Monday 20th July Luddesdown Village Hall

Monday 21st September Luddesdown Village Hall

Monday 16th November Luddesdown Village Hall

All meetings start at 7.30pm

Feed the birds – but thoughtfully

If you enjoy feeding the birds, you are not alone. Up to 60% of all households in the UK regularly feed their wild birds, according to surveys from UK Pet Food. It all adds up to an estimated £250 million in sales annually, with roughly 150,000 tonnes of seed being sold.

When feeding wild birds, here are five mistakes to avoid:

Not keeping the feeders clean. This can spread disease. The RSPB advises cleaning bird feeders once a week with a mild soap such as washing-up liquid. Do it outside, using brushes that you keep for this job alone.

Leaving too much food out. It attracts rodents. Instead, the RSPB advises that little and often is best. But keep an eye on those feeders and keep them topped up. When birds are nest-building and raising broods, they need a lot of energy. Feed peanuts in a rigid mesh feeder, so that large piece of nut cannot choke baby birds. Avoid putting out fat in hot weather – it can go rancid.

Feeding bread. This can lead to malnutrition. Bread is high in carbohydrates, while garden birds require a protein-rich and high-calorie diet. A chick with a stomach full of bread can freeze to death overnight. Ideally, feed a combination of mealworms, seeds, sunflower hearts, dried fruit, peanuts and fat.

Forgetting to provide water. Birds need to drink and bathe daily, especially in hot weather. Change the water every day and keep the basin clean.

Putting feeders in the wrong place. Place your feeders near to shrubs, trees and bushes, to provide cover. Blackbirds and robins are ground feeders, whereas tits and sparrows prefer to feed from hanging stations. Using an array of feeders will attract a wide range of birds.

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BELL RINGING by Peter Hartley

The Kent Young Ringers had a practice session on our bells. How encouraging that some youngsters are willing to learn to ring. At Cobham we enjoy the help of two.

Ringling involves skill and concentration. When ringling a particular method, a set pattern of changes, you have to know the route of your bell through the ever changing but ordained pattern of the other bells. You always count your changing place amongst the changing places of the other bells. Bell handling by correct rope pulling ensures your bell strikes cleanly. The bells peal and the ringers pull, count and concentrate.

Concentration can so easily be broken by the supermarket shopping list, by the thought of the next perhaps possible project, or simply daydreaming. Or just wondering if the 13½ ton bell cast in 1858 by Whitechapel and hung in the Elizabeth Tower at the Palace of Westminster was named after “Big Ben”, the fearsome Victorian bare-knuckle boxer Ben Caunt. Or indeed named after 6ft 4in tall Sir Benjamin Hall, Victorian M.P. for Marylebone and Commissioner of Works. In a Commons debate on the naming of the bell Hall droned on when a bored fellow member called out “Why not call it Big Ben and be done with it”. Apparently the suggestion was accepted with laughter and gratitude.

In another interregnum one might distractedly think of all the peculiar parsons delightfully recalled in the 2018 book “Field Guide to the English Clergy” by the clever and colourful Old Tonbridgian priest the Reverend Fergus Butler-Gallie.

The Earl of Darnley, Patron of the Living of Cobham, who used to market garden the daffodils he grew in the fields along Halfpenny Lane, might have got on with the Reverend George Engleheart (1851-1936). In his Wiltshire parish this clergyman created 720 different types of daffodil. There are now about 27,000 named varieties. Sometimes his parishioners would find a notice pinned to the church door “No service today, working with daffodils”.

The Bells of Cobham Church



Sunday Afternoon Club

3.00pm on Sunday Afternoons in the St John's Centre Meopham: Songs and Stories, Prayers and Games, Activities and Food!
For Children up to age 12 and their adults.



Meopham Library Writing Group meets again on **Thursday 4th June 2026 at 10am.**

If you are interested in writing you are very welcome to join us. Each month there is a different writing theme such as "Strawberries", which can be used as a starting point for a short story, poem or an article. Creative writing is a very enjoyable activity which can also be used to record special family memories as well as being helpful for anyone facing difficult times.

Future meetings will be held on 2nd July, 6th August and 3rd September.
Please ring **01474 813379** for more information.

The **1st South Street Boys Brigade and Girls Association Company** meets every Friday evening 6pm-7.30pm for boys and girls aged 5-18 years, at South Street Baptist Church, Wrotham Road, Meopham, DA13 0QJ (*next to Hope Hill*). New members are very welcome to join us for craft, games and Bible stories. Please ring **01474 815039** or **01474 813379** for more information or visit www.southstreetbaptist.org.uk and www.BOYS-BRIGADE.org.uk

SONG TIME meets Monday 9.45am-11am during term time for families with babies and toddlers. There are lots of different toys, art and craft, musical instruments and singing. A **MESSY CHURCH SERVICE** will be held at South Street Baptist Church on Sunday 28th June at 10.45am with games, craft, children's Bible story videos and refreshments. Everyone is welcome.

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presents

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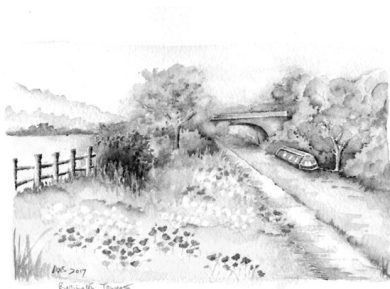
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St John's Meopham with St Mildred's Nurstead Church Services June 2026



Sunday 7th June 9.45am Morning Worship & Baptism at St John's
11.30am Holy Communion at St Mildred's

Sunday 14th June 9.45am Holy Communion at St John's
11.30am Mattins at St Mildred's

Sunday 21st June 9.45am Morning Worship at St John's
11.15am Churches Prayer Meeting at St John's Centre

Sunday 28th June Patronal Festival at St John's
9.45am Holy Communion at St John's
11.30am Family Service at St Mildred's

Cobham, Luddesdowne and Sole Street
Church Services during June 2026



Sunday 7th June

10:30am Holy Communion, Luddesdowne

Sunday 14th June

10:30am Holy Communion (BCP), Cobham

Sunday 21st June

10:30am Holy Communion, Luddesdowne

Sunday 28th June

10:30am Holy Communion, Cobham

Midweek services in Sole Street

St Mary's Church Room, Informal Morning Prayer

9:30am 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th June



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Some questions of life



Why are buildings called buildings when they are finished? Shouldn't they be called built?

Why is abbreviated such a long word?

Why is it that when you tell a man there are 400 billion stars he will believe you, but when you tell him there's wet paint, he has to touch it?

If your supermarket has been lowering prices every day, how come nothing is free yet?

If con is the opposite of pro, is Congress the opposite of progress?

If a firefighter fights fire and a crime fighter fights crime, what does a freedom fighter fight?

Do you find it unnerving that what doctors do is called 'practice'?

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Fathers' Day, a time to celebrate male role models

In the UK, USA and Canada, the third Sunday in June is Father's Day. It's usually a good time for sons and daughters to take their father to his favourite restaurant, or to watch a favoured sport, or whatever else he enjoys doing.

How do these special days ever get started, anyway? Well, Father's Day began because way back in 1909 there was a woman in Spokane, Washington, named Sonora Louise Smart Dodd. That year she heard a church sermon about the merits of setting aside a day to honour one's mother. Mother's Day was just beginning to gather widespread attention in the United States at this time. But Sonora Louise Smart Dodd knew that it was her father who had selflessly raised herself and her five siblings by himself after their mother had died in childbirth. So the sermon on mother's day gave Sonora Louise the idea to petition for a day to honour fathers, and in particular, her own father, William Jackson Smart.

Sonora Louise soon set about planning the first Father's Day celebration in Spokane in 1910. With support from the Spokane Ministerial Association and the YMCA, her efforts paid off, and a 'Father's Day' was appointed. Sonora Louise had wanted Father's Day to be on the first Sunday in June (since that was her father's birthday), but the city council didn't have time to approve it until later in the month. And so on June 19th, 1910, the first Father's Day was celebrated in Spokane.

Gradually, other people in other cities caught on and started celebrating their fathers, too. The rose was selected as the official Father's Day flower. Some people began to wear a white rose to honour a father who was dead, and a red one to honour a father who was living. Finally, in 1972, President Richard Nixon signed a presidential proclamation declaring the third Sunday of June as Father's Day - a permanent, national holiday.

Enjoy time with that special person in your life, the one that helped to raise you, guide you and care for you. Whether that be a mentor, uncle, or step dad. Sadly, many of us no longer have that special person with us, but the memories we shared together will stay with us forever.



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Crewelwork was the subject of our last meeting. Christine Seymour-Godwin came to talk to us about this form of embroidery which dates back at least as far as the Bayeux Tapestry, and possibly even to Egyptian

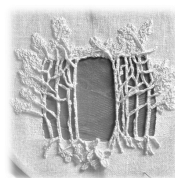


times. Kashmir in India developed its own form of the technique in the 15th Century and owing to trade links with the UK this form of stitching, also known as Jacobean work, reached a peak here in the 17th century.

The embroidery is traditionally done using “crewel” wool on linen ‘twill’ weave fabric which is made from the flax plant. The imagery often depicts Jacobean style designs of exotic birds, animals, fruits such as pomegranates and flowers. Christine showed us some examples of her own crewelwork embroidery done in the traditional style (above left), together with a more modern take on the technique (above right). As Christine is leading a workshop for our group next year, we asked her to teach us the older way of producing this kind of embroidery as a starting point for our crewelwork journeys.



We were lucky enough, recently, to have had Christine to deliver a ‘needleweaving’ workshop to our group. Although she knew they might not be finished, Christine asked us to bring along the ‘work in progress’ for all to see and as an opportunity to ask for help or advice. It was lovely to see a good number of these



pieces and such a surprise to see how different they all were! You can see two examples here. Watch this space to see how things develop. Hopefully, by the time you read this you will have heard about the Gravesham Fringe Festival – May 30th until June 7th and you may even have been able to see some of our work on display! If you or someone you know would maybe like to start a new hobby and to join our group or would just like to find out a bit more about us then please pay us a visit - look at our website: northkentembroiderers.co.uk/

or email at: info@northkentembroiderers.co.uk or contact our Chairman, Eileen on 01474 324734 Happy stitching, Karen

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COBHAM & LUDESLOW W.I.

May is the month when we hold our Annual Meeting and elect our committee and president for the coming year. Our meeting on the 6th was well attended and we were pleased that all eight of our committee members were willing to stand again. We heard the reports from the group reps (Craft, Art, "Read and Rabbit", "Knit and Natter", Needlework, Crochet and Lunch Club) which gave an account of their activities over the past year; and the committee's annual report and the president's address, which reminded us of just how important all of our members are to us and how much had been achieved to date. Our two tellers from Sole Street W.I. had a relatively simple task of overseeing the election of June Nicholson, who had agreed to carry on with the presidency of our institute.

We all scratched our heads over the tea break with a picture quiz, which asked us to identify photos; mainly of celebrities, with varying degrees of success. Some of us didn't get past Joanna Lumley, who was number one, but Ann Clarke managed to identify twelve out of the twenty and was declared the winner. After tea, we discussed and voted on the two W.I. annual resolutions which will go to the National Federation Annual Meeting on 4th June.

Our 107th birthday lunch this year was held on May 13th at Bartella's restaurant in Meopham.

We are looking forward to our next monthly meeting at 2pm on Wednesday June 3rd when Dean Caston will be coming along to talk to us about 'The History of the Royal Variety Performance'.

If any ladies who are not yet members would like to come along to this or any other of our meetings, you will be very welcome. We make a small charge of £2. We are a very friendly group of ladies and, who knows, you may even decide to become a member. Our meetings are held from 2pm until 4pm on the first Wednesday of each month (except August).

If you would like any further information please contact our secretary, Jenny Brooker (Telephone 07860 545326)



Luddesdown & District Rights of Way Group.

We are a small friendly group that usually walks from The Cock Inn, Henley Street, Luddesdown, Gravesend DA13 0XB, at 11am on Wednesdays. We walk at a gentle pace for some 90 minutes in beautiful countryside. Occasionally we lead weekend walks. With four Socials a year in Luddesdown Village Hall and a twice yearly Newsletter, we would be delighted if you joined us for a walk or two. Becoming a member costs £7 per person a year. Please contact Walks Co-ordinator Janet Ferguson, preferably at janetferguson@hotmail.fr . Ian Sheridan, Acting Chairman, 07951 927 517

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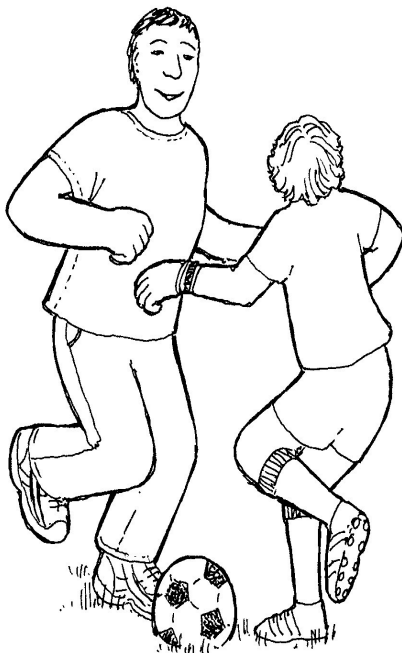
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Have fun on Father's day with your own special loved one.



Hello my lovely hooman friends,
I hope you are enjoying the warmer weather.

Some of you may be fans of the television show, *Gone Fishing with Mortimer and Whitehouse*, well I recently learned that the star of the show, Ted had passed away. I was saddened by this news as I had been following his career with interest, not least because it had been suggested I had a slight resemblance to the little guy, in fact a man in the garden centre once stopped to ask me if I enjoyed fishing!

Ted and I were similar in that we both share a Patterdale Terrier heritage, were both rescue dogs and enjoy a certain celebrity, he as a television personality and me in my journalistic role.

So, RIP little fella and enjoy lolling on the riverbanks in doggy heaven.

Love and licks to all - Paddy

P.S Ted will still appear in the next series as it was filmed before his passing.

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Visit of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Elizabeth

Mary - the virgin mother of Jesus. Her visit to Elizabeth, when both were pregnant, is a moving account of two humble, ordinary women, suddenly caught up in a great event that would shape world history. Their trusting faith in God and acceptance of His will, shine through.

After Jesus is born, Mary makes few appearances: when the family visits Jerusalem and she loses her Son on the way home; when she urges Him to help the wedding party in Cana with its wine problem; and when Jesus gives her into the keeping of the beloved disciple when He is dying on the cross. Mary's last appearance is in Acts, just before Pentecost.

Mary, chosen to be the mother of Jesus Christ, one who is both God and Man, holds a unique place in history. Down the centuries that have followed, the Church has paid special honour to Mary – and well deserved it is. "All generations shall call me blessed..."

Mary Virgin Mother Elizabeth Pregnant Ordinary World History
 Great Event Family Jerusalem Wedding Cana Wine Beloved
 Disciples Dying Cross Keeping Unique Place Centuries Church
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