

SEPTEMBER 2020



SEMINGTON  
PARISH  
MAGAZINE

**Minister for Semington:**

**Rev. John Rees**

**22 Warren Road**

**Staverton**

**BA14 8UZ**

**Tel. 01225 764365**

## Where To Go To Stay in The Know

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### **Canalside Benefice**

The Canalside Benefice website [canalsidebenefice.org.uk](http://canalsidebenefice.org.uk) has a number of useful links on it. It has resources for worship and Messy Church resources for children. In addition there is a link through to YouTube so that you may worship from your own home. Check out the Benefice website for the most up to date link.

### **Semington Little Marsh and Littleton Support Group**

The Support Group was founded as a direct result of the Coronavirus pandemic. The Group has a Facebook page which is the principal source of information, updates, offers of help and requests for help. Search Semington Little Marsh and Littleton Support Group on Facebook to join.

The newsletter is now published to alternate with the Parish Magazine so generally in the middle of each month. Distribution is via the Support Group Facebook page, for anyone who would like a hard copy of an issue of the Support Group Newsletter, including all past issues, the spares are in the Somerset Arms and the Village Hall, which can be accessed when the Post Office is open on Mondays and Thursdays from 9.30am-12.30pm. There is a fantastic selection of books and jigsaws available to buy when the Village Hall is open.

### **Semington Village Website**

The village website [www.semington-village.co.uk](http://www.semington-village.co.uk) has all the latest news needed including Wiltshire Council updates, the Support Group Newsletter and the Parish Magazine. Importantly it also includes normal day to day stuff that even in the midst of these strangest of times you may need to access.

### **Wiltshire Council Website**

For wider issues such as refuse collections, ancillary and community services, the Wiltshire Council website [www.wiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk) should be your first port of call. There are links on the home page for service updates as well as the facility to sign up for e-mail updates.

## Christians in Semington

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*Bev Woodward*

**Christians in Semington** - We will be meeting via zoom in our own homes, to pray for our community, on **Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September at 8.00pm**. Please contact Jack Woodward, 870784, for the Zoom link.

**Housegroup** - every Tuesday, via Zoom, at 8.00pm - looking at how the Bible helps us to live as God wants us to. Phone Jack/Bev 870784 or David/Pam 870030 for more details.

*Thank You from Edna!*

*Hello to all my friends in Semington!*

*I have missed seeing you all at coffee morning, also Marilyn and Gerald's lunches and other social events. I do hope you're all keeping safe from this dreadful virus. As for wearing a mask! I walked past my dear friend, Kay; she didn't recognise me, nor I her, so we'll have to have name tags on. We had a good laugh!*

*But, seriously, I want to thank the people who have been ringing me during lockdown, and I was touched by Vicky and Emma ringing to see if I needed shopping. It was very kind of them. Semington people always help each other. I send all my best wishes to you all and hope to see you soon. From Edna Jones.*

## Editor's Note

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*Gillian Airey*

Well we're all still here! This month will see St George's School welcome its pupils back and if you're looking for ways to get involved in village life – check Peter Smith's article on page 7 for a couple of suggestions as well as the Semington Camera Club and Lunchtime Walking on page 19.

Deadline for submissions for October is **Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September**. If you wish to contribute to the magazine or weekly newsletter my e-mail as always is **semparmag@icloud.com** **Stay alert – stay safe!**

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## This Month I've Been Waiting Patiently

*Gilly Airey*

The Great British public is admired for many things – our sense of humour, our ability to champion the underdog and for the Great British breakfast, but we are absolute world beaters at the capability to queue. You only have to be on holiday abroad (remember those!) to be able to spot the British tutting furiously when queuing protocols are not followed! So going to the shops during the pandemic has provided us with queuing equivalent of altitude training for athletes.

Don't get me wrong I have no issue with queuing to go into shops, anything that keeps us safe and sound is fine by me, but what it has allowed me to do is to play my own little game of Queuing Top Trumps..... So what do you look for when it comes to a good queue management system? Well I'm not going to lie I do love a good doorman – all of those displaced nightclub and pub doormen have turned up at Waitrose turning their charm on little old ladies rather than encouraging those who have had their fill of 'enjoyment' that their night is at an end. Perhaps even the doormen never thought they would see the day when they ushered people into buildings rather than throwing them out!

I am also taken by a sanitising station – Sainsbury's is all singing and dancing, a trolley disinfecting, hand-sanitising and bin combo, Waitrose is a foot pump although Melksham struggled to work this out and needed two signs to point us in the right direction. I've even got to a point where I have favourite sanitisers, zero points for Whitehall's far too sticky and gritty for my liking, similarly I struggle with the contactless ones – I seem to misjudge the timing of the squirt and generally find that my clothes are perfectly sanitised whilst my hands remain not so. My favourite shop sanitiser by far is Marks and Spencers with notes of neroli – if I'm not mistaken. That said a number of the lovely Highfield ladies swear by the Scout and Sage hand sanitiser – and who wouldn't when it's made from one of our most favourite gins!

I have had the most fun queuing – having a socially distanced chat with my fellow queuers when in the old days it would have been head down and get the shopping done. The most fun was at the Apple Store in Bath, in the early days just after they had re-opened. Not only did they have the displaced nightclub doorman ushering us in, we were offered bottles of water, umbrellas and free masks! So for now queuing is my opportunity to 'stop and smell the roses', to stop the rush and ponder life's more important questions like which shop really does win the Top Trumps of queuing!



# LOCKDOWN MENU

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## Parish Council Matters

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*Peter Smith, Vice Chair of Parish Council*

**Village Questionnaire and new initiatives** – the Support Group newsletter of 7<sup>th</sup> August gave a very good summary of the responses from so many of you, where you provided some great ideas and offers of help. Some of those suggestions are already being acted upon, including sorting out who wants to do what in the Street Scene Group, where work is likely to begin over the coming weeks (two dates already fixed, see below). In addition to providing support where possible to these initiatives, the Parish Council also has a long list of suggestions covering traffic and development management, parking, signage and similar issues to consider.

**Litter Pick** – a village litter pick will take place on **Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September at 10.00am**, meeting at the Village Hall car park. This is to ensure the streets are clean and tidy before the village celebration event on 19<sup>th</sup> September. In addition to the Street Scene Group, any other volunteers are very welcome to join in. Litter picking sticks and bags will be provided. Please bring work gloves and a hi-viz vest if you have one.

**Guttering and Pavements** – our Parish Steward, during July, has dealt with weed growth along the High Street. A date has now been set for a work group, made up of some Street Scene Group volunteers and anyone else who wants to join in, to clear away and dispose of the dead plants, and to clear growth in other streets. The date is **Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September at 10.00am**, meeting at the Village Hall car park. A couple of hours maximum to do whatever we can.

**Anti-social problems** in Little Marsh at the old A350 gate – early in July, concerns were raised by a Little Marsh resident about speeding and drug abuse. Our local CPSO has been very helpful with police visits increased. At the time of writing, it is 3 weeks since the last incident, though someone has fly tipped in the same area instead. Please keep a lookout and report anything that seems wrong.

**Planning Changes** – the government is consulting upon new proposals which may result in different criteria being introduced when deciding whether planning permission should be granted. The council is keeping a close eye on emerging news and formulating its response to the consultation.

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## Semington, Little Marsh and Littleton Support Group Update

*Vicky Bodman*

As the world moves on, we are lucky that as yet we have not had to go into a local lockdown. However, seeing this happen across the country with restrictions being put in place on travel as well, makes you think about when this all started. We all came together to support each other and the Semington, Little Marsh and Littleton group was formed. This group saw people help community members they had never even met before but all sharing a common purpose which was to ensure we all stayed safe through this time. The Facebook group continues to promote items happening in the village and enables people to share information.

On **Saturday September 19<sup>th</sup>** the village will be coming together as it did on VE Day, for people to have street celebrations and reflect on how we have supported each other. With people being able to go round the village more freely, we are looking at how we incorporate our 4 main hubs - the Village Hall, the Pub, the Church and the School. We have formed a working group to look at activities that could take place whilst respecting social distancing rules. We do hope you will all join in with us to celebrate how far we have come as a community.



*On September 24th Pat and Les Hiscocks will have been married for 60 years.*

*They would have loved to have had a party at the village hall, to celebrate with all their family and friends. They are very sorry that, sadly, that is not possible now, because of the coronavirus.*

*Congratulations to Pat and Les on this fantastic milestone in their lives together!*

## **Short Stories and Tiny Tales**

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*Siobhan Chown*

2020 will be remembered for many, many things but hopefully it will be a date that will be remembered as the very first creative writing competition to take place in Semington, Little Marsh and Littleton.

We invited entries from budding authors of all ages and the only limitation was that their stories could be no longer than 500 words. Entries trickled in (we're hoping for a flood next year!) and on 13<sup>th</sup> July the judges sat down to discuss all the stories and decide on our winners.

The judges had a marvellous time reading through all the stories, some made us laugh, some made us think, but they all inspired a lot of discussion and after careful consideration – here are our winners!

**Under 8 years – Oscar Way**  
**8 – 12 years 1st - Jessica Goodman,**  
**2nd - Madison McDine 3rd - Bethany and Jenson Day**  
**Adult – Joint winners Roy McDine & Jeremy Tyler**

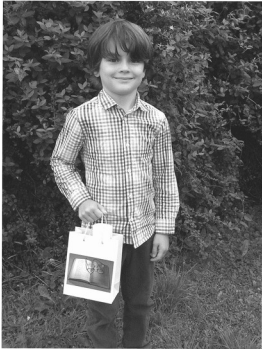
**Judges Favourite - Jessica Goodman**

Many congratulations and thanks to everyone who submitted a story and you will hopefully get to read them all when we publish our little book of lockdown memories to be sold in aid of the Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

Many thanks must also go to our esteemed judges for their time and expertise, Angela Grodzicka, Victoria Shackleton, Marianne Smith, Sophie Williamson and Bev Woodward.

Short Stories and Tiny Tales - The Winners

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Oscar Way



Jessica Goodman



Madeline McDine



Bethany and  
Jenson Day



Roy McDine with Siobhan



Jeremy Tyler

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It has been a tough few months for many of us, especially, perhaps, for those living in towns and cities who have had to rely on their memories or second-hand images of an open-air life.

It was **Coleridge** and **Wordsworth** who planted in our minds the idea of nature as a healing and spiritual force and the redemptive powers of the natural world, and Peter Ackroyd says that anyone who yearns to walk beside the sea, or to ascend a mountain, or to row across a lake, owes a great debt to them.

Wordsworth knew nature could provide solace and comfort both in the present and also in the memory. Even when we are no longer somewhere, landscape, vistas, geography, topography, rock, river, turf and sky remain with us – together with how we felt about them. In 1798, in his great poem, *Lines written a few miles above Tintern Abbey*, he wrote this about recovering and reliving the experience of being in the natural world:

But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din  
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,  
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,  
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;  
And passing even into my purer mind  
With tranquil restoration. ...

## Parish Council Meeting

*Abridged Minutes From Meeting Held via Zoom Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> August*

**Present:** Councillors P Smith (Vice -Chairman and Acting Chairman for the meeting), R Blake, V Bodman, M Kasasian, R Oglesby, W Scott, R Bruges (from Agenda item 3b) and the Clerk Roger Coleman. Wiltshire Council Cllr. J Seed attended (part-time). There were no members of the public present.

The Chairman and councillors noted that Cllr. Bowyer had confirmed that he had resigned from the Parish Council. The Chairman, on behalf of the Parish Council and the parishioners, thanked Cllr. Bowyer for his contribution to the Council and to the village over the thirteen years or so that he had served as a councillor. He added that his interest in the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and in matters affecting public safety had benefitted the village in a number of ways. The Chairman and councillors wished him well for the future.

**Apologies:** Apologies for non-attendance were received and accepted from Parish Cllr. C Wade.

**Co-option of a New Member:** The Council **resolved** to co-opt a new member. The Council **resolved** to co-opt Richard Bruges as a member of Semington Parish Council.

**Wiltshire Council Report:** Cllr. J Seed gave a brief report on the following topics: Government Planning Initiative. In response to a question from Cllr. Scott, Cllr. Seed explained that Wiltshire Council is awaiting further details regarding the proposed changes to the planning legislation before making a response to Central Government. He indicated that the response is unlikely to be supportive for the proposed changes. Cllr. Seed stated that he would make enquiries regarding the likely response from Wiltshire Council. In response to a further question, Cllr. Seed added that Wiltshire Council has a robust and fully defensible 'Five Year Housing Plan' for Wiltshire. Neighbourhood Plan. Commenting on the authority of Neighbourhood Plans in the planning process, following a question from Cllr. Oglesby, Cllr. Seed stated that in view of the new, proposed, legislation they are unlikely to have the strength or influence previously anticipated. Cllr. Oglesby responded by adding that the decision by Semington Parish Council not to produce such a plan had been vindicated.

**Chairman's Report. Litter Picking** – A village litter pick is scheduled for **18<sup>th</sup> September. Anti-social problems** in Little Marsh at the old A350 gate – The vigilance of local residents and the very helpful response from the Wiltshire Police PCSO had significantly reduced the issues associated with the anti-social behaviour, although fly-tipping is again on the increase. Cllr. Blake commented that there had been fly-tipping in Gypsy Lane but Wiltshire Council had responded very promptly when it had been reported. Cllr. Oglesby reported that a caravan had been dumped at the layby on the A361.

**Guttering and Pavements** – The Parish Steward has dealt with weed growth along the High Street. The Chairman commented that it is hoped that the newly formed ‘Streetscene Working Group’ would include this issue in their list of proposed tasks and added that it would be helpful if any weed growth etc could be removed prior to the main Litter Pick on **18<sup>th</sup> September 2020**. **Rights of Way** – There have been five maintenance outings for this group since last we met. We had seven volunteers on the last work group, all socially distanced, which was excellent and made for swift completion on a hot day. The Chairman thanked all those involved. Cllr. Scott added that there may be a need to cut back some paths and other areas as preparatory work for the Winter.

The Chairman and councillors expressed their thanks to the parishioners who had responded to the questionnaire regarding possible initiatives to improve the facilities and appearance of Semington Village. Improvements to the Streetscene, Traffic Management issues, Wessex Close Play Area and the need for a local shop featured in the responses. The Chairman asked that this subject is placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

**Highways and Environment:** Cllr. Scott stated that the Melksham News recently published an article regarding a scheme to reallocate road space to prioritise cycling and walking, which includes a link from Hilperton to Melksham via Semington. Additional funding is being sought from Wiltshire Council. The Council noted the date and meeting point for the guttering and pavement clearance – **Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2020, 10am** at the Village Hall.

**Finance. Total balance as 19<sup>th</sup> August 2020 £36,496.83** The Council **resolved the following sums:** a donation to St Georges PCC of £550, £45 plus VAT for daffodil bulbs and it further **resolved** to invite the Streetscene Group to propose additional planting schemes to improve the visual appearance of the village. The Chairman asked that this subject is placed on the Agenda for the next meeting. The Council **resolved** to allocate the sum of £150 for printing Community Newsletters to promote communication within the village over the coming months.

**Village Celebration.** The Chairman reported that the Celebration originally planned had been cancelled because of the continuing restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, although it was hoped that it could take place sometime next Spring. He commented that notwithstanding this, there were to be a number of events taking place on **19<sup>th</sup> September** but they were likely to be of a very local nature and relatively ‘low key’. Cllr. Bodman added that she was intending to canvass the ‘Street Leads’ to inform them of the proposed celebrations and to ask them if they have any plans for taking part and, if so, the nature of their proposed events.

**Date of the next meeting. Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020** at 8.00pm (a Zoom – Virtual/Remote Meeting).

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## Your Wiltshire Council News

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*Jonathon Seed*

I write in the middle of a heatwave and I suspect that we will be enjoying the rain we are currently praying for by the time you read this. After a hot COVID April an average summer turned to a scorching August. Many of us were very glad of decent weather to allow us to at least get outside during lockdown. As the lockdown eases we remember victims and hope for a vaccine. Whatever the future our outstanding Doctors and scientists have worked so very hard to understand and tackle the virus and as a result we all have a much better chance of pandemic survival than was the case in March.

In local government some of the spending which Wiltshire Council incurred on tackling COVID has been replaced by central government. There is still a gap as a result of lost income (e.g. leisure centres) but the Council is going to get through all of this without being declared bankrupt. There will be hard choices and some services will not re-emerge into whatever is the new normality as we knew them. However local government goes on. Much of the business of Wiltshire and Parish Councils alike has been conducted using Zoom or Teams and generally this has worked. I look forward to chairing my first remote meeting when in August I Chair the Western Area Planning Committee. On the positive side remote meetings have pushed many into the internet and virtual world and many more members of the public have attended meetings than would have done so in person. Indeed there are many who would like to see Parish Councils meet remotely after the pandemic on dark, cold and wet nights and in my opinion this should be considered.

On a personal note, like many others, I have taken time to reflect on my future in general and my politics in particular. The election for Police and Crime Commissioner was postponed for a year and this had a devastating effect on many candidates and incumbents. Government is conducting a review of the way PCCs operate but has made very clear that both the post and the number of PCCs will remain the same. Next year I will be standing as the Conservative candidate for PCC for Wiltshire and Swindon. Many PCCs also serve as back bench Councillors because they find it keeps them properly in touch with local people and local politics, and having seen some PCCs perform this is definitely required. However I will not have the advantage of a year to continue as a Councillor to see how the two posts work together. Also the Division of Summerham and Seend has been split so I have had to make a decision not only on whether but also where to stand locally. After much thought, I have decided to apply to be a candidate in Melksham Rural West which is where the majority of my current voters will be and will keep me involved in Melksham. This means that I will have the opportunity to continue to represent you after twelve years' service as your local Councillor. However the final decision is clearly yours!

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## **Melksham Foodbank**

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*Julia Wade – 01380 870137*

Over the summer all you amazing Semington residents have continued to donate a huge amount of tinned and packet food, every week, to the Melksham Foodbank. It has been wonderful to see! The volunteers at the Foodbank are incredibly grateful and moved by your efforts. Having a regular amount donated is really helpful to them, especially as winter approaches. A massive thank you to all of you and a special thank you to John at the Somerset Arms, and St George's Church, for allowing us to leave our donations there. You can leave your food donations (no fresh items) at the pub from 12.00pm – 8.00pm on Wednesdays, or in the box in the church porch any time. Thank you!

## **Semington Camera Club**

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*Roy McDine*

As Covid 19 is going to restrict any face to face meets for the foreseeable future, I am starting a new Semington Camera Club private Facebook page for those interested to share images, tips and suggestions. Search Semington Camera Club on Facebook and click on 'Join Group'.

## **Lunchtime Walking**

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*Jacqueline Stockley*

I am currently working from home due to COVID. On the whole its ok, but I am rubbish at taking breaks and getting out into the fresh air. I used to go out with work colleagues twice a week and I was wondering if anyone in the village fancied a short 30-40 lunchtime walk to break up the day. Small group, starting September and would have to be COVID compliant. If this is of interest to you, please catch up with my post on the Support Group Facebook page.

## **Club Central**

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There are some great initiatives happening around the village the Camera Club and Walking Group are just two examples – check out the Facebook page or ask your Road Lead for more information.

# BE INSPIRED



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## Down The Local

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John, The Landlord, John

So here we are post lockdown. How has it been ? Well thanks to Rishi and his dishies we have been full every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday throughout August. We've had to turn so many people away looking for tables – so apologies if you have been one of them! Thursdays as a result have been quieter but happily at the weekends we have a steady trade.

Looking forward Mother Nature is not our friend and it remains a worry how we accommodate enough eaters and drinkers once it gets chilly outside. We will see when September comes as the song says.

The social distance band was enjoyed by many at tables and it created a nice atmosphere. It was so good to have to have live music back at the pub and proved that with the right measures in place decent entertainment is possible. Hopefully the weather will be kind to us on **Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> September** when we welcome some more live music and we can enjoy the music without getting wet.

It's a strange new world but we are getting used to the new normalish. Fingers crossed we can move forward slowly and won't have to reverse back into another lockdown. I won't lie about being concerned about the winter and the space we don't have inside even for a reasonably large pub. I cannot thank the village enough for the support we have seen through lockdown and beyond and long may it continue. We are doing our very best but each week brings a new challenge but I am confident we have got this beast under control. Rishi has proved everyone likes a bargain so look out for some villager promotions in September.

It's all week by week and although I hate to say it Christmas will soon be upon us but what will that look like in a social distanced environment. So many questions and not so many answers but main thing is we are still here and whatever will be will be. That's it for now. Looking forward to a little celebration on the 19<sup>th</sup> September and we shall see what lies ahead beyond that.

As always much love and continue to stay safe, John

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## Autumn Leaves

Sighing leaves, flying leaves,  
Hustling, bustling and rustling leaves,  
Dead leaves, red leaves, russet and brown:  
Scattered and tattered leaves,  
Trodden and sodden leaves –  
In Autumn's October are all falling down.

Prancing leaves, dancing leaves,  
Gold leaves and old leaves  
Stray and bay leaves swirling through town:  
Chaffing and laughing leaves –  
In the month of September, they start falling down.

Little leaves, brittle leaves,  
Drying and dying leaves,  
Calling and falling, they clutch Autumn's gown.  
Aspen leaves quivering  
Willow leaves shivering –  
Leaves of October are all falling down.



## **FSM Solicitors donates £25 for every LPA to Alzheimer's Society**

**This summer, a local firm of Solicitors Forrester Sylvester Mackett are donating £25 to for every Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) they complete.**

It is estimated by Alzheimer's Society that by 2025 more than 1 million people in the UK will have dementia. For those people who do not have an LPA, handling their financial affairs and making medical or care decisions on their behalf can become virtually impossible.

An LPA is a legal document in which you can appoint trusted individuals (such as your relatives or friends) to make decisions on your behalf. You can make two different types of LPA:

**Property and Affairs:** This LPA will allow individuals of your choice to help you manage your money, property and finances.

**Health and Welfare:** This LPA will allow individuals of your choice to make decisions about health and care which may include what medical treatment you receive and where you live.

Rachel Saunders, Head of the Private Client Department at FSM Solicitors said, "Each year our staff vote for a 'charity of the year' and all fundraising efforts go towards that organisation. For 2020 the firm is supporting Alzheimer's Society, however lots of our plans have been cancelled or postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic. Donating £25 for every LPA we complete is a great way to provide some much-needed fundraising for this excellent charity, as well as giving us the chance to highlight the importance of later life planning to our current and prospective clients."

FSM Solicitors' offices are all open and the team are ready to help with your legal requirements. Please pre-book an appointment by visiting [www.fsmsolicitors.co.uk](http://www.fsmsolicitors.co.uk) or call 01225 755621 for more information.



## Catholic News

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*St. John The Baptist Trowbridge & St Bernadette's Westbury (inc villages)*

### **Please check weekly newsletter for any changes to timings**

#### **St John the Baptist - Trowbridge**

*Sunday & Weekday Masses:*

For the duration of the Corona Virus Mass times are:

Saturdays 12noon & 6.00pm (Vigil Mass)

Sundays 10.30am & 12noon

Monday/Weds/Friday 9.00am

Tuesday 6.00pm

#### **St Bernadette's - Westbury**

Mass times are:

Sunday 9.00am

Thursday 10.00am

For social distancing & safety protocols the one meter+ distancing will be followed, and face masks are required to be worn whilst in church.

#### **St John's & St Bernadette's Churches Revised Mass Protocols & Live Broadcasting.**

Due to the growing number of people attending the weekend Masses Fr. Tom has adopted the 'One Meter +' protocol to increase capacity in both churches. In addition, face coverings are required to be worn at all Masses. Read details of Mass times, distancing constraints and safety measures in the Newsletter. Mass will however continue to be available on 'You Tube' but slightly later to correspond with actual Mass times (go to 'Mass in Trowbridge').

The online Mass Broadcast System is bedding down however, it is 'jerky' due to inadequate broadband speed which will be corrected by early September. How to connect and receive the broadcast is in the Newsletter noted below and on the parish website. The system is costly to install and run so contributions to meet costs would be most welcome.

#### **Parish Newsletter**

Please visit the parish website <http://www.stjohnthebaptisttrowbridge.co.uk>

Where you will find the latest copy of the parish newsletter. Should you wish to have an emailed copy please contact [f.geraghty303@btinternet.com](mailto:f.geraghty303@btinternet.com)

## Thought From The Rectory

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John Rees

How would you like to be remembered? I was asked that question on a training course long before I became a minister. It was suggested that we needed to use our time wisely, giving enough time to people and things that were really important. Nobody has ever had “I wish I had spent more time at the office” written on their gravestone.

These thoughts have come to mind because sadly my Mum died this summer. Although she was 93 and not in distress, as a family we are coming to terms with her loss. One of the things that is bringing us comfort are the many wonderful tributes that we have received. One said that *“she was an amazing woman who made good use of her many talents and was so caring”*. It so is important that we make good use of all of the skills and money we have; that we are good stewards not only of our possessions but of the wonderful yet damaged world in which we live.

One of the stories Jesus told was about a master who went away and gave his servants talents (coins) to use on his behalf. Two of the servants used their talents wisely; and on the master’s return were commended and given more. However, the third servant buried his talent in the ground. The master was angry, and took his talent away. Christians believe that it as we offer our lives and all our unique skills to God, and ask for his help and guidance, whether life is running smoothly or we are facing difficult times, that we become the people God created us to be.

The disciples, when questioned by Jesus after three years in his company recognised Jesus to be more than a good man who gave good advice and healed people, but as “Son of the living God”. Because of this, their lives were transformed; they received such a deep awareness of God’s loving presence and peace that they had to tell everyone else what had happened to them. This was the beginning of the Church; and the actions of those disciples are still remembered today,

My Mum had a questioning faith, she believed that God had given her skills to apply for the good of her community and her family. She would have been surprised to know how much her life had helped others. During these troubled times there has been much evidence of people using their skills to support one another and I give thanks for that. I hope that this greater compassion will be a lasting legacy from 2020; and that this more compassionate identity will be a feature of our society. I hope too, that people will trust in Christ’s message that we do not have to face life’s challenges alone; through him we can know God’s presence and peace.

With best wishes to you all, Revd John Rees (Rector)

## Return to Church in The Canalside Benefice

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At the end of July, after 19 weeks of being unable to worship in church, the doors of St Mary Magdalen's in Horse Road were re-opened for our first Communion Service.

We know that many of our regular congregation can't join us for our live services at the moment so we will be providing an online service each Sunday as we did during the lockdown. In the coming weeks services will be held in all the churches of the Benefice – the first in Semington is planned for **Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September**. Please bear with us as we plan how to accommodate everyone to minimise the risks.

Full details of our services in church and online and updates on other activities can be found on our website [www.canalsidebenefice.org.uk](http://www.canalsidebenefice.org.uk) or contact our administrator Michael Gamble on 07795 400262 for details.

**St George's Church** - You may know that the Church has been open every Friday morning since the beginning of July from 10.00am - 11.30am. From this month this is changing to Wednesday afternoons, 2.00pm – 3.30pm. To keep everyone safe there is hand sanitiser provided, and general instructions on the noticeboard and inside Church.

### Paws for Thought



Now may the Lord of peace  
himself give you his peace at all  
times and in every situation.  
The Lord be with you all.

It's in the Bible; 2 Thessalonians 3 verse 16



Please visit our **Canalsidebenefice.org.uk** website page and the 'canalsideparishes' Facebook page to include prayer and worship resources and activities for both adults and children.

Check the website for the most up to date link to YouTube for the online services. We will upload a new service every week until St George's is open for worship again.

If anyone wishes to have a friendly chat at this time of physical isolation I would be pleased to talk to them on 01225 764365 John Rees.

### **Contact Details for The Canalside Parishes**

Administrator – Michael Gamble, please contact Michael for initial enquiries about baptisms, weddings and general matters on **07795 400262**

E-mail: **canalsideoffice@gmail.com**

PCC Secretary/Treasurer - Jack Woodward **01380 870784**

Church Warden – Mr David Wildsmith

Lay Pastoral Assistants are co-ordinated by Marilyn Stubbs. Please contact Marilyn on **01225 753118** or John if you would like a visit.

Curate: Revd. Joy Albone **07931 638524** email **canalsidecurate@gmail.com**

Rev John Rees, Rector, Canalside Benefice **01225 764365**

Email: **canalsiderector@gmail.com** **www.canalsidebenefice.org.uk**