

FEBRUARY 2021



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

Canalside Benefice

The Canalside Benefice website 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 is still very active in the community especially during the current LockDown. 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 to 12.00pm. There is a fantastic selection of books and jigsaws available to buy when the Village Hall is open.

Village Websites

The village now boasts two websites; www.semington-village.co.uk and www.semington.org.uk (see Vicky's article about this website on page 19 in this magazine). Back issues of both the Parish Magazine and the Support Group Newsletter are available on semington.org.uk

Wiltshire Council Website

For wider issues such as refuse collections, ancillary and community services, the Wiltshire Council website 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

Bev Woodward

Christians in Semington - We will be meeting via Zoom in our own homes, to pray for our community, on **Wednesday 3rd February at 8.00pm**. Please contact Jack Woodward, 870784, for the Zoom link.

Housegroup - This will continue on Tuesdays, via Zoom, at 8.00pm, every other week. So if you'd like to discuss how the Bible helps us to live as God wants us to, please phone Jack/Bev 870784 or David/Pam 870030 for more details and the Zoom link.

Semington Weather 2020

Jack Woodward

Some things were very different in 2020, but for Semington, weather was its usual changeable self with very few extremes. Just what we expect from living in a temperate climate.

We were all so blessed by lots of dry, sunny weather in the first lockdown. The second half of March, then April and May were lovely, helping us to exercise regularly and enjoy our wonderful countryside. Do you remember the V.E. day sunshine when we were able to sit outside and chat to our neighbours?

Average temperatures for the year were the highest this century, a result of mild winter months, followed by slightly higher than average for April – July. Rainfall was a bit higher than average, with 34.75 inches (882mm) with one exceptionally wet weekend at the beginning of October where we had over four inches of rain in four days.

So what will 2021 hold for us? I have no idea, but we will all be talking about it!

Editor's Note

Gillian Airey

Hello and welcome to 2021! We have some advertising slots open up so if you would like to take a quarter or half page then feel free to email **semparads@icloud.com** and we can get you in from next month. February being the shortest and dreariest month means that before we know it the deadline for March's magazine will be upon us, **Friday 19th February** is the date for your diary.

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This Month I'm Virtually There

Gilly Airey

No really I am...not you understand with regards to my place in the vaccine queue, according to The Times I am number 16,367,987 in the line – so I'll be waiting a while for the vaccination centre equivalent call of 'Cashier Number 4 please!' Staying in is the new going out and I am all in favour of this, so I have got a little bit creative with how to make the most of staying in bearing in mind we do not have the benefit of the great spring and summer weather of the first lockdown.

So I've gone virtual, it all started with an invitation from the BBC to join a recording of Mock the Week as part of their virtual audience and has now expanded to take in loads of Radio 4 programmes. Of course there are pros and cons, the pros; my sofa, my wine and the total freedom to wander off to replenish said wine as I please. The cons? Signing up and participating in a show that you realise holds no attraction – I'm looking at you Gardeners' Question Time.... I don't know what possessed me, Gorgeous Hubby has a battle at the best of times to get me into the garden to do some weeding, as we edged into the second hour of recording I cannot lie I left the recording running whilst I did something far more interesting instead – like getting another glass of wine.

Anyhow – two of my most favourite shops in the world (after Black Sheep Wools) have come to the rescue! John Lewis and Marks and Spencers have launched a raft of virtual events (actually they are real – just that the audience will only be virtually there – at the end of a Zoom link no doubt). So my diary is bursting with wild and wonderful things to virtually take part in. I have signed up for 'Beginners Calligraphy', a make up master class (just because I'm staying in doesn't mean I can't try to look more gorgeous than normal), a couple of cookery classes and a 'Sweaty Betty' yoga session. The last one does have me a bit worried, not sure I can rock the image of a Sweaty Betty – but I'll have a go.

And then there is the next best thing – I have had to buy loads of things to make sure I can take part, a calligraphy pen, special ingredients for the cook along, new make up and a whole new wardrobe of 'athleisure' wear for my Sweaty Betty moment. I think there is an Amazon Fairy that lives in our house... as I order things, they arrive and I've yet to see a bill even when it's not Amazon. Although I really have a sneaking suspicion that my Amazon Fairy wears shorts all year round and might just bear a passing resemblance to Gorgeous Hubby.....



TAKEAWAY MENU

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Skinny fries available
£2.75

GOURMET CHEESY CHIPS

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Real Ale Battered Fish served with peas, homemade tartar sauce and a wedge of lemon
Smaller option available

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Wiltshire ham served with gourmet chips, egg and peas
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Down The Local

John, The Landlord, John

As I write and as you read we are and will be most certainly still very much in Lockdown 3.0 as it now seems known as. It's amazing the amount of people I talk to who assume as a pub we get the heads up on lockdown affairs in advance – this is so not the case as we stay as much in the dark as the rest and only hear it when our illustrious leader makes his announcements. I can however prognosticate (trust me it's a word – means I can predict stuff!). In my humble opinion I think we are in this until end of March at least, which just so happens to be almost Easter.

Much as it hurts being all but closed it's for the best and it will be a big lift to us all to end Lockdown 3.0 with a return so some normality – I think we will socially distance to the end of year and beyond but at least we can hope to enjoy each others company in some way by then, and yes - get back down the pub. Speaking of the pub its still pretty much the same as when the newsletter went out, we've made a few little tweaks here and there so as it stands.....

Wednesdays 5.00pm – 8.00pm Midweek Madness Every week a special dish or something from the menu for a fiver.

Fridays 5.00pm – 8.00pm Fishy Friday Enjoy ale battered fish and gourmet chips or skinny fries for a fiver, regular Lockdown menu is also available.

Saturdays - Saturday Breakfast available takeaway or delivery 10.00am to Noon.

Sundays 12.00pm – 3.00pm Roast Chicken or Beef with all the trimmings £10.00.

****STOP PRESS**** On the first Friday in the month we will now be offering **Fishy Friday Lunch**. It's available for takeaway or delivery from 12.00pm to 2.00pm

Coffee Shop Saturdays 10.00am – 12.00pm and Sundays 12.00pm – 3.00pm With all the walkers strolling by it seemed rude not to offer coffee and maybe some treats to brighten the walk. Obviously takeout only but why not call in for latte, cappuccino, americano or even a tea to go. Served with Maia's Lemon Drizzle or Biscoff Cheesecake – What's not to love?

Don't forget we still have alcohol here and it's really not good for my health if I drink it all! As you know we can only offer alcohol as delivery, even though we can't do takeaway at the moment we have plenty of containers and will happily drop on your doorstep pretty much anytime – just call or message the numbers opposite. Also for all you gin lovers that I know are out there we have a stock of tonic in the cellar that's good for now but its dated March and can't see it getting used by then – knock on the door if you want a few, I'd much rather they went in gin than the bin.

To borrow from a well known supermarket 'Every Little Helps', so please support us in any way you can, keep safe and we'll and see you soon!

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Parish Council Matters

Peter Smith, Acting Chair of the Parish Council

Hilperton to Melksham cycle path – consultation on a proposal to create a continuous cycle route from Devizes Road in Hilperton through Semington and into Melksham closed on 8th January 2021. The proposal includes an improved surface along the byway from St George’s Place going west to the A361 at Paxcroft roundabout. The potential benefits for exercise and green commuting are obvious. We understand that the surface would use the same materials (road planings) applied in previous resurfacings, which haven’t stood up well to weather and heavy machinery. We can only hope that, if this cycle route does get the green light, Wiltshire Council is able to build and maintain a surface that somehow survives combined use by heavy motor vehicles, cyclists, walkers, runners and horse riders. We await the results.

Pooch (mostly) perfect – like so many of us during this latest lockdown, I’m out daily along the roads and lanes getting fresh air and exercise. I see so, so many dog walkers being public spirited and clearing up the precious gifts left by their pooches. Thank you from me and all the other clean-booted local walkers. There are a few, a very small few, who may have run out of bags or whatever, so I do sidestep the occasional deposit or, worse still, don’t sidestep it. So this is both a reminder and a plea: bag it and bin it and, if you’ve no bag, why not carry a small trowel to lift and deposit the leavings into the base of the hedge? Thanks.

The Parish Council website – was launched on 13th January 2021, find it at: **www.semington.org.uk** It has lots of council related stuff which, surprisingly, is sometimes quite interesting. In particular, there’s a lot going on with strategic planning matters where we as local people are asked to say what we think. And, as we all know, if we don’t offer our views, we sometimes end up with decisions we don’t like. Please see below if you want to comment on local plans.

Local Plans – there are two out to consultation at the moment:

- Wiltshire Council Local Plan Review, which will frame where developments such as housing, infrastructure and commerce should be built, with on-line events for you to join.
- Wiltshire Gypsy and Travellers Plan Review, which will look to allocate land for travellers in sustainable locations to meet their permanent and temporary accommodation needs up to 2036.

Links to the Wiltshire Council consultation pages can be found on the new Semington parish council website, under “Council”, then “Planning”.

And now for something completely different – we have a few more weeks of Lockdown 3 to go. Sigh. If you can, please keep on supporting our local businesses and charities so that they’re still here with us when we emerge on the other side. Meantime, stay safe.

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A sonnet from John Clare to start the year, reminding us, if we needed it, that we are still in Winters's grip.

Winter Evening

The crib-stock fothered, horses suppered-up
And cows in sheds all littered down in straw
The threshers gone, the owls are left to whoop
The ducks go waddling with distended craw
Through little hole made in the henroost door
And geese with idle gabble never o'er
Bate careless hog until he tumbles down
Insult provoking spite to noise the more
While fowl high-perched blink with contemptuous frown
On all the noise and bother heard below
Over the stable ridge in crowds the crow
With jackdaws intermixed known by their noise
To the warm woods behind the village go
And whistling home for bed go weary boys



There's nothing complicated here or remarkable. Clare is not sending us messages about what nature has to teach us about being nice to each other, or about how to live more lightly on the Earth. There's nothing sentimental either; just his usual clear descriptions of animals and birds doing what they usually do, and making a lot of noise as they're about it. It's early evening then, before sleep comes or hunting begins. Just a routine winter night as it would have been around a farming community like Semington in the early part of the 19th century.

Parish Council Meeting

Abridged Minutes From Meeting Held via Zoom Wednesday 6th January 2021

Present. Councillors P Smith (Vice-Chairman and Acting Chairman for the meeting), V Bodman, M Kasasian, R Oglesby, W Scott, C Wade, R Bruges, S Chown and the Clerk Roger Coleman. There were no members of the public present.

Wiltshire Council Report. In the absence of Wiltshire Council, Cllr. J Seed there was no report.

Chairman's Report. The Chairman stated that a new national Lockdown with effect from 5th January 2021 had been implemented and that this would have implications for the Parish Council in respect of the planned programme of work. He anticipated that the Village Support Group that was so active and appreciated during the previous Lockdown would be very busy with, as before, the support of the Parish Council.

Planning and Development. The Clerk reported that there were no planning applications received after 30th December 2020. The Chairman thanked Cllr. Scott for drafting a possible response to the Melksham Joint Local Plan consultation – a Neighbourhood Plan developed jointly by Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Council. Full details of the proposed response is available on www.semington.org.uk

The Council previously noted the result of Planning Appeal PP/Y3940/W/20/3253180 – Land North of St Georges Road - and a summary of the resulting s106 Agreement and a proposed way forward for the Parish Council to influence the detail of the development was prepared by Cllr. Scott and sent to all councillors. Cllr. Bruges commented that the Parish Council must engage in a dialogue with Wiltshire Council regarding the details of the development (especially the 'reserved matters' and the details of the s106 Agreement) and Cllr. Scott favoured engaging with both Wiltshire Council and the Developer (Pegasus/Greystoke). Cllr. Oglesby asserted that Wiltshire Council was the key party and councillors commented that it was important to establish how best to initiate this discussion. Cllr. Bodman agreed to investigate how, and with whom, the Parish Council could initiate this discussion. The councillors were of the view that the Parish Council could be influential in identifying local needs and facilities to be financed by the s106 Agreement. The full report by Cllr Scott is available on www.semington.org.uk

The Council noted that the Wiltshire Council Local Plan Review (Draft) is to be issued very soon and the formal consultation period will be **13th January 2021 to 9th March 2021**. Cllr. Scott added that he is to attend the 'Live Consultation Event' on 28th January 2021 that will concentrate on the implications for the Melksham Area. Cllr. Scott agreed to send details of registering attendance at the event to all councillors.

Cllr. Bruges enquired whether the Parish Council should develop its own local or 'Neighbourhood Plan' in order to influence the future development of the village. There ensued a lengthy discussion on the difficulties and protracted nature and high cost of developing such a plan with Cllr. Oglesby giving practical examples of the experiences of other villages that chose to develop such a plan. Cllr. Bodman also offered Cllr. Bruges some points of contact for him to obtain further information.

Cllr. Bruges commented that individuals had recently been visiting and taking a keen interest in land that had recently been cleared close to the canal. The Chairman stated that he would contact the landowner.

Environment and Streetscene. Cllr. Bruges stated that recent Litter Pick just before Christmas was successful and that it was very well attended. He suggested that a log or record should be made of those places where litter accumulated in order to better direct Litter Pick operations in the future. The Chairman added that he had information that would assist future Litter Picks. Cllr. Scott reported that the Rights of Way (RoW) Group had been very active and had undertaken a survey of many public paths in the village and noting stiles that needed replacing or repairing. He noted that there were at least six stiles that needed attention and that Wiltshire Council had been informed, also that two of the paths had been deliberately blocked by land owners. Cllr. Scott added that Keevil Parish Council councillors were keen to form a Village RoW Liaison Group to address those 'cross-boundary' Rights of Way and that Brian Smyth was taking the lead on this matter.

Transport and Traffic. The Chairman thanked Cllr. Wade for his report and proposed response to the Melksham A350 Bypass Consultation that he had sent to all councillors. Cllr. Wade gave a brief review of his report and commented that there was a possible conflict between the A350 Bypass proposals and the Melksham Local Plan for additional housing and the possible effects it may have close to the canal and Semington Brook. Cllr. Chown argued that the Parish Council should not, at this stage, indicate a preference for any of the possible routes because she considered that the case had not been made for a new A350 Bypass road. Councillors were also concerned that traffic flow figures and methodology employed by DfT when calculating the figures currently adopted by Wiltshire Council were historical and failed to address current or future trends. Cllr. Wade offered to reshape his report to reflect these comments and to circulate it to councillors for approval via email. This was agreed.

Recreation and Wellbeing. Cllr. Chown stated that there was very little to report. The recently announced Lockdown, has curtailed most, if not all, recreational activities. She added that the 'Village Support Group' is very active again supporting those in need and that the 'Wellbeing' issues are being addressed.

Community and Communication. Cllr. Bodman stated that she had little to report as she had been very busy with the development of the new Semington website.

Finance. Total balance in hand as at 6th January 2021: £39,623.84

Budget FY2021-2022. It was resolved that Budget discussions will commence at the October Parish Council meeting and it would concentrate more on likely expenditure in relation to the various 'themes' and that 'Theme Leaders' would be expected to propose realistic likely expenditures in their respective areas.

Website. Councillors expressed the view that the new website was very good and that it met the expectations of the Parish Council. He added that the training of those intending to manage the website is still outstanding and that some content is still awaited.

Date of the next meeting: Wednesday 10th February via Zoom 7.30pm

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Community Thank You



Heartfelt thanks from Kay Ferneyhough

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks for the wonderful outpouring of sympathy and memories of Les. I was very moved by the wonderful cards from so many lovely people, a lot of them relating stories of how they knew Les. It is wonderful to think he touched so many people's lives and helped them in so many ways.

Thank you so much to the lovely neighbours and friends who have made this very difficult time easier to bear.

Thank you from Pat Hiscocks

A very big thank you to all neighbours and other friends from the village who have been such a help to Les and me over the past months. You have all helped me to get through what has been, and still is, a difficult time, and I'm really grateful.

Thank you to our Editor

I would like to thank our lovely Editor of the Parish Magazine, Gillian Airey, for all her hard work, not only producing the Parish Magazine, but also the Support Group Newsletter, throughout the pandemic, the first one coming out on 27th March, just four days after Lockdown #1 began. For a while this Newsletter was produced weekly and became our essential guide for what was going on in the village and the Support Group. It has cheered us up with fantastic photos, made us smile, informed us of the latest guidance, given us loads and loads of useful local information and become essential reading. Thank you Gilly (and all the people who contribute to both the Magazine and Newsletter)!

If you cannot access the Support Group Newsletter on the village website then a few hard copies are produced. Let me know if you want one. Spare copies are also left in the Somerset Arms and in the village hall, which can be accessed when the Post Office is open on Monday and Thursday mornings.

Julia Wade, tel 870137

(Editor's note - I am blushing and I must in turn thank Siobhan for getting the very first newsletter out as we were on a plane coming back from Thailand!)

Thank you to Sue Stainer

For the beautiful flowers in Church on Christmas morning. 20 of us were there, socially distanced - my favourite memory is going outside afterwards and singing carols - it was great to sing!

Bev Woodward

From Westminster

Michelle Donelan MP for Chippenham

With Christmas and New Year starting to feel like a distant memory, I do hope despite the restrictions in place you were all able to celebrate in some way and I would like to wish you all a very Happy New Year.

In 2021, it is important to keep in mind the strong sense of community we saw come to the fore as the pandemic hit last year. We saw the very best of this with the overnight setup of volunteer groups and tireless efforts to locate those isolating and in need of help and get food and medicines to them while they shielded from the virus. While we start the year with the extremely good news of the approval of not 1, but 3 vaccines and the rollout of the biggest vaccination program the NHS has ever undertaken, we must remember we are not quite at the end and it is as important now to continue to look out for our neighbours to get us through this difficult period together.

I want to reflect on the small actions in the village too that don't revolve around the pandemic. These actions are so important to lift our spirits and I was delighted to see the volunteer effort that nearly 90 households took part in of planting 500 daffodils in Semington near the end of the year. When these daffodils brighten up the village next spring, they will be the most wonderful sight. It was also fantastic that the village were able to diversify back in November to put the Remembrance Service online, it was important as a country we still found means to mark this significant day.

To update you on wider issues in the community affecting Semington, at the end of last year I met with representatives from Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal Trust to discuss the ambitious "Melksham Link" project. This section of the canal has been in the planning for a long time and I am very pleased to be able to lend my support and do what I can to help with its delivery. The project will bring huge benefits to the area in terms of attracting tourism businesses and providing a beautiful leisure space for residents and visitors to enjoy. I was thrilled to receive news after the meeting that the restoration of the Wilts & Berks canal to link the English northern and southern waterway systems, for which crossing the M4 has been a significant logistical obstruction has received a huge boost with Highways England awarding over £42,000 towards the Trust's feasibility studies via its Environment and wellbeing fund. In the longer term the Trust hopes this will help to demonstrate the benefits of restoration to other towns along the historic route, including Melksham and Chippenham.

I have been contacted by constituents from Semington about the proposals for a Melksham bypass and I hope you were all able to submit responses to the consultation. I am keeping up to date with the progress of this issue and I look forward to representing the interests of the village as the project progresses. You can see my letter to Wiltshire Council on my website here: <https://michelledonelan.co.uk/my-letter-to-the-leader-of-wiltshire-council/>

Once again, as your Member of Parliament, I want to personally thank everyone in Semington for their efforts and community spirit. Better days lie ahead! If you ever need my assistance or have a question to ask me, please do not hesitate to contact or call **01249 704465**.

Your Wiltshire Councillor News

Jonathon Seed

We are now in lockdown three of the terrible year of the virus. We are all required to stay at home except for critical tasks like essential shopping and exercise. The country does not seem to be taking this lockdown as seriously as the past two even though the levels of COVID are higher and rising fast. Let us hope this lockdown gets the spread of the virus down enough for mass vaccination to do the rest. One way or another 25% of our population will have suffered from the virus and a critical 20% will be vaccinated by mid February. Let us hope that we will be clear of this dreadful pandemic soon.

Political life continues as does much of our national life but it is working in very different ways. Many of us are meeting via Teams or Zoom and we all seem to be managing. It is not the same as meeting up in a village hall but do we conduct any less business? I am certainly able to attend more of my Parish Councils when they clash. However I find attending two virtual Parish Councils simultaneously a little tricky but I am learning to cope! In some ways it is quite similar to my Army days when I managed to deal with three different radio networks at the same time whilst rumbling around the German countryside in an armoured vehicle! Our nation and our locals are showing a similar sense of purpose to those military days and I think that we are getting things done, in less time and with greater efficiency than pre COVID days. Certainly I am seeing local issues raised and local issues resolved with satisfying speed.

There are matters that cannot be attended to on line and amongst these are elections. We are due to go to the polls on 6th May to elect a new Police and Crime Commissioner, a new Wiltshire Councillor and new Parish Councillors. The PCC election has been delayed by one year and there is talk of further delays for all three elections, however there are vacancies to be filled and we need a new mandate for the management of local affairs whether they be the overseeing of our police or the conduct of our local government. My personal wish is to get past elections on 6th May and continue to serve my community in whatever capacity you decide - but in a much safer post COVID environment.

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Competition Time!

Vicky Bodman

Logo for Semington Parish Council Website

As we are launching our new website, we think it's important that we have our own identity. We would love for our new Parish Council Logo to be designed by a member of our community. The winning logo will be used throughout our website. The ideal size for the logo would be 344px x 151px.

Please send your entries to: semingtonvolunteers@gmail.com

Closing Date: **Friday 5th February**

Cover Photo for Our Website

We are also looking for a cover photo for our website that represents the village. The size of the photo needs to be 1440px x 500px as a minimum and taken in landscape. Please take a look at the homepage of the website for an idea of how it would look.

Please send your entries to: semingtonvolunteers@gmail.com

Closing Date: **Friday 5th February**

We would also like information on the clubs that are in the village to be sent to: semingtonvolunteers@gmail.com so that we can populate the website.

Kieren Bourne **Garden Maintenance**

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Semington WI

Deb Hurn



A Happy, healthy, 2021 to everyone.

I know that unfortunately many of us didn't have the Christmas that we had planned for, but I hope that everyone was able to have a pleasant time. I don't know about anyone else but December seems an age away now. It seems strange to be giving the results of a competition that we had before Christmas asking our ladies to make something with a Christmas theme. 1st was Rose, 2nd Jean, 3rd Shirley. All entries were excellent.

We've been keeping in touch as usual using the technology available to us. At our Zoom meeting on Thursday 14th January, we decided to issue a new challenge to our members to make something with a Valentines theme. I'm looking forward to seeing the results. Our next meeting will be on **11th February at 7.30pm** on Zoom of course. For those that can't make it we will, of course get in touch in other ways. Stay well. Stay safe.

Melksham Foodbank

Julia Wade 01380 870137



In December I was given a Certificate of Thanks for the community of Semington, Little Marsh and Littleton from the Melksham Foodbank. This was in grateful appreciation of the donations of food that you have made every week since Spring 2020. I know they really appreciate the consistent giving each week, which makes managing their resources so much easier. Also, usually in December they have to buy food as they do not have enough in their store, but this time they had enough. So, once again, THANK YOU.

Every week I post their latest specific food requests on the village Facebook page, but a full list is on the noticeboard in the Church porch. If you want to know their specific requests and you are not on Facebook then do ring me and ask. At the time of writing they are short of; tinned meat/stew, toilet rolls, instant mash, tinned potatoes, squash, jam and UHT milk. Nothing fresh, please. The Foodbank has their own Facebook page and website **www.melkshamfoodbank.org.uk**

Please take to either the Somerset Arms pub on Wednesdays before 6.00pm, or put in the box in the church porch, any time. If the pub is closed then please leave your donation in the marquee at the rear of the pub. Please see the Support Group's Newsletter on the village website for any changes to these arrangements. (Hard copy can be delivered to those without the internet.)

Catholic News

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

Weekly Timings: Please check newsletter for changes

St John the Baptist - Trowbridge

Sunday & Weekday Masses:

For the duration of the Corona Virus Mass times are:

Saturdays 12noon and 6.00pm (Vigil Mass)

Sundays 10.30am & 12noon

Monday/Wednesday/Friday 9.00am

Tuesday 6.00pm

St Bernadette's - Westbury

Mass times are:

Sunday 9.00am

Thursday 10.00am

Masses will be live streamed each day and will be recorded for later viewing.

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

Live Streaming Details:

All masses are streamed live on www.churchservices.tv or on YouTube 'Mass in Trowbridge'

Parish Newsletter:

This is available weekly on the Parish website:

www.stjohnthebaptisttrowbridge.co.uk

Should you wish to have an emailed copy please contact Francis Geraghty – details as below.

THE NEW 300 CLUB 2021

The monthly draws Subscriptions: £50 annually - £13 quarterly - £4.33 monthly. New members are most welcome to join at any time. Monthly Prizes are: £200-£70-£50-£10.

For information on any of the above contact **Francis Geraghty tel 01380 871083 and email fgeraghty303@btinternet.com**

Thought From The Rectory

John Rees

“We are a light in the darkness
Jesus living in us can change the world”
(From the song “City on a Hill” by Nick and Becky Drake)

“I am a City on a Hill” is a favourite song at Collective Worship in our village schools in Canalside Benefice. We sing it in some of our All Age Services in our Churches too. It is inspired by Matthew 5, in which Jesus taught about the importance of our being “the light of the world”, bringing light into darkness. Jesus taught us to **“let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.” Matthew 5:16.** I believe that the presence of Jesus is with us all and can give us strength to go on when we may feel overwhelmed by the bleak news that affects us all at this dark time. Jesus’ presence can sustain us and also equip us to be beacons of light for others.

We become beacons by showing love and care to those around us. Very often, it is through giving loving care when we are feeling vulnerable and weak, that others sense the loving presence of Christ is with them in the darkness too. I particularly want to celebrate the wonderful, sacrificial, loving care that has been shown by staff, governors and Churches to the children and parents in our village Schools throughout the pandemic as we face these dark times together.

In Canalside’s online Christingle Service, we thought about how the light from a candle can be passed on without running out. Jesus asks us to pass on the light of God’s love to others. As we do this, we can be sure that the light of God’s love will never run out, for us or for them.

Paws for Thought



Jesus said “if you are tired from carrying heavy burdens, come to me and I will give you rest.”

It’s in the Bible; Matthew 11 Verse 28

At The School Gates

Sue Cook

The children at St Georges ended 2020 on a high, with fantastic class Nativity plays in Ducklings Class and Herons class that was broadcast live to our grown ups at home, and a great Christmas songs performance from the children in Swans class and Kingfishers class that were recorded and uploaded onto our school information system for them to enjoy.

We also had a Christmas jumper day, but instead of bringing in money to wear their Christmas jumpers, the children brought in a small gift that was donated to a local charity. As always our families were really generous, we had a great selection of gifts to donate.

The staff were well prepared for outdoor learning as we returned in 2021 with our lovely new teepee that you may have seen appear in the school field. Thank you Mr & Mrs Hutchinson. This is a great area for our children to learn outside of the regular classrooms. We have also taken delivery of 60 small trees that we will be planting in the school grounds to continue to offer privacy for the school and the surrounding houses.

The new year has brought about a different kind of school for the staff and children at St George's with all of our wonderful students 'online learning'. It has been so great this lockdown to be able to see the faces of all the children as they are given the opportunity to continue learning, with the support of their wonderful grown ups. We have continued with our fun activities for the children, by having a non-uniform day and a crazy hair day which they have all loved showing off whilst doing their amazing online learning.

We are so lucky to have such great teachers, leaders and support staff at the school, who have all adapted well to our new way of working, and making sure each and every pupil gets the very best we can offer in these strange times.



WORSHIP

DURING LOCKDOWN

Following the introduction of the latest national Covid-19 lockdown the Ministry Team and PCC Standing Committees have decided that our worship should now be focused online rather than in church. In this way we can keep everyone as safe as possible. Hopefully the lockdown measures and vaccine programme will mean that soon we will be able to gather together again for worship in church.

All our pre-recorded Online Services can be watched by going to our website <https://canalsidebenefice.org.uk/> and clicking on the link on the front page.

PRIVATE PRAYER

DURING LOCKDOWN

Although our churches are generally closed at the moment St Michael's in Hilpertont will continue to be open for private prayer each THURSDAY FROM 10am-12 Noon.

If you would like to visit any of our churches at other times for a period of private prayer please contact the Benefice Office and we will do our best to arrange that for you.

SUPPORT

DURING LOCKDOWN

This is a difficult time for us all and if you need, or you are aware of others who may need support, please contact the Benefice Office. Similarly let us know if you are able to offer shopping or other help - and thank you to those who are already providing this support. If you would like someone to pray with you or for you, or if you would like to speak with someone, please contact us.

CONTACTS

DURING LOCKDOWN

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CURATE: Joy Albone 07931638524 canalsidecurate@gmail.com