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Dear friends,

A survey published during the summer showed how people were changing their leisure activities in relation to technology. The biggest change was in the use of the internet. Increasingly people were spending more of their leisure time here and less on the more conventional pursuit of the television. Radio listening was up, but much of this being people listening either live on line or using internet facilities that allowed you to listen when you choose. Encase you are of a certain age and feel this has nothing to do with you, those who spend most time on-line are the so called 'silver surfers'. These are people, shall we say, of more mature years that once having over-come their fear of computers and technology have discovered to their joy the possibilities. Like everything the internet can be used for bad purposes, but it can also be used for the good. I am delighted that we have Steve Simmonds from Foundations 21 coming to talk with us at St. Edmund and St. Mary Parish Church on the 21st of October. Foundations 21 is a new initiative from the Bible Reading Fellowship aimed at people who enjoy using the internet. and realise how it can be a powerful tool for learning. Foundations 21 gives anyone with some time to spend the opportunity to learn more about the Bible, the foundation of the faith.

The following Sunday, 28th of October, we will be celebrating Bible Sunday at both churches. At Fryerning we will be doing this at the family service. It is truly wonderful that this service continues to attract both children and young families. In July we had Bishop Laurie at the service and I know how much he enjoyed himself and everyone enjoyed him being with us. It is, of course, absolutely essential that as Christians and those who live in a country built upon Christian foundations, we have an understanding of the diversity and richness to be found within the Bible. That is why in recent years we have ensured that all the leavers from the Church of England Junior School have received Youth Bibles as a leaving gift. These Bibles not only

have the text in language that is direct and easily understandable, as it was in the original Hebrew and Greek, but numerous articles that help application of the texts to contemporary situations. What better gift could there be to give to someone as they grow up and face the challenges and uncertainties of the future. Of course God gives everyone the possibility of rejecting all that he offers.

I am delighted that this magazine contains articles about the work of our local Scouting organisation and the Brownies. This year in October the local Scouts celebrate ninety nine years since their foundation. As in August we celebrated one hundred years since the first camp on Brownsea Island, this means that in just fourteen months the vision had been captured here in Ingatestone and a group begun. The movement is based on firm Christian principles, something very apparent at the renewal of promises ceremony on the top of St. Mary the Virgin Parish Church Tower. I know many local people were surprised to know that there are more scouts locally now than at any time in the history of the group. We shall have to plan something very special for next year!

Both Sue and I separately visited the Brownie camps during the summer. Here too it was very obvious that there was a Christian foundation to the organisation. The girls were having a service and saying prayers each day as part of their activities. We recently had a wedding where the groom commented to me how much he had received from his time as a Cub and a Scout. He found the foundations that this had given him had both helped him to date in his life and also had made coming back to church so much easier. Having come back, now he was staying and wanting to learn more and become more involved. Confirmation beckons for him and for others next October.

We all need foundations on which to build our lives. We only have to look around the world in which we live to see that many people do not understand or value the foundations given to us by God. The Church has always stood for the foundation given by Jesus, 'love God and love your neighbour as yourself'. I pray that is your foundation. Yours in Christ, *Patrick*