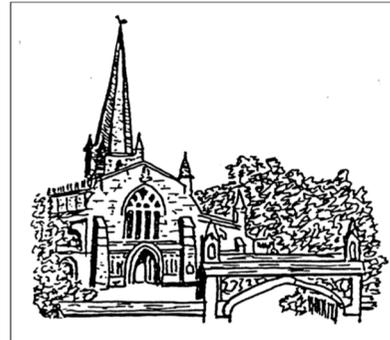


INSPIRE



ST JOHN'S

ST KATHARINE'S



**THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR THE PARISHES
OF**

**ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, FROME
AND
ST KATHARINE, EAST WOODLANDS**

MAY 2020

50P

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in the Frome Local Ministry Group**

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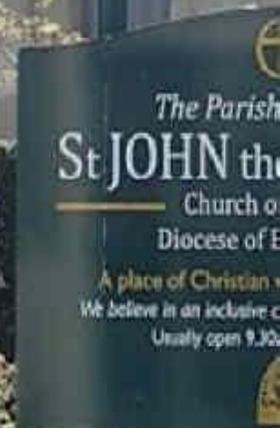
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www.bennettcentre.com

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May 2020

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Bella's tree in St John's forecourt looking glorious in mid-April

Dear Friends

What extraordinary times we live in!

So much that was being planned is now postponed or redundant and our priority focusses on everyone's health and well being as we maintain social distancing and do our best to support each other from a distance.

I am grateful to all those who are making an effort week by week to keep in touch with members of our congregations and others around them and checking that they are supported in emotional and practical ways.

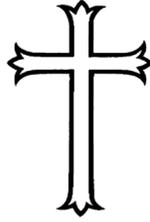
It is very strange not meeting with you all for worship, and we hope that the material we are providing via St John's website, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube is of help, and that the various links we are providing to national and diocesan resources and services are also helpful. Some clergy are live-streaming services, but I hope you will understand that I have chosen instead to record occasional material that you can use when you want to.

I have also felt that without a gathered congregation I can't celebrate the service of Holy Communion. This has in some ways always been the case as the observant person scanning through the church service register at St John's would notice one or two entries over the years on Thursday mornings where I wrote 'NCP' – abbreviation for 'non convenient populi': there was no congregation. With social distancing measures likely to remain in place for a significant period of time I think that it will be quite a few months before we are able to share in Communion together – and even then we may still be without a shared chalice and the physical sharing of the peace.

The team that have set about producing our 'weekly extra' deserve our thanks and appreciation: It is a welcome addition to our means of communication, and I know a number of other churches have had similar ideas (e.g. Stratford upon Avon). The more ways in which we can share together through these challenging times the better.

One thing that we can do is continue in prayer for each other and for this world. I've drawn up a suggestion for each day of the month in a prayer diary (see page 18) that you might like to use.

I would welcome thoughts from folk as to other material we might produce to go online or be circulated by email. I'm also conscious that when all this draws to some form of end it is unlikely that everything will return to how it was. There may well be an interest in continuing to produce some online material – there may be different ways of being church that we have by then discovered that we value. Certainly in our



weekly clergy chapter meetings that we are now holding via Zoom we have already raised a number of areas where we think that there could be lasting changes.

What is unchanging in all of this is the knowledge we have of the love of God and the sustaining grace he offers to us in and through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. May we all be blessed in holding to that truth and knowing it in our lives through the weeks ahead.

Your Friend and Vicar

Colin Alsbury

From the Editor

No Well Blessing this May, and none of the usual Christian Aid activities (though you can still donate—see page 15), so there's no 'diary dates' page as such, but there are dates to look out for.

The Clap for Carers on Thursdays at 8pm is the obvious one, but there are others: Rosemary's singing sessions online on Fridays at 6.30pm have just started (see page 18), and on 8th May – the 75th anniversary of VE Day – there are activities to join in from your own homes (see page 12).

I've reinstated the 'services' page in the middle spread of the magazine (page 19) as we now have a great range of options for worshipping at home, from the online services prepared by Colin and family to TV and radio services – and there are even services available on your phone (landline or mobile) via a new free 'Daily Hope' phone line set up by the Church of England (see page 19).

Mandy Crook

Listening chaplaincy phonenumber

This faith-based service offers the people of Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire confidential and caring chaplaincy support for people of all faiths and none in times of emergency.

Are you recently bereaved? Are you a key worker overwhelmed by what you are dealing with? Are you worried about someone who is gravely ill who you can't visit? Are you anxious about the effect that the COVID 19 crisis is having on your life? Maybe you would just like someone from the faith community to talk to. Call:

0330 229 1700, 8am-11pm, 7 days a week

A Holy Week and Easter like no other...

I wrote, somewhere else, that Holy Week is usually a pretty frenzied affair: all those extra services at St John's involve getting people to do readings – it's like managing the logistics for the Carol Service, but on a far more complicated scale. The Stations of the Cross service needs 14 readers, but as we usually use a slightly different version each year, all the readings have to be accessed, printed and distributed (after you've made the rota of who is available to do the readings). Factor in other services like Tenebrae and Colin's Three-Hour Service and you get an idea of the organisation. I am always grateful to the people who often turn up to services and just grab a reading previously unseen. One of the reasons I so look forward to St Katharine's Good Friday service is that someone else (Mary) has done all the organisation of readers. Easter Day usually brings its own anxieties – what to do about the children who may or may not turn up (meaningful activities ... chocolate eggs).

This year the challenges were different. We decided that we would make some of the planned services available online, where possible. Monday of Holy Week has become the time when we complete the Lent Course in church, but this year, of course, the Lent Course was cruelly truncated. So I was faced with writing a concluding Act of Worship on the theme of Doubt, at a time when Doubt was, quite possibly, more uppermost in our thoughts than at any other time in the past. I struggled, and left it unfinished on the Saturday before Palm Sunday. But then I watched the service from Hereford Cathedral which ended quite brilliantly with the hymn *Great is Thy Faithfulness* and I got my ending to the service:

There is no shadow of turning with thee;
Thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not;
As thou hast been, thou for ever wilt be.

We made the decision that there was no point in constructing our own Stations of the Cross for the Tuesday evening when there was a readily accessible film of Wells Cathedral Stations on the diocesan website. NB Is there a photographic record of John Huggins's Stations? If not, we ought to make one.

We focussed our attentions on the service of Tenebrae which we had scheduled for Wednesday evening. By some miracle I found, buried in my laptop, the outline of a service we used a few years ago in St John's, and Colin and Beth transformed it into an audio version which was quite beautiful.



It has been our tradition to walk the Via Crucis at St John's on Easter Eve and it was especially poignant to do so, virtually, this year, with Colin's particularly apt reflections on our current situation at each of the seven stations.

On Easter Day we were able to witness the lighting of the Easter Garden, and renew our Baptismal vows in a brief but memorable filmed sequence devised by Colin. We received an email from someone who had been feeling pessimistic but who found that *'it moved me and it stopped me from turning my soul away from God and uplifted me in a way I can't describe. And from someone else'* and from someone else who said *'I for one really felt part of St John's.'*

One of the benefits of having a Holy Week and Easter like no other has been the opportunity to read and reflect in a different, dare I say, more leisured way. I greatly enjoyed all the Easter music on offer – a particular highlight was *Easter at King's* on BBC during which I was surprised to find myself so moved to hear *This joyful Easter-tide*. Each day during Holy Week I watched a filmed reflection by one of the Diocesan staff, and on Easter Day joined in the Acts of Worship led by Justin our Archbishop and Peter our Bishop – always thinking, well about now I should be in St John's or at St Katharine's.

Easter Day was nearly over before I remembered *Heavenly Gardens* on BBC, and there was the Bishop's Palace Garden at Wells, in all its splendour, where usually, every other Monday afternoon, I am privileged to be a volunteer steward. How I miss that.

I have listened to every one of the *Three Vicars Talking* series on Radio 4 and have always giggled at the often irreverent yarns told by Revs Richard Coles, Kate Botley and Giles Fraser – all media vicars. So here was another surprise: to be moved to tears by their profound sense of grief and loss at this difficult time. Here was an entirely

natural interweaving of the themes of Holy Week and Easter with the current emotions of uncertainty, fear, desolation and, ultimately, hope.

Thank you to Colin, who with Beth, Sam and the McCormick family produced some memorable services for us. It was a Holy week and Easter like no other: in some ways awful in its sense of desolation, but with unexpected moments of wonder.

Janet Caudwell

Ed: most of the services that Janet mentions are still available on the St John's website, the diocesan website or on BBC iPlayer.

St Katharine's Church News

It seems so long since we met together in church, the daffodils have bloomed as have the trees bearing blossom. Unfortunately, whilst only being allowed out to do essential shopping, many of us have been unable to see this show of nature this year. However, we do have memories of the wonderful sight from past years, and, please God, we will await next year's show.

Nature is truly miraculous: it seems whatever happens plants and trees carry on with their yearly cycle. We see what happens after fire ravages great swathes of forests and woodlands – in time much of the devastation recovers. In fact some plants and trees need to be burnt before they can regenerate.

News has been received that the architect's scheme of repairs to the walls, gates and lamps has been approved, and the necessary specifications have gone out for tender invitations to be issued. Obviously, because of the current situation, no work will be able to be carried out yet.

In the April edition of *Inspire* we reported that Rick Squire, landlord of our village pub, The Jockey, had had a stroke. Sadly, we now have to report that he has died. As we know, during this pandemic no friends, on only minimal family are able to be present at either the hospital or the funeral. Our condolences are sent to Kathy at this time.

There is no usage of the Hall during the 'lockdown', so no news there! Until next time, when we are all hoping for some improvement in the situation, I will hope you all stay safe and follow whatever guidelines apply to you.



Terry Williams

Administrator anniversary

Easter marked a year since I took up the post of Church Administrator, moving into the freshly renovated office at Church Cottage and meeting many new faces. As this anniversary approached, I thought about writing a piece for *Inspire*, thanking everyone for the warm welcome and support I received and remembering the events that had happened during my first year in the office: the challenges of working out how everything fits together in a new job, dealing with the regular tasks each week and making friends with the photocopier and the 'Publisher' program (I think we're on reasonable terms these days!). Then in mid-March everything took a different turn; I could no longer work from the office, and my dining table became my desk, until the remote connection with the office PC stopped working and we had to reassess the arrangement. I am thankful that Mandy was able to step in to produce the Pew Sheet from her home office, to give us all some much needed continuity.

This enforced quiet time has given me a chance to reflect, and I realise that what drew me to apply for the post of Church Administrator are the things that are important to me, perhaps even more so now. I enjoy interacting with people and being a part of the church community; in my walk across the town to St John's I've felt more connected with Frome, too; I like the structure of working with a focus on weekly, monthly and annual schedules, punctuated with seasonal events and special occasions. Despite this structure, there are always a variety of tasks to be done, both expected and unexpected, and I feel a sense of satisfaction for the part I play in supporting the parishes.

During my time at home I've had to put my organisational skills to work in a different way, and simple things have become important cornerstones of each day: finding recipes to fit ingredients, sorting and storing winter clothes, writing letters to friends and relations. I'm thankful that I have a good stock of books to read, and I've appreciated the changing season more this spring, especially being able to dry the laundry outside in the sunshine; my best pre-lockdown investment was a new washing line! I will be back at Church Cottage as soon as possible and look forward to seeing familiar faces again!

Karolyn Curle

Ed: Thank you, Karolyn, for giving us an insight into life as our administrator – and for all you do to look after our parishes

Memories of Palm Sunday

In some distant age – three months ago – at our last Worship Committee meeting, we wondered if we could organise a donkey for this year's Palm Sunday service at St Katharine's. I don't think we found one, and, anyway, the poor thing would have been a bit lonely on Palm Sunday 2020 ...

However, I began to remember a previous Palm Sunday when we had not one but *two* donkeys for our Palm Sunday service. I remember sitting in a service station somewhere on the way home from St Ives, where we had spent the previous week, receiving a text message from Joy telling me about the *two* donkeys and having to hurriedly rearrange the Gospel readings for the following day (Matthew's account is the only one which mentions a second donkey). I had planned an opening to the service as we gathered on the green outside church, with palm branches (borrowed from St John's). I read the account of the entry into Jerusalem, and, of course, I had got copies of G K Chesterton's poem for everyone to read:

The Donkey

When fishes flew and forests walked
And figs grew upon thorn,
Some moment when the moon was blood
Then surely I was born.

With monstrous head and sickening cry
And ears like errant wings,
The devil's walking parody
On all four-footed things.

The tattered outlaw of the earth,
Of ancient crooked will;
Starve, scourge, deride me: I am dumb,
I keep my secret still.

Fools! For I also had my hour;
One far fierce hour and sweet:
There was a shout about my ears,
And palms before my feet.

But events conspired against me: the two donkeys – who arrived and placidly chewed the carrots that everyone was queuing up to give them – were the fluffiest, most adorable, amiable creatures you could imagine. As I began to read the poem, I could feel stirrings of discontent among the gathered congregation, and by the time I'd reached 'The devil's walking parody /on all four-footed things', there were loud cries of 'No!' and I was forced into a hurried apology to those poor donkeys who, I must say, were not as outraged as the St Katharine's congregation, and continued their good-natured chewing.



Janet Caudwell

Swan update from The Bishop's Palace

On my final day of volunteering at the Bishop's Palace there was great consternation that Grace, the female swan, had elected to build her nest underneath the Willow Bridge, over which hundreds of pairs of feet tramp on a busy day at the Palace. Grace obviously knew something, because she is now in splendid, tranquil, isolation – just her and her nine eggs.

You can see her, live, by going to the Bishop's Palace Wells website and then patiently scrolling down until you reach the Swan Web Cam. Bob studied it for several minutes yesterday and observed, 'Nothing happens!', but that's the point. Just enjoy the gently rippling waters of the moat and the occasional family of ducklings ... and await, with bated breath, the arrival of the cygnets.

Janet Caudwell



A time to

'love our neighbours as ourselves'

One of the things that Bishop Ruth and I enjoy doing is writing these articles for parish magazines. It gives us a chance to keep in touch with people across the diocese and to share the things that are in our hearts and minds as the year unfolds. The drawback is that we have to write them well in advance, in order to reach magazine editors in good time, and things may change in all sorts of ways by the time you are reading them. I am particularly conscious of that this month, as things are changing very fast and it is hard to know what the next few weeks will bring. That inevitably brings with it a certain degree of uncertainty, and some of us, especially those who are isolated and cut off, may be feeling anxious for ourselves or for others.

My hope throughout this time of 'lockdown' is that although some of us may feel physically isolated, we do not feel socially or spiritually isolated. I have been truly amazed and encouraged by the stories I have heard of people caring for each other, phoning each other and going shopping for those who cannot get out. None of us knows quite how and when this virus will be brought under control. However, I do hope that when restrictions can be safely lifted and we begin to go out again, things will be different. We have had to learn new ways to pray and keep in touch with others in our churches and communities. We have had to trust, hope, and look out for our neighbours, especially those who are particularly vulnerable. We have been humbled by the courage and dedication of those who work in the NHS and care homes and all who as 'key workers' have worked tirelessly to look after and provide for us.

Jesus taught us to 'Love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind' and 'to love our neighbours as ourselves'. My hope and prayer is that as we emerge from this pandemic we and our communities may be more compassionate, more generous, more grateful. And may we all have discovered what it is to know in a deeper way the peace and the presence of God.

May the peace and the joy of the Risen Lord be with you
The Right Revd Peter Hancock, Bishop of Bath and Wells



Join Wild Memories

STUCK AT HOME AND LIVING WITH DEMENTIA?

JOIN OUR NEW NATURE GROUP IN FROME

Sign up for free activities, with tips and ideas for springtime gardening, learning about wildlife, and arts & crafts including our collaborative quilt project, "Memories of Spring"

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Join the Wild Memories nature group!
You can arrange to have activity sheets delivered to your home, or by email.

Keep in touch
Staff and volunteers will be available to talk through activities. We will provide video instructions, audio files, and other resources.

Make your quilt square
We are creating a shared quilt to celebrate Springtime. Make a design on a 7 inch x 7 inch piece of fabric, any fabric will do! The theme to follow is "Memories of Spring". Some examples to inspire your square design: a favourite plant or animal, a holiday, a view of a landscape. Then just let us know when you are finished!

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT
Zak: 07949 572849
Email: zak.mathergratton@froglife.org

CAN YOU HELP US MAKE THE MEMORIES OF SPRING QUILT?

YOUR DESIGN GOES HERE!
The theme is Memories of Spring. You can use any materials you like. Some ideas are sewing on fabrics, buttons and ribbons. You could use paints and inks. Or use glue to stick on other materials you might have around the house.

Leave ½ an inch blank around the edges

 **froglife**
Learning Outdoor for
MINDS & IMPROVING

 **SOMERSET**
County Council

Ed: You can take part in this new project NOW, from home – indeed, it may be even more helpful amid the current challenges.

You can read more here: <https://www.froglife.org/what-we-do/education/green-pathways-for-life/> or get in touch with Zak – details in the poster—who will be pleased to give you more information.



VE Day 75 in lockdown

The May Day Bank Holiday this year was moved to Friday 8th May to enable three days of celebrations to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe – or VE Day –

when the guns fell silent at the end of war in Europe.

The formal act of military surrender was signed by Germany on 7th May 1945, and the next day celebrations took place over much of the world. In the UK, Winston Churchill marked the occasion by declaring the 8th May as a public holiday, and there were parties and dancing in the streets. Church bells rang out across the land and huge crowds converged on London to celebrate in Trafalgar Square and paddle in its fountains, to hear Churchill speak at Whitehall, and to see King George VI and the Royal Family on the balcony at Buckingham Palace.

Whilst there was huge relief, the war in the Far East was still continuing, and many families mourned the loss of family and friends who were no longer alive to celebrate with them – but the images of the time were predominantly ones of joy that the fear, hardships and loss over the previous arduous seven years had come to an end.

The plans for the VEDAY75 commemorations this year were similarly joyous. Sadly, the COVID-19 restrictions have severely curtailed those plans, but we can still take this unique opportunity to pay tribute to the many millions at home and abroad who gave so much to ensure our future and our freedoms (yes, there are still some!). So we are all being asked to mark the occasion in a number of ways:

- Decorate our homes in red, white and blue – for those wishing to make bunting to decorate their windows, the BBC have a download with instructions and template – Google ‘BBC VE day bunting’.
- Prepare a celebratory tea – preferably including cucumber sandwiches, scones with cream and jam, and a cake or cup cakes decorated in red, white and blue.
- if possible, enjoy your celebratory tea as a picnic in your front garden.
- At 3pm take part in the ‘Nation’s Toast to the Heroes of WW2’ from the safety of your own home by standing up and raising a glass of



refreshment with the following ‘Toast’ – “To those who gave so much, we thank you.”

Those who would have featured in the original VE DAY 75 plans are being asked to perform a scaled down version of their roles:

- At 11am, standard bearers (eg. Royal British Legion, scouts and cadets) will be lowering their flag from the gardens or doorsteps of their own homes
- At 3pm, pipers will play the ‘Battle’s o’er’ and buglers the Last Post
- At 7pm, town criers will call out ‘A Cry for Peace Around the World’.

It was also originally intended that church bells would ring out – whilst that cannot be, perhaps we can all think of something similar?*

Elaine Gilbert

**Ed: Perhaps as many of us as possible could play the YouTube clip of St John’s bells – you can find the link to the clip of the St John’s website.*

Clap for our Carers

A chance remark in a recent email made me realise just how many of our own congregations have members of their own family working in the NHS during the coronavirus outbreak. Whereas we are all experiencing the privations and frustrations associated with lockdown, many of our friends have the added anxiety of knowing that those they love are in the front line, and all these worrying headlines about PPE are frighteningly relevant. When we Clap for Carers every Thursday evening we are remembering (and I hope praying for) not only those in the NHS but all those people on whom we *now* realise we have come to rely.

Janet

My Kitchen Notebook Encountering UFOs

It is becoming a cliché, but how much has changed since I wrote my last article for the Parish Magazine. My weekly routine may be only a distant memory, but some things never change, including the need to put food on the table at regular intervals. But, of course, this has changed too – no longer can I rely on eating most of my meals at school, needing to cook only on weekends while leaving Neil to scavenge the fridge for left-overs during the week. Now there are four of us sitting down together twice daily but I have been told to reduce my trips to the shops.

The first thing I did to prepare for this was to get my rarely used (till now) shopping trolley out from under the stairs and start walking to the town centre shops for my daily exercise. The second thing was to make an inventory of everything in my cupboards and freezer; those tins of salmon and sliced peaches that must have been bought for a purpose, but which have been lingering behind the baked beans and jars of honey for far too long! I knew I had a leg of lamb in the freezer which I have been saving up for Easter, and there are always a lot of summer fruits, harvested last autumn (and the one before!) but which it doesn't seem right to be eating in the middle of winter, and anyway we are now into the rhubarb season. Amidst the carefully boxed "left-over turkey for sandwiches" and "goose stock" are those UFOs – Unidentified Freezer Objects which have fallen to the bottom and lost their labels – or if I am truly honest were probably never labelled anyway. Does that bag of purple spheres contain plums or last season's beetroot crop? Is that a tub of tomato puree or raspberry sorbet? I have yet to answer both these questions. But not every trip to the freezer is akin to playing Russian roulette – we have enjoyed the remains of Alice's birthday cake from last November, the spinach soup lake is gradually reducing and the carefully chopped red chilli (I only needed one for a recipe and they came in packs of two) went into the vegetarian chilli I made last week. That was a recipe I should share with you. It is a Jamie Oliver recipe and the web link is below. The list of ingredients looks quite long, but most of them I either had in the

cupboard or I picked up on my walk to the greengrocer. The basic recipe serves 10, but I am preparing meals for one of my neighbours at the moment, so we ate half at one sitting and the rest is in a box in the freezer – carefully labelled of course!

<https://www.jamieoliver.com/recipes/vegetables-recipes/kerryann-s-chilli-con-veggie/>

Rosemary McCormick



Christian Aid Week goes online! 10-16 May

This year we can't go out collecting in the Westway precinct as usual – nor can we join in the usual coffee morning and sale at Wesley. But we can still donate. Google 'Christian Aid Week' and click on the red button 'Donate'. Christian Aid is also planning activities we can join in online – we'll keep you informed on the weekly sheets.

Light a virtual candle

You can light a candle online to pray for a loved one, for a situation, for yourself – for anything that is on your mind. Google 'Church of England light a candle'



Did you know?

- The pages for our two churches on 'A Church Near You' each get about 3,000 visits a year.
- On Facebook the page for St John's has 183 followers and that for St Katharine's has 41.
- There 35 people who follow St John's on Twitter
- In the past three months the website for St John's has had 571 different visitors, nearly 40% of whom were using mobile phones rather than computers.
- In the three weeks from 27th March to 16th April the video services on YouTube attracted 319 views – the peak being 59 views on Easter Day.

‘Good fences make good neighbours’

In the middle of the lockdown I was dozing in my garden when I was awoken by a nearby knocking.

I looked around and was struck by the way that everything in the garden was carrying on as if there was no COVID19: the buds on the clematis were just springing forward; the pyracantha had at last started to push upwards; the frogs had surfaced from the mud at the bottom of the pond; the ceanothus was happily circling the iron garden seat; the hypericum had at last completely hidden the old elder tree stump; the catkins were bursting forth on the willow bush by the summer house.

The knocking continued, paused and was succeeded by a voice calling me. My neighbour, Ron, was spring-mending the fence between our gardens and needed a little help. He asked me to drive in some screws from my side to strengthen the vertical struts of the fence. After about ten minutes this was duly accomplished, but during that time he explained many things to me and prompted some thoughts.

He explained how he had built the fence himself in 1984: as a master carpenter working at Butler and Tanner for nearly 40 years, this had caused him no problem, although he had had to ask a friend to build the dwarf wall the fence rested on. The previous fence had not properly separated the two properties, and his wife in particular felt too near her neighbours. He had maintained the fence ever since and now a widower the wrong side of 80 he couldn't change the habits of a lifetime. We agreed that what we had now done between us would keep the fence going for another few years which would see off both of us. Till then, he said, having a good fence between us will make us better neighbours.

Ron also explained how he was keeping busy with small carpentry jobs: making a jewellery casket for an old friend; creating a wooden box to contain the ashes of his wife, who had recently died after five years of dementia in a local care home; repairing a key box that he'd first bought in the 1970s. He explained how each of these needed a particular type of wood, not easily obtained nowadays but essential if you were going to do the job properly. In this age of plastic it was good to hear that the old materials and methods still survived.

Ron's comments about the fence stayed with me, and I was taken back to the 1960s, my student days of poetry and ambition. I recalled a poem about fences by the American poet Robert Frost and

eventually found the book hemmed in between Flecker and Goethe: dated May 1963: costing 5 shillings (25p in modern money). The message of the poem was exactly Ron's message: *'Good fences make good neighbours'*.

Frost's fence was very different from ours: not separating two tiny suburban properties but a drystone wall between Frost's apple orchards and a neighbour's pine woods in a rural part of New England. Every year, like Ron and me, Frost and his neighbour agree to walk the wall between their two properties, picking up and replacing stones that had been displaced due to animals, storms, hunters or just age. They chat as they work. They wonder why the wall needs repairing every spring:

*Something there is that doesn't like a wall
that sends the frozen-ground-swell under it
and spills the upper boulders in the sun
and makes gaps even two can pass abreast.*

Frost, the intellectual, makes the point that they don't really need a wall, since there are no cows or sheep to wander off their own property:

*He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
My apple trees will never get across and eat the cones under his
pines, I tell him.*

His neighbour, like Ron, has spring-mended the wall for 40 years and only replies

Good fences make good neighbours.

A month ago the government issued the same mantra as Robert Frost. They called it social distancing. No longer just something nice to do but essential for our survival. Some argued like Frost that this was not necessary and that the economy would suffer. Most obeyed the call to build this new wall, as Ron and Frost's neighbour did. They also knew that external causes, like hunters and weather in the poem, will gnaw away at the wall and that it will need constant repair.

Social distancing seems to be working. It is too early to say what will be the full effect. However, erecting virtual walls between each other has reduced the effect of the virus and given us all time to provide answers to what we should do next. As with Frost's neighbour, we are beginning to realise that by social distancing we have become better neighbours to one another.

Chris Lewis

PRAYER DIARY

a theme to include in our prayers day by day through the month

1	NHS staff	17	Those researching to find cures and vaccines
2	Postal and delivery workers	18	People furloughed from their work
3	Retail staff	19	People fearing their business will fail
4	Our neighbours	20	Those working in media and communication
5	Waste management workers	21	People struggling with other health issues
6	Care home staff	22	People who are bereaved
7	Our family and friends	23	People whose weddings have been postponed
8	All in hospital	24	People whose children can't yet be baptised
9	All depending upon food banks	25	Schools providing places for children of key workers
10	People we are missing contact with	26	People whose moves of home and/or job are on hold
11	Those manufacturing the goods we need day by day	27	People frightened or struggling with mental health
12	People living in overcrowded/inadequate accommodation	28	People without means of online communication
13	People at risk in this time of isolation	29	Pharmacists and pharmacy staff
14	People in need of counselling and support	30	Those working in the justice system – police, courts, prison staff etc
15	Care workers who continue to visit	31	People we love and care and pray for
16	Holders of responsible office in government and nation		

Singing online – good for our mental and spiritual health!

Fridays, 6.30pm to 7pm

1st May: Compline; 8th May: Easy anthems

You are all invited to join virtual singing sessions using the Zoom app, which is very quick, easy and free to download. Please email rosemarymccormick@hotmail.com to be sent the password. Words and music will be sent out in advance of each session.'

MAY 2020 –SERVICES and SUNDAY READINGS

Services led by Colin and family:

Ante-communion service:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6e3kgVa4uqM>

Morning Prayer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=marZmGuZFqU>

or from the St John's website: <https://www.stjohnsfrome.com/>

Sunday services from the BBC:

Radio 4: 8.10am Sunday Worship

BBC1: mid-morning Sunday Worship

Services from the Diocese:

Sunday reflection: <https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/>
Wednesday, 10.30am: <https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/>
or via the Diocese's Facebook page

Sunday readings during May

Sunday 3 May – 4th Sunday of Easter

Acts 2.42-end 1 Peter 2.19-end John 10.1-10

Sunday 10th May – 5th Sunday of Easter

Acts 7.55-end 1 Peter 2.2-10 John 14.1-14

Sunday 17th May – 6th Sunday of Easter

Acts 17.22-31 1 Peter 3.13-end John 14.15-21

Sunday 24 May – 7th Sunday of Easter

Acts 1.6-14 1 Peter 4.12-14, 5.6-11 John 17.1-11

Sunday 31 May – Pentecost Whit Sunday

Acts 2.1-21 1 Corinthians 12.3b-13 John 20.19-23



A free phone line of hymns, reflections and prayers

Daily Hope offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England. It is available 24 hours a day and has been set up particularly with those unable to join online services in mind.

Not the Vicar's Letter... So what is the Vicar doing?

Day to day living is quite busy with five adults in the household: myself, Marian working three days a week in a prison, Beth back from her studies at RADA in London, Sam not working at the Apple store but having lots of work meetings online, and Connie his partner who is a care worker visiting folk in their homes. With varied diets, some vegan, some omnivorous, there's plenty of cooking and washing up – the poor dishwasher (machine, not person!) hasn't had so much work for ages. We had a problem with our heating system pump failing and fortunately a contractor was able to attend and repair it.

Each of the YouTube videos I've produced has taken about a day and a half or two days to plan, script, record, edit etc. There are a few meetings that continue – PCCs have been virtual meetings online, and clergy chapter are meeting weekly using Zoom.

There have been a fair few couples to work with as they rearrange wedding plans from this year to future dates and some families to support as they face the loss of a loved one but with very restricted funeral arrangements possible.

There are plenty of emails to deal with keeping in touch with the pastoral group, with the production of weekly sheet and weekly extra and magazine, though most of the work is being done by others in our team. There are practicalities of planned works that have not yet been actioned, and some work continues, such as the roof alarm annual service – all done with due social distancing. There are useful emails from the Inclusive Church Network and from the Major Churches Network and Historic Buildings Alliance that help shape our response to the present situation alongside the regular emails from the Diocese and national church.

Archive enquiries continue – relating to information about families that lived in Frome and to contractors who worked on the church during the Victorian restoration.

And around the rather changed work pattern I have stripped the turf from two patches on the lower level of the vicarage garden, dug them over and planted some vegetables. Once a week or so we try to sit

down to play a game together – this week four of us played 'Saloon Tycoon'.

I've also started reading a rather good book – *The Prosecutor* by Nazir Afzal – from his childhood in the Midlands in the sixties experiencing racist violence to becoming Chief Prosecutor of the CPS – it's an important story about justice and truth.

The white board in our hallway that is normally full of notes of different events during the week stands gloriously blank – it is quite different facing the day without the question 'What have I got to do today?' and having it replaced with 'What could I, might I, do today?' It refocuses priorities and may well mean that come the day that the white board fills up again I might ask more questions about whether I really do have to do some of the things that appear there.

Colin Alsbury

St. John's PCC report

26th March – 3rd April 2020

All meetings have to happen virtually at the moment, so St John's latest PCC meeting started at 7.30pm on 26th March and finished just over a week later at 10am on 3rd April. Although apparently a long meeting, all discussion was by email so it was actually very focussed! The main points:

- Approval was given to the wardens' fabric report for 2019 (for the annual report), the annual Parish Share return and the annual accounts for 2019.
- Grateful thanks were extended to Christine Holland for continuing to undertake the huge commitment involved in managing the church's finances and the Social Committee for making a donation of £500 to general funds to help with the current crisis.
- It was agreed that the Standing Committee would conduct any day-to-day business, and call the next PCC as and when needed for significant decision-making but no later than 21st May (whether physical or virtual).

It was reported that the Annual Meeting (APCM) would not take place on 13th May as originally planned but later in the year instead as the period within which it had to be held had been extended by Bishop's Instrument to 31st October.

Mandy Crook





Community and global engagement audit questions

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | Our church financially supports an environmental charity
Current answer: No | Options:
Yes / No |
| 2 | Our church works with local sustainability movements like Transition Towns :
Current answer: No | Options: Yes/no |
| 3 | Our church has committed to pray for a specific overseas environmental project.
Current answer: No | Options: Yes / No |
| 4 | Our church participates in the Tearfund/ Cord 'Toilet Twinning' scheme
Current answer: No | Options: Yes / No |
| 5 | Our church organises events providing an opportunity for local people to engage with local leaders on local environmental issues (e.g. local MPs or council leaders):
Current answer: Never | Options:
Annually / Less often / Never / Not applicable |
| 6 | Our church (either alone or as part of a local network) engages with our local MP, or local council on environmental matters

Current answer: Never | Options:
Annually / Less often / Never / Not applicable |
| 7 | Our church participates in regular sustainability initiatives (e.g. Carbon Fast, WWF's annual Earth Hour event)
Current answer: No | Options: Yes / No |
| 8 | Our church participates in campaigns concerning national environmental issues

Current answer: Never | Options:
Annually / Less often / Never / Not applicable |
| 9 | Our church participates in campaigns concerning global environmental issues

Current answer: Never | Annually / Less often / Never / Not applicable |



Treading lightly – our Eco audit Community and global engagement

It seems an age since we wrote in the last *Inspire* about St John's Eco Audit – so much has happened since! Last month we looked at the Lifestyle category and we're delighted to report that St John's is now at silver level in that category. As a follow on from the audits, Elaine investigated switching to a Green supplier, was amazed at the potential savings and is interested to see how they work out in reality. The next category we could look at as a church community is Community and Global Engagement – which seems strangely apt in these pandemic times. Some of the questions are given opposite, and below are the ways in which we would be grateful for your help:

Re 1. Environmental charities: This is something we will refer to our Overseas and Social Committees. If you have a particular charity that you would like them to look at, please let us know.

Re 2. Local sustainability movements: The group in Frome that is part of the Transition Network is Sustainable Frome. Are any of you members? Google 'Sustainable Frome' for more information.

Re 3. Specific overseas projects: This is something we will refer to the intercessions team. If you know of a specific overseas environmental project you would like St John's to pray for, please let us know.

Re 4. Toilet twinning: We don't do this, but we could do easily – both as a church and as individuals. Let us know what you think. It costs £60 to twin a household latrine and £240 to twin a school toilet block. For more information, Google 'toilet twinning'.

Re 5–9: These are areas we will need to look at in greater depth, but if you have any input, it would be much appreciated.

And finally, as we mentioned before (but haven't been inundated with responses!), we would like to open this process up to more people – so if you feel you would like to join us, or take on one of the suggestions, please do let us know. The award scheme is really designed to engage with as many people in the congregation as possible, and we would love to see that happen ...

Elaine Gilbert and Mandy Crook

Cathedrals of the world
All Saints Cathedral Nairobi

On the edge of Uhuru 'Freedom' Park, the main public gathering area in the centre of Nairobi, lies All Saints Cathedral, where I worshipped during my time there. Although originally founded as a church for European Anglicans, its staff and worshippers are now predominantly Africans. A white face like mine nowadays is as common there as is a black face in Frome. But you were welcomed as one of them and questioned keenly about your home church, what you were doing in Kenya and what you thought of Nairobi.

I attended the 9.30 Sunday service which, although almost identical in format to a similar Eucharist in England today, was significantly different as a religious experience. The church was packed, more chairs had to be brought in; the singing was loud and invigorating; the preaching was far more political than in this country, with significant criticism of the behaviour of top officials in the government; the welcome afterwards was overwhelming, not just drinks but food, singing and dancing in the extensive infrastructure of buildings that has grown up around the cathedral. English was used throughout, with Swahili services being held at different times.

One significant difference is that, although you receive both bread and wine, as in England, there is no use of the chalice to distribute the wine. This is reserved for the priest only. Individual plastic cups are given to each worshipper to avoid having to share a common chalice: this is a health precaution because of the significant proportion of any gathering in a country such as Kenya suffering from the HIV virus. After COVID-19 we may need to do the same.



Left: All Saints Cathedral Nairobi

Opposite: Artist's impression of the children's chapel

The original foundation of the cathedral followed a public fund-raising by European Anglicans in 1914; the foundation stone was laid in 1917 and the first services held in 1918. The architect was the Irishman Temple Moor, one of the most outstanding church architects of his time in the gothic tradition. However, it was not until 1952 that the main building was completed. At first all staff and worshippers were European, but following Kenyan independence in 1963, the congregation became mainly African and when I was there nearly 10 years ago, there were only a handful of very elderly Europeans who had decided to live out their lives in Kenya.

You can tell that the cathedral is successful by the large number of worshippers each Sunday. But the cathedral has a much wider role than just worship. It is a centre for social, cultural and educational activity. In many ways it resembles a monastic community of mediaeval times, although there are no monastic residents as such. Currently there are thirteen ordained clergy of whom three are women; there are also nine lay workers in the cathedral, of whom five are women. These concentrate on outreach, administration, music and work with children and teenagers.

Although there is already a large number of buildings around the church, the PCC has recently decided to build a new Children and Teens Centre to provide for the need for more space to worship and amenities that encourage spiritual growth and physical well-being for children and teenagers. The Mission of this new centre is to *“lead children to the knowledge of Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour and to teach them to use the Word of God as the basis for their decisions in life.”*

Integrating religion and life decisions is not an idle boast. During one meeting with Kenya civil servants, they wanted to start their meeting with a prayer. I asked who would lead the prayer and was told that Mary, taking the minutes, was an ordained priest and would lead us. This never happened to me in 25 years at the British Home Office.

About three years ago the new Archbishop Dr Jackson Sapit,



was enthroned in the cathedral. Since then his boundless energy has reinvigorated the church in Kenya. He is a man of the people who started life as a poor Maasai herdsman, moved to translate bibles for his Maasai community, to become a missionary and evangelist and then to become ordained. Since becoming Archbishop he has become a force to be reckoned with in the continuing tribal and national divisions. After the 2017 election he acknowledged those differences but said that his focus for the future was 'to build unity in the church and the nation, trying to heal those divisions.'

In fact, the Cathedral preaches truth to power in a way Europe has lost. In a recent open letter to the president under the heading: **Where there is no vision, the people perish (Prov 29:18)** the cathedral authorities said:

"Leadership is about vision; as a leader, you need to keep your vision alive to the citizens. This is where you score poorly. Mr. President, what will you be remembered for? What happened to your Big Four agenda....affordable housing, affordable health care, infrastructure, and food security? It's paramount to move with speed and reclaim the Nation back to this vision.

We also call for an independent audit on government loans to ascertain their legality. We suspect Kenya is paying fictitious loans to enrich people in government. Please don't leave Kenyans poorer than you found them!"

You will not find a fiercer criticism of a government from any Old Testament prophet. **Chris Lewis**



All Saints children's choir

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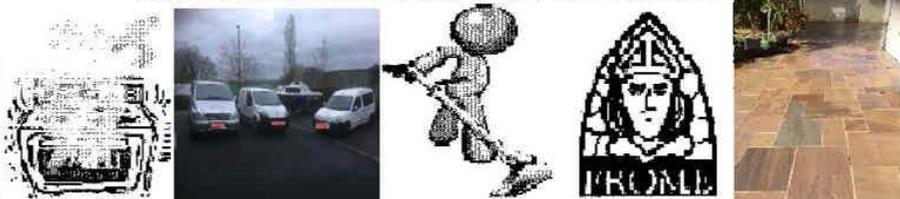
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Inspired to Read?

Eating for England By Nigel Slater

I should like to start by saying how nice it was to get some feedback on last month's book: *I am Malala*. I had hoped that these articles might provoke some discussion, and it was lovely to hear, not only that someone else had enjoyed reading the book, but that they, like me, had found it very informative, especially regarding middle eastern politics. So even though we can't stand over coffee on a Sunday morning at the moment I hope the lockdown might give you a bit more time to enjoy a good read and let me know your thoughts, as well as any suggestions you might have for future reads.

So you will no doubt not be surprised to know that I enjoy reading books about food, especially when they are well written by someone who is passionate about his subject. I can happily take a cookery book to bed with me, but this small volume is not a recipe book; rather it is a collection of thoughts about British eating and cooking habits.

About the author: Nigel Slater is a writer and TV food presenter. I first came across him as a columnist for the Sainsbury's magazine; his monthly contributions focussed on one particular seasonal ingredient which he would write about enthusiastically before suggesting a couple of recipes. He has also written a regular column for *The Guardian*, while his books have included *Kitchen Diaries* and *Real Cooking*. He is a believer in using quality ingredients when in season and cooking them without too much fuss.

From the inside cover: *Eating for England* is Nigel Slater's personal portrait of the British and their food. A celebration of the glories, humour, eccentricities and embarrassments that make up that extraordinary thing that is the British at table.

A short extract. There are many passages in this book at which I laugh out loud so to choose just one sample is difficult, so opening the book, more or less at random, I offer you this:

Fancy Toast. A sourdough loaf, with its slight acidity and chewy texture, makes very good breakfast material, though considered a bit modish by late adopters. Ciabatta is probably the least suitable,

as the butter pours through the holes. Attempt it at your peril, though it is probably OK if there is no other bread in the house and you are already wearing a very old dressing gown that already has the odd bit of marmalade on it anyway. Toasted malt loaf is in a class of its own, but delicious as it is – especially on a cold November morning – it has a distinct whiff of pension book about it.

The contents pages give a clear indication of the delights in store, including such treats as: Trifle – a social indicator, Boiled Brussel Sprouts, and Eating Outdoors. Slater writes with a nostalgic love of British quirkiness; his comparisons to the finer European cuisines are eloquently written with a fondness for British foibles: *The French cook with their senses, the Italians with their hearts, the Spanish with their energy and the Germans with their appetite. The British, bless them, cook with their wallets.* Despite his mocking tone he has a love for our national eccentricities and his wonderful use of language enables him to express this love in a few well-chosen words.

This is not a book to be consumed at one sitting. It is more like a buffet table to which you will want to return to see what other delightful morsels have appeared. It is a trip down memory lane as Slater reminds his readers of those British institutions that have disappeared from our daily lives, in many cases without us realising: *Barley Sugars, The Berni Inn, Old English Spangles.* He identifies different styles of cooking: *The Grow-your-own Cook, The Oh-I-never-measure-anything cook, The Cool, Modern, Shopper Cook.* He reminds us to be grateful for our food producers: *The Organic Box, A third-generation fishmonger, The Greengrocer – a national hero.*

I do hope some of you will be inspired to read this book and I should love to hear your thoughts about it. We may not be able to chat about it over coffee for the next few weeks, but please e-mail me and let me know which bits resonated with you.

(rosemarymccormick@hotmail.com)

I would also welcome suggestions of books to feature in future months.

Here are the books I shall be reviewing over the next three months:
June: *The trouble with goats and sheep* by Joanna Cannon: a coming

of age novel set in the long hot summer of 1976.

July: *This is going to hurt* by Adam Kay: ‘Secret Diaries of a Junior Doctor’

August/September: *Identity Crisis* by Ben Elton: a modern satire, uncomfortably relevant to the time we live in.

If you have any thoughts about these books, or would like to suggest a title for future reading please remember that the magazine deadline is the 15th of the month!

Rosemary McCormick

Smile line

They have Dial-a-Prayer for atheists now – you call up and it rings and rings but nobody answers.

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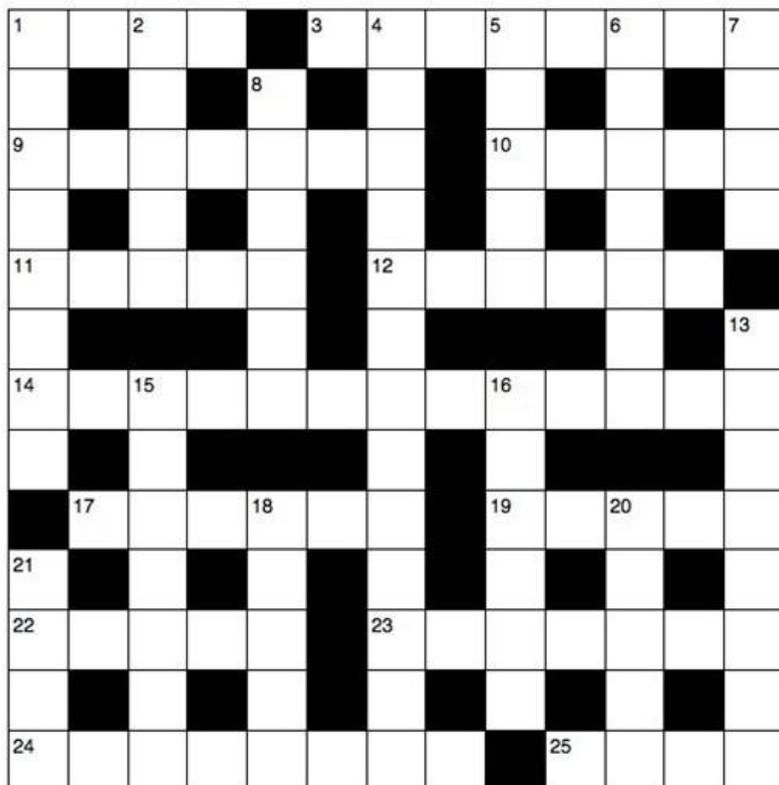
WORD SEARCH

This month the Church celebrates the Ascension of Jesus, the sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and the fact that our God is a Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. After the Resurrection, Jesus was seen on the road to Emmaus, by the Sea of Galilee, in houses, etc. He encouraged his disciples, and said that He was sending them to all corners of the earth, as his witnesses. 40 days after Easter, Jesus ascended into heaven; his work on earth was done. The disciples returned to Jerusalem, and on the fateful morning of Pentecost, there was suddenly the sound as of a mighty rushing wind. Tongues of flame flickered on their heads, and they began to praise God in many tongues – to the astonishment of those who heard them. That morning the Holy Spirit came to indwell all those who believed in Jesus: the Church was born. And so we have a triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

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Ascension	prayer	tongues	confusion	Spirit
blessed	power	flame	languages	Trinity
taken	one	joy	Earth	Father
Jerusalem	room	praise	Peter	Son
wait	disciples		Holy	triune

MAY CROSSWORD



The Bible version used in this crossword is the NIV.

- 1 'Therefore let us — passing judgment on one another' (Romans 14:13) (4)
- 3 'I — — these persons here present' (Marriage service) (4,4)
- 9 According to a prearranged timetable (Numbers 28:3) (7)
- 10 Group of eight (5)
- 11 The cell into which the Philippian jailer put Paul and Silas (Acts 16:24) (5)
- 12 — Taylor, pioneer missionary to China (6)
- 14 Otherwise known as the Eucharist, Breaking of Bread, the Lord's Table (4,9)

17 'So that after I have preached to others, I — will not be disqualified for the prize' (1 Corinthians 9:27) (6)

19 Attend to (3,2)

22 Approximately (Acts 4:4) (5)

23 Tea rite (anag.) (7)

24 Rule of sovereign (8)

25 Test (anag.) (4)

Down

1 The name of the street where Judas lived in Damascus and where Saul of Tarsus stayed (Acts 9:11) (8)

2 'The playing of the merry — , sweet singing in the choir' (5)

4 'We have been saying that — — was credited to him as righteous' (Romans 4:9) (8,5)

5 Dr Martyn — Jones, famous for his ministry at Westminster Chapel (5)

6 Port at which Paul landed on his way to Rome (Acts 28:13) (7)

7 Observe (Ruth 3:4) (4)

8 Minister of religion (6)

13 'I am — of this man's blood. It is your responsibility' (Matthew 27:24) (8)

15 'Greater love has no one than this, that he — — his life for his friends' (John 15:13) (3,4)

16 Archbishop who calculated that the world began in 4004BC (6)

18 'No one can — the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit' (John 3:5) (5)

20 Establish by law (5)

21 Product of Gilead noted for its healing properties (Jeremiah 46:11) (4)

Answers to April's crossword: ACROSS: 1, Cosmic. 4, Thomas. 8, In his. 9, Delaiah. 10, Falwell. 11, Water. 12, Recovered. 17, Sidon. 19, Radiant. 21, Centaur. 22, Broil. 23, Eleven. 24, Prison. **DOWN:** 1, Cliffs. 2, Scholar. 3, Issue. 5, Holy war. 6, Moist. 7, Sphere. 9, Deliverer. 13, Candace. 14, Deacons. 15, Psyche. 16, Stolen. 18, Dance. 20, Debar.

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	7		2			5		6
1				7				9

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Editor St Katharine's	Terry Williams
Printer	Karolyn Curle
Collators	Judith & Peter Davies, Allyson and Michael Joyce

Please send in material for *Inspire* to the editors by the 15th of the previous month (please give St Katharine's news to the St Katharine's editor).

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East Woodlands Hall

Hall Bookings	Mrs Sara Charlton
Hall website	www.ewvh.co.uk

St John's Church School (Aided)

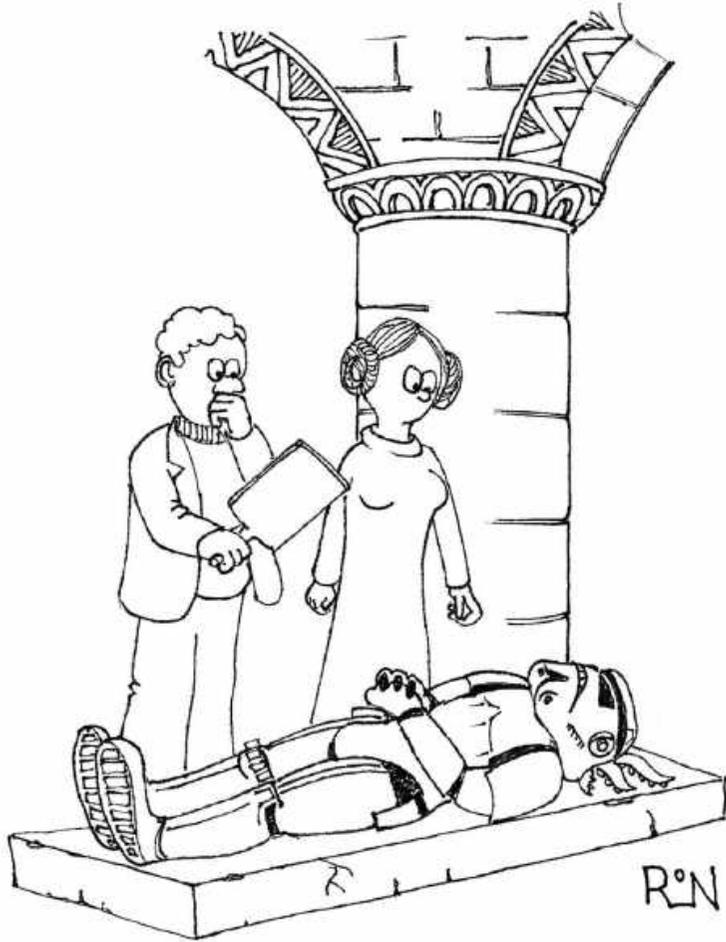
Headteacher	Mrs Claire Marsland
Chair of Governors	Vacant c/o school
Clerk to Governors	Ms Rosemary Conway
	<i>Email: rconway@educ.somerset.gov.uk</i>

FACT

Frome Area Christians Together

Chair	Vacant
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We have tried to get all the key contacts on these lists; if you have any corrections or suggestions to be added to the list please contact the editors.



*He'd fought in the wars, but the guide
didn't say which ones*

**Material for the June magazine to the editor by
15th May at the latest, please.**