

The Beacon

Ashwick, Oakhill & Binegar News



MARCH 2021

Cover photo: © John Law



**BEACON
TRINITY**



Church Services – March 2021

We continue to keep our church buildings closed for in-person worship. Keep an eye out for next month's edition of The Beacon for updates about Easter.

Until then, we are introducing some variety as to how we enable worship. A small group of people have enjoyed Zoom services for some time but though we have limited resources we are trying some Live Stream and pre-recorded services now too. This way more people can find something to help with worship at home.

We share updates on Facebook and use YouTube too. Our Instagram is limited but also a way to find some information. There is a weekly newsletter that you can sign up to from our website which tells you what is happening each week.

Please visit www.beacontrinity.church or:

Find us on 
facebook.com/beacontrinity

Follow us on Instagram! 
instagram.com/beacontrinity



Daffodils are also known as *Lent Lilies*



View from the Hill

February 17th was Ash
Wednesday and the start of
Lent. Traditionally Christians fast

during Lent but this year it seems that everyone has had to give up so much already so how do we live Lent in Lockdown. I've always liked to try and take something up for Lent, something that is honouring to God and is in some way a sacrifice for me, maybe of time.

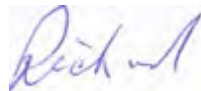
This year I have had a renewed focus, at least in my head, of how we care for the environment. Many speak of the global climate crisis and I feel that due to the pandemic this has not had the coverage we would expect. I walk around our area, down the lanes, along the footpaths through the woods and across the fields. I enjoy being in God's creation. I am often dismayed at the litter, particularly in the hedgerows of more main roads, but it can be found everywhere. When I pray I allow my surroundings to inspire my prayers, so when I see litter or vandalism I talk to God and say sorry for the damage humans do to creation, and I then pray about the damage I do and ask for forgiveness. When I see the new buds of spring, the snowdrops or daffodils, I say thank you for the new life, for the ever-moving cycle of the seasons.

As I walk past houses, I ask for God's blessing on those who live there. When I see an ambulance I pray for what ever is going on, giving thanks for the paramedics and medical staff who at this time are stretched to the limit.

When I see the fallen ash trees I pray for the ability to plant new trees. As I walk past the closed-up pubs I pray for the landlords and other businesses that are struggling and fear for the future. I also then pray for the chance to meet again with friends. And as I pass the school I ask for God's blessing on the teachers and on all the parents who are having to enable home learning for the children.

I like to walk and pray. It's almost like a daily pilgrimage, more than just a walk, it has a purpose of being close to God and praying. Perhaps you are not a praying person. If so, I encourage you still to get out into the countryside and allow the environment to inspire your thoughts, and though Lent may mean little to you, allow this time of spring to be a time of renewal for you, find a fresh focus beyond the lockdown and hold on to hope for a better world for all.

Let Lent in lockdown be a time of renewal for us all. Give up a few minutes everyday (or more) and do something that brings you a little light in the darkness that will keep on growing.



Do you live in Ashwick, Oakhill or the surrounding communities?

Coronavirus is making life hard, but your village wants to help by:



Collecting your medicines



Collecting groceries



Listening to your concerns



Just being someone you can talk to

Many of your Village Neighbours are helping in any way they can. If you can access the Oakhill Village Life, Facebook page you will find more information there.

Alongside this your local churches have set up a Helpline:

01749 841838

You can leave messages which will be collected every evening. We will call you back to let you know who will help.

As well as helping with your daily supplies etc. the church can help confidentially with any other issues you are currently experiencing. From financial to spiritual, physical to emotional, whatever the problem we will walk beside you.

Please call, we want to help you.

Help control the virus

To protect yourself and others when you leave home you must:

- Wash hands - keep washing your hands regularly
- Cover face - wear a face covering over your nose and mouth in enclosed spaces
- Make space - stay at least a metre away from people not in your household

If you are feeling unwell, get a test and do not leave home for at least 10 days.

Coronavirus symptoms can include:

- A high temperature
- A new, continuous cough
- A loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste

Advice taken from Gov.UK and the NHS

Community corner



Congratulations...

...to Ed and Elsbeth Ralls on the birth of their daughter Phoebe Louise in the early hours of Saturday, 23rd January, a sister for Madeline Rose.

Bill Bolton

The amazing sum of £1129.17 has been raised in memory of Billbo and, in accordance with his wishes, donated to The Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance Charity. Thank you to Sarah Stevens for organizing this tribute to Bill.

Captain Sir Thomas Moore: April 1920 – February 2021

Capt Sir Tom raised nearly £33 million (almost £40 million with Gift Aid) for National Health Charities Together during the Pandemic. His motto was "My today was all right, and my tomorrow will almost certainly be better. Tomorrow will be a good day." RIP Sir Tom.

A new rose is helping continue the good work of Capt Tom by raising funds for his charitable trust. Every 'Captain Tom' rose sold contributes £2.50 to the Captain Tom Foundation.

Gurney Slade Post Office:

The hard-working, community-spirited, entrepreneurial Weller family have now launched their new online shopping service – see advert on p27. They have all done a magnificent job in supporting us throughout the pandemic, so let us now support them.

Oakhill Surgery:

A BIG THANK YOU to all the staff at our amazing surgery here in Oakhill for looking after us all during these troubled times. In particular, they pulled out all the stops to help set up a GP's vaccination hub in Shape, Shepton Mallet which made the vaccine available quickly and efficiently to the most vulnerable groups in our community.

This month's cover...

This month's photograph of a 'waving' ladybird was taken by John Law. Please send photos for the cover (portrait orientation, in colour) to: magazine@beacontrinity.church
Thank you.

Coronavirus Vaccine Scam (Official)

Coronavirus vaccinations are free of charge. The NHS WILL NEVER:

- Ask for your bank account or card details
- Ask for your pin or banking passwords
- Arrive unannounced at your home to administer the vaccine
- Ask for documentation to prove your identity such as a passport or utility bills

Tales of old

How did parishes work economically in the 1600s?

In each parish, the Church had always raised a levy from each household. Originally, one-tenth – a tithe – of agricultural produce was given to the Church. 800 years before, Saxon King Æthelwulf, gave the Church one-tenth of his lands.

There were *Great Tithes* paid to rectors on cereal crops and wool etc. Vicars were entitled *Small Tithes* payable on vegetables, fruit, hops etc. They raised about a third of the income of *Great Tithes*. Early on, Tithe Barns were built to store the goods received from this tax on income.

By 1600, this simple pattern had been complicated by centuries of arbitrary changes. Church Reformation was just the latest of these. Money, based on property values, now replaced many tithes-in-kind.

In our diocese, parish incomes ranged from £10 to £300 a year. Generally, rectors, collecting *Great Tithes* did well. Vicars did not. Their *Small Tithes* on lesser agricultural products were indeed small. So, the vicar of Barton St. David in 1668 still only received the 1535 salary of £10 a year despite the rectory value having risen to over £50.

A clergyman would probably accept £30 as a minimum income. Yet in 46 parishes it was below this, condemning those clergy to poverty.

To compound things, the Reformation allowed local gentry and substantial yeomen to profiteer at the Church's expense. The Church became a natural source of plunder for them. With this came endless argument and litigation in civil and church courts over who was entitled to what. 'Who'd be a parson?' you may ask.

A pattern emerged of parishes whose incomes had increased above or below the average. The rich parishes tended to be in the agricultural south of the county. Those that increased least, mainly from poor wool prices, formed a band across the Mendips from Bath to Frome.

Binegar was an exception. Then, it was a large parish, extending north to Paulton. Its income rose from £13 a year in 1530 to over £50 a century later. Rector Henry Russell, with three incomes, was among a wealthy elite of the diocese, his more puritan successors less so.

Richard Higgins

Grenville's Ramblin's...



The subject of re-wilding is often in the news these days. With much being said both by those for and those against the idea of introducing or reintroducing various species of animal that did, or might have once, run wild in this country. Of course, as I've said on other occasions, each to his or her own thoughts.

However, from my own view on the subject, while I am not too unhappy over the current species that feel that they have the right to hunt and forage around our property and the old quarry land behind us, I can't say that I'd be too happy over the introduction of species of things like wolves and wild cats.

One of the problems that I find with the current visitors is that their visits are for the most part nocturnal. From time to time during the night the activation of our security alarm and outside lights disturbing my sleep, tells me that there is some form of activity going on around our property. Normally, the brevity of the alarm indicates the passing through of a Badger, Deer, Fox or a neighbourhood Cat. However, there are times when the prolonged activity of the security system encourages me to leave my warm bed to make a trip to the back door or front window, where a quick shout will discourage the trespassers.

I make the effort to discourage because a couple of lumbering, foraging Badgers tend to not only dig up the grassed area and flatten things growing in the garden but are also apt to dig out wild Bees' nests in the surrounding banks. While, if I don't put a strong net fence around my Runner Beans, the usual Deer will graze off all the leaves and flowers, as well as grazing off the Strawberry plants and any of Molly's flowers that happen to catch their eye. Recently I see that as well as the usual Deer we've had a couple of visits from a Muntjac Deer, a species apparently introduced into this country from China in the 1800s.

Unfortunately, both the Deer and the Badgers see it as their right to cross Binegar Lane at their convenience, to and from our property, to the woodland opposite, showing no sign of familiarity with the Green Cross Code. I say unfortunately because a couple of years ago we had to get a dead Deer removed from our land, no doubt the loser in a confrontation with a vehicle, while more recently a dead Badger had to be removed from the grass verge adjacent to the entrance of our property.

With the increase in the amount of traffic using this narrow lane in recent years, some moving too fast for the safety of all concerned, it is, I believe, not unreasonable for road users to be aware, often during daylight hours, of the possibility of a Deer suddenly deciding to cross the road. Then I suppose, better a dead animal than a child or adult using the pavement - less access to the playground or village hall!

Grenville Reakes

The March Garden

JANE EVANS

By mid-March, we're ready to welcome the start of spring, there's lots to done outside.

Once soil is workable, dig a minimum 5cm layer of compost or well-rotted manure into your beds to prepare for the season ahead. Work in a general-purpose fertiliser e.g. pulled chicken manure or blood, fish and bone.

If garden plants need supports during the year, place them now so that the plants grow through them.

Resurface or clean paths.

Feed trees, shrubs and hedges with a slow-release fertiliser.

As roses come into growth feed with special rose feed or balanced fertiliser. Prune to encourage strong new growth, remove dead, diseased or crossing branches, cut back to an outward facing bud.

After mahonias flower cut out the top rosette of leaves to encourage branching.

Cut back dead foliage from perennials and ornamental grasses.

Prune overwintered fuchsias back to one or two buds on each shoot.

As the flowers fade trim winter flowering heathers.

Cut old leaves off hellebores to remove foliar disease and make new flowers more visible.

Look out for slugs. Use nematodes for effective organic control.

Plant native hedges to encourage wildlife.

Dig in green manures grown over the winter.





Cover prepared soil with black plastic to keep it drier and warmer in preparation for planting.

Weed and mulch asparagus by hand to prevent damage to shallow roots.

Feed blueberry plants with ericaceous plant fertiliser.

Cover strawberries with cloches to encourage earlier fruiting.

Protect from frost the blossoms of apricots, peaches and nectarines.

Recut lawn edges, install edging to make future maintenance easier. Prepare the soil to grow a new lawn from seed.

Remove any pond netting left over from the autumn/winter.

Install water butts for the season ahead. Position under downpipes using a rainwater converter kit.

Use hot soapy water to scrub watering cans to prevent fungal diseases.

Build a compost bin. If you have one check for any compost ready to use on vegetable beds. Move bags of compost into the greenhouse to warm up before using for sowing.

Invest in a soil testing kit if you don't know your soil type.

Check containers to ensure they've not dried out and top dress by removing the top 2.5cm of soil, replacing it with fresh compost.

On sunny days ventilate greenhouses and cold frames. Move plants from greenhouse to cold frame for at least 7 days before planting out to harden them off.

Oakhill & Ashwick Local History Group

The Oakhill Brewery Railway – Lin Thorley

The Brewery was extremely important in the history of Oakhill: it was productive, long-lasting, and successful. But only one aspect of it was unique: the Oakhill line was the only brewery narrow-gauge railway ever built in the UK. The story here will be familiar to long-term residents (apologies) but will be new to many later comers.

By the turn of the last century the Oakhill Brewery was producing some 2,000 barrels of beer a week. This was moved by road, but as can be imagined the steam lorries that ran on pre-WWI roads were wreaking havoc with surfaces. Mendip District Council insisted something should be done. So, the Directors of the Brewery decided on a novel course. They commissioned a narrow-gauge railway which would move the stock – including

the hugely popular Oakhill Stout – from the Brewery in the middle of Oakhill up to Binegar Station, where it would be loaded onto trains of the Somerset and Dorset railway line.

The track was laid out by Bagnalls of Stafford, to a gauge of 2ft 6in using rails weighing 56lb to the yard, with transverse wooden sleepers, laid on local stone ballast. In June 1903 Bagnalls supplied a 0-4-0T engine named 'Mendip', which had a supply of 150 gallons of water and a bunker for 14 cubic feet of coal. This was joined in April 1904 by 'Oakhill', a larger engine from Peckett and Sons of Bristol, carrying 340 gallons of water and 5 cwt of coal. The livery for both was olive green with black bands, picked out in yellow and vermilion, giving them a very striking appearance.



'Oakhill' pulling the Brewery Train over the Viaduct at Binegar Bottom

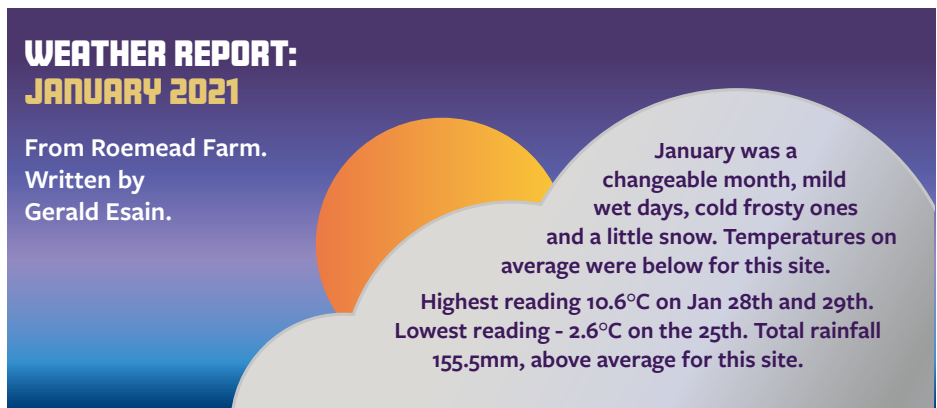
Bagnalls also supplied the rolling stock, 6 low-sided bogies, the wagons having light grey bodywork with black metalwork. The manpower included a Driver and Fireman, plus a Brakesman who rode on a platform at the back.

The track ran from the loading bay at the front of the Brewery on Oakhill High St (with double sidings running off between the maltings buildings, now called the 'Old Brewery', behind which was the Engine Shed for maintenance). After loading the train took on water at the side of the Brewery, ran down Gas Lane past the Beeches and on past the old stables (now private housing) to start a long slow climb. Turning west, running at a distance from the houses but parallel with the High St, it arrived at the Bristol Rd (A37), then over a level crossing just south of Batts Farm (not much traffic in those days!). Passing behind Batts Farm it made its way north to level with the Mendip Inn, then crossed the B3135. By this stage it had climbed 100 ft. It ran north across fields to Binegar Bottom, which it crossed by a three-span steel girder viaduct, 35 feet above the road below. Passing through a very short cutting it arrived at Binegar Station to be unloaded.

The journey took about 25 minutes, and 20 on the return carrying only empties (with a couple of schoolboys aboard if they were lucky!). There were usually two trains per day each having 5 wagons, but at busy times the 'Oakhill' could take 6 wagons and up to 6 trips a day. The drivers were Mr Ford in the early days, followed in 1917 by Harry Lambert (Percy's father) and Arthur Barnett.

Trade declined during WWI, mainly due to the UK government restrictions on grain and hops – no restriction in Ireland meant Guinness was able to take over their customers (trade wars even then!). Annual profits at Oakhill dropped from £250,000 before the War, to £4,000 after it. Motor lorries would be more economical and the roads were now tarmacked, so the railway was discontinued in 1921 and the stock sold off. The 'Oakhill' was pensioned off to a cement works in Wales; the rolling stock went to Welsh docks. Some Oakhill farms today have supplies of rails to use in fencing even now. There are surprisingly few signs of the railway still to be seen – some wooden posts, some stone from the dismantled pillars of the viaduct. And, sadly, very little is left of the old Brewery itself.

Lin Thorley



WEATHER REPORT:
JANUARY 2021

From Roemead Farm.
Written by
Gerald Esain.

January was a changeable month, mild wet days, cold frosty ones and a little snow. Temperatures on average were below for this site.

Highest reading 10.6°C on Jan 28th and 29th.
Lowest reading - 2.6°C on the 25th. Total rainfall 155.5mm, above average for this site.



Ashwick Parish Council

February 2021 Update – David Barlow & Kate Egan
(ashwickparish@hotmail.co.uk)

Zoom Zoom Zoom

Yes! The Council continues to Zoom for its monthly Wednesday Council meetings. There was of course an additional meeting scheduled to invite comment from parishioners on the proposed development of 29 houses on land in Chapelfield. The virtual meeting was well supported with input from residents and both Josh Burr and Sam Phripp, our Mendip Councillors. The meeting had been advertised on the Parish website, the Village Facebook pages and on the Facebook Group 'Little London Against Residential Development'. Objections ranged from: outside development area; not needed; volume of traffic which would be generated; density of housing; nature of the land; closeness to existing houses through to legal challenges about lack of signage and notifications to residents.

The Parish Council met on Wednesday 10th February and following summaries from residents, Councillors debated the application and voted to reject the application. A good result for the parish!

All agendas and minutes can be found on the Parish Council website:

www.ashwickparish.org

Finger Post

Observant parishioners will have noticed that the Finger Post on the corner of Simbriss Lane has been returned, having been previously knocked down. It has been re-sited further back on the grass verge to prevent any further damage. The PC has also requested a quote from Somerset Forge to look at the finger post outside the Oakhill Inn.

The Hump

It's time to revisit the 'Hump'. As a result of seriously torrential rain, causing the partial break-up of the pavement along the Bath Road and uncleared gullies, debris and mud were washed into a property at the top of the High Street and others were at risk. County Councillor, Mike Pullin, responded promptly, met the residents, took photographs and organised sandbags and the road sweeper. The next step has to be a review of the junction, the adequacy of the existing 'hump' and to look again at how to divert rainwater away from the High Street without causing additional problems further along the A367. Highways really must ensure the drains and gullies are cleared regularly!

Council Members

Following the resignation of Becky Battagel, The Council can follow the co-option procedure and anybody interested in becoming a Councillor should contact the Clerk (email at the top of the page) for further information and application form.

The new Councillor will be elected at the Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 10th March.



News from the Ashwick & Oakhill Village Hall Committee

As I write this we are still currently in lockdown, and the Village Hall is closed, but it is great to see lots of people using the recreation field and making the most of our facilities. A few of the new trees planted in January are already showing signs of growth, and we are looking forward to seeing the wildflowers and bulbs, planted over winter, showing their faces in the spring.

As a committee, we continue to meet, virtually, to work together to manage the Village Hall and progress the 7 Objectives that we discussed in last month's addition of the Beacon (Governance, Finance, Rejuvenation, Marketing, Fundraising, Facilities & Maintenance and Environmental). The committee have voted to move to an online booking system, which we hope will be in place late spring, and will make doing business with us much easier for you - with the ability to view our calendar, make a booking, and make payments online.

You may have noticed that we have recently resumed locking the car park gates overnight. We have put this measure in place to discourage the antisocial behaviour that had been witnessed in the car park in the evenings and ensure that the facilities remain a welcoming and safe environment for the village. We would like to thank our trusty team of gate-locking volunteers, who venture out in all weathers each morning and evening do this. We continue to monitor the situation and hope that this, alongside the notices and PCSO support, will have the desired effect.

Whilst we are closed, fundraising ideas continue to be a focus for us. The clothes bank continues to do really well for us (so far it has earned us over £250 - thank you so much to everyone who has donated - please keep it up), and after the success of the Halloween and Christmas events we hope to be able to host some further community events very soon.

In addition, one of our new committee members, Tim Ambrose, is raising money for the VHC this year through the sale of plants and shrubs from his home here in Oakhill. He is stocking a wide range of fruit plants/bushes, shrubs and perennial plants to brighten up your garden at very reasonable prices. He is offering free delivery within Oakhill and Ashwick with no minimum spend and also within 5 miles of Ashwick (subject to a minimum order of £25). Please help support him with his fund-raising activities by requesting a mini brochure (in PDF format) from him. Just e-mail him at tambrose1@sky.com

As always, the Village Hall Committee can be contacted via email at aandovillagehall@gmail.com, via Facebook (Ashwick and Oakhill Village Hall), or please speak to any member of the committee if you have anything that you wish to draw to our attention. If you would be interested in joining us, either as a committee member, or on a more informal basis by becoming a member of our Friends of AOVH WhatsApp group, please do get in touch, we would love to hear from you!

Kim Hare
Ashwick & Oakhill Village Hall Committee



Binegar and Gurney Slade Parish Council News

Lockdown 3 - COVID-19 Support Group

The Support Group established last March remains to assist with the needs of our villagers requiring support at this time. We thank those who continue to offer their help. Contact – 01749 841182.

Overgrown hedges

With Spring on the way and the bird nesting season soon to commence a reminder to cut back your roadside hedge if you have not done it already. Overgrown hedges can be a danger to walkers, cyclists, and drivers, please make sure your hedge is not the cause of an accident.

If we report any overgrown vegetation to Somerset Highways, you will have to pay if Highways are forced to cut it back.

Village Textile Bank – Fundraiser

The Parish Council and Village Hall Committee have agreed to the installation of a Village Clothing Bank in the Village Hall Car Park. Post your unwanted textiles into the bank for re-cycling (Clothing, Shoes, Bags, Belts, Bedding, Towels, Curtains, Soft Toys) and raise funds for the village.

Village Spring Clean Up

The Parish Council plans to hold this year's Spring Clean Up over the weekend of 27th/28th of March. Please save the date and put a couple of hours aside to join us and help to keep our villages clean and tidy. Look out for further information on the village noticeboards.

Parish Council Meetings

The Parish Council will next meet virtually on Tuesday 6 April at 7:00pm.

Keep Safe

Diane Abbott Parish Clerk: binegarpc@hotmail.co.uk
www.binegar-pc.org.uk

Your councillors - Jon Abbott, Philip Blatchford, John Bridges
Cath Law, Phill Roberts, John Scadding and David Stone





Royal Voluntary Services

Thank you to Cath for bringing to the Parish Council's attention the Virtual Village Hall.

The Virtual Village Hall is a programme of themed online activities designed to enjoy at home. Sessions are led by expert tutors, Royal Voluntary Service activity coordinators, volunteers, and some well-known faces, and require very little space or equipment. You will find a wide range of sessions to take part in, like creative arts and crafts, music and singing, cooking and baking, dance and exercise, and technology skills. Join in with live sessions or catch up on demand when suits it you.

The website is well worth a visit - take a look at:

<https://www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/virtual-village-hall>



**Somerset
Sight** Working with people
who lack sight, not vision



Somerset Sight is a local charity which has been supporting sight-impaired people across Somerset for over a hundred years and in 2019 won the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

One of our services is the Volunteer Visiting Service whereby volunteers are matched locally with a sight impaired person for regular visits for company and support, and also helps alleviate their loneliness and isolation.

Volunteers help with a variety of tasks such as reading, correspondence, or making appointments, going out for a drive or just a cup of tea and a chat. Many volunteers get great satisfaction and enjoyment from their voluntary work, many friendships are formed and the people they support very much look forward to their visits. At the current time, as face-to-face visits are not permissible, the service continues with regular phone calls until such time as a visit is allowed again.

For anyone who is sight impaired and would like to know more about our services or if anyone would like to volunteer for the Visiting Service, please contact us on **01823 333818** for further information. We look forward to hearing from you soon!

The world through a lens

images by the Beacon Photography Group



JL



RWJ



DW



JD



TH



FH



IDr

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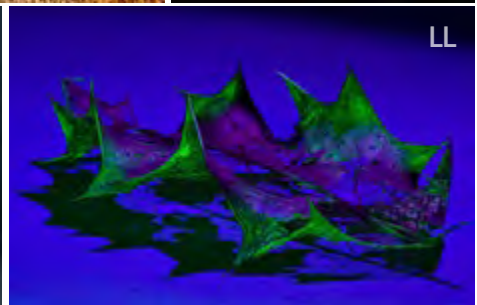
JH



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The Beacon Photography Group meets online, every Wednesday evening at 7.30pm. We welcome new members – contact Jon Durrant on 01761 232520 to find out more.

MARCH HIGHLIGHTS

MONDAY 1ST | ST. DAVID'S DAY

Commemorates the death of St David, Patron Saint of Wales, in 589 AD



SUNDAY 14TH | MOTHERING SUNDAY



Mothering Sunday is the fourth Sunday of **Lent**. Centuries ago it was considered important for people to return to their home or 'mother' church once a year. Each year in the middle of Lent, everyone would visit their 'mother' church - the main church or cathedral of the area. Most historians think that it was the return to the 'Mother' church which led to the tradition of children, particularly those working as domestic servants, or as apprentices, being given the day off to visit their mother and family. As they walked along the country lanes, children would pick wild flowers or violets to take to church or give to their mother as a small gift.

The food item specially associated with Mothering Sunday is the **Simnel cake**. There's a legend that a man called Simon and his wife Nell argued over whether the cake for Mothering Sunday should be baked or boiled. In the end they did both, so the cake was named after both of them: SIM-NEL.

WEDNESDAY 17TH | ST PATRICK'S DAY

Commemoration of the arrival of Christianity in Ireland



SUNDAY 28TH | BRITISH SUMMER TIME AND THE EUROPEAN UNION



The British Summer Time Act was created in 1972 which started the tradition of changing the clocks in late March (subject to the date of Easter) and late October. Twenty years later, the changing of the clocks in Britain was aligned with other European countries and from 2002 onwards, the EU stipulated that all member states should adjust their clocks on the last Sunday in March and October.

In March 2019 the European Parliament backed a proposal to end the practice of changing the clocks in European Union states. If the proposal is adopted, EU nations could change the clocks for the last time as early as 2021.

What happens now the UK is out of the EU?!

March Message

Nigel Stock

Hon Assistant Bishop of Bath and Wells



Pay loving attention

With the Lenten Season well under way, I wonder how it is going for you? I always anticipate Lent with a slight feeling of having to brace myself. Come on make an effort in something! If I am going to give something up don't just make it an exercise in self-improvement, how is it going to help others? If I am going to do something positive what will be its long-term effect? It is all too easy to 'over think' the whole exercise.

Once the season is underway I begin to appreciate it. But in the end it should be about paying attention to God. I am always struck by the end of the story of the temptations in the wilderness. Jesus refuses to be a cheap miracle worker to benefit himself, and refuses to follow the route to worldly power and status. He faced temptation by stripping away all the necessities of life and knew deep hunger. At the end of this exhausting wrestle with his vocation the Gospel tells us "...suddenly angels came and waited on him." (Matthew 4:10)

Whatever Lenten discipline you are following, perhaps the #Live Lent course, or a local study group, a focussed effort to support others or a form of self-denial (or all of them!), may it bring a greater focus on God. There were those who ministered to Jesus in the Gospel stories. The angels in the wilderness, the woman who anointed him, Simon who carried his cross for example. We might not be able to do those things for him, but we can pay loving attention.

When we emerge from the austerity and effort of Lent, which has had an even more austere aspect in Lockdown, we come to the bright hope of Easter. We know in the Risen Christ the same relief that Jesus knew from the Angels. As we offer our love to Him, His love for us is always returned.

May the blessing of the Risen Christ be with you.

Nigel Stock

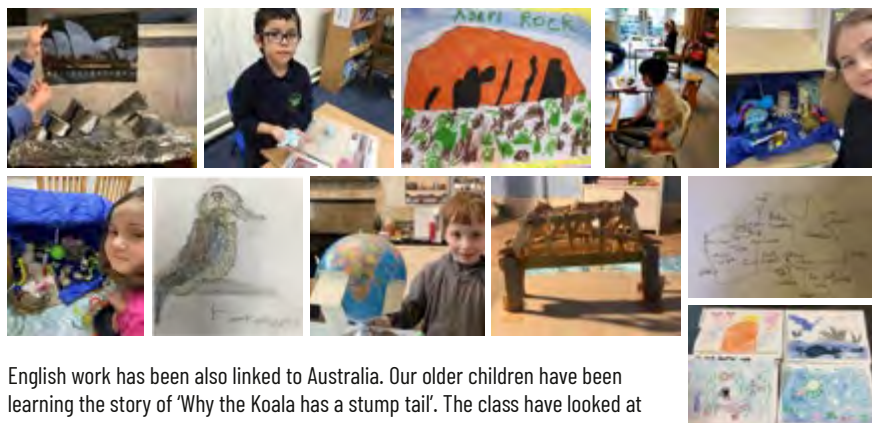
Hon Assistant Bishop of Bath and Wells



Remote Learning at Oakhill Church School

Hayley Hamblin, Assistant Headteacher
Oakhill Church School and Nursery

The children have become immersed in the whole school topic learning about Australia. They have been learning about where it is, the states, animals and the famous landmarks. The children have been so creative drawing and making models of landmarks including wildlife in the Great Barrier Reef.



English work has been also linked to Australia. Our older children have been learning the story of 'Why the Koala has a stump tail'. The class have looked at features of folktales and are now writing their own which we will make into a class book. Some of our ideas include: how the kangaroo got its long back legs, how the platypus lost its teeth and why does the platypus lay eggs.

The children are working incredibly hard at home and should be proud of what they are achieving.

Miss Bodinar's Happy Walk

It is so important that our children have that face-to-face contact with their teachers. Every Tuesday lunchtime you may see Miss Bodinar on her happy walk through the village, smiling and waving at many of our children and families.

Thank you!

During this time of on-screen remote learning, we have to rely on ICT devices to enable our children to make daily contact with their teachers and friends. We are so grateful to Rev Richard and the whole community for all your kind donations of laptops and tablets to help our families.

Happy families

'I just wanted to say how brilliant the remote learning package you've created is. You've clearly spent a lot of time planning to get it to work, you've also made it very clear for everyone to understand. Massive Well done.'

'I wanted to praise the school and teachers for all the support you've given to the parents and children since the start of the year. It can't have been easy to make arrangements with such little notice, but we have been given clear work plans each week and it's been easy for the parents/children to follow and lots of feedback soon after we've submitted the work via Teams.' **Oakhill Parents**

BINEGAR SCOUTS

MARCH 2021



1st North Mendip is a thriving Scout Group that meets in Binegar Memorial Hall weekly during term time. We currently have Beavers (6-8yrs), Cubs (8-10yrs) and Scouts (10-14yrs).

Beavers and Cubs have been meeting online for this term so far, we had 28 members complete their two-week January Challenge badge in full with us and we have now been meeting weekly virtually where we have learnt all about germs and how they spread using water, soap and pepper. A week of getting messy with Alphabetti Spaghetti, playing Hangman and learning all about the history of scouting - pasta style! We're making bottle racers this week, let's see how far we can get them to travel? Finally, before the February half term we're looking at emergency first aid, knowing how to call the emergency services and how to administer first aid successfully whilst using only what we have around the house.

Scouts have also continued their weekly Zoom meetings. At the start of the term, we had 13 Scouts take part in the national scout online Winter Camp, completing lots of activities from indoor scavenger hunts, whittling, soap carving and science experiments to geocaching on their daily walks. We also ran a Wassailing evening where we made baked apples and there were definitely some interesting fillings! Scouts were also invited to take part in the RSPB Big Birdwatch for their Naturalist badge where we found out that the most common bird that we saw was a Sparrow. This last week, Scouts were split into small groups to look at the journeys we take and how they impact our carbon footprint as part of their Local Knowledge badge. This week coming we are making pancakes and trying to find out not only who can flip a pancake, but has the best signature move!

Do you have a young person aged 5, 6 or 7 that may be interested in joining our Scout adventure? We're looking for young people who want to make new friends, have fun and learn some new skills in our Beaver section. Why not give it a try?

If you are interested in joining us please sign up via our Online Waiting List:
<https://tinyurl.com/v7kz5kp> or contact a member of the team:

Beavers/Cubs - Gemma (Raksha) - 01749 938321

Scouts - Natalie (Gunner) - gunnerexplore@gmail.com

You can also sign up and see what we're up to on our Facebook page:
www.facebook.com/northmendipscouts



'The Hill We Climb'

*by Amanda Gorman,
US National Youth Poet Laureate*

Read at the inauguration of Joe Biden as 46th President of the US on 20th January 2021

"When day comes we ask ourselves, where can we find light in this never-ending shade? The loss we carry, a sea we must wade. We've braved the belly of the beast, we've learned that quiet isn't always peace and the norms and notions of what just is, isn't always justice. And yet the dawn is ours before we knew it, somehow we do it, somehow we've weathered and witnessed a nation that isn't broken but simply unfinished.

We, the successors of a country and a time where a skinny black girl descended from slaves and raised by a single mother can dream of becoming president only to find herself reciting for one. And, yes, we are far from polished, far from pristine, but that doesn't mean we are striving to form a union that is perfect, we are striving to forge a union with purpose, to compose a country committed to all cultures, colors, characters and conditions of man.

So we lift our gazes not to what stands between us, but what stands before us. We close the divide because we know to put our future first, we must first put our differences aside. We lay down our arms so we can reach out our arms to one another, we seek harm to none and harmony for all.

Let the globe, if nothing else, say this is true: that even as we grieved, we grew, even as we hurt, we hoped, that even as we tired, we tried, that we'll forever be tied together victorious, not because we will never again know defeat but because we will never again sow division.

Scripture tells us to envision that everyone shall sit under their own vine and fig tree and no one should make them afraid. If we're to live up to our own time, then victory won't lie in the blade, but in in all of the bridges we've made.

That is the promise to glade, the hill we climb if only we dare it because being American is more than a pride we inherit, it's the past we step into and how we repair it. We've seen a force that would shatter our nation rather than share it. That would destroy our country if it meant delaying democracy, and this effort very nearly succeeded. But while democracy can periodically be delayed, it can never be permanently defeated.

In this truth, in this faith, we trust, for while we have our eyes on the future, history has its eyes on us, this is the era of just redemption we feared in its inception we did not feel

prepared to be the heirs of such a terrifying hour but within it we found the power to author a new chapter, to offer hope and laughter to ourselves, so while once we asked how can we possibly prevail over catastrophe, now we assert how could catastrophe possibly prevail over us.

We will not march back to what was but move to what shall be, a country that is bruised but whole, benevolent but bold, fierce and free, we will not be turned around or interrupted by intimidation because we know our inaction and inertia will be the inheritance of the next generation, our blunders become their burden. But one thing is certain: if we merge mercy with might and might with right, then love becomes our legacy and changes our children's birthright.

So let us leave behind a country better than the one we were left, with every breath from my bronze, pounded chest, we will raise this wounded world into a wondrous one, we will rise from the golden hills of the West.

We will rise from the windswept Northeast where our forefathers first realized revolution, we will rise from the lake-rimmed cities of the Midwestern states, we will rise from the sunbaked South.

We will rebuild, reconcile, and recover in every known nook of our nation in every corner called our country our people diverse and beautiful will emerge battered and beautiful when the day comes we step out of the shade aflame and unafraid, the new dawn blooms as we free it, for there is always light if only we're brave enough to see it, if only we're brave enough to be it."

Quick Marmalade Pudding

Ingredients:

- 3 eggs
- 170g/6oz self-raising flour
- 170g/6oz sugar
- 170g/6oz butter
- 6 tablespoons marmalade

Method:

Dollop 4 tablespoons of marmalade in the bottom of a buttered 2 pint/1 litre pudding basin.



In a food processor, blend the eggs, flour, sugar, butter and 2 tablespoons of marmalade. Scrape mixture into the bowl, cover with cling film and microwave for 6/7 minutes (check with a skewer that it is done). Serve with crème fraiche or custard.

Village Agent TOP TIPS keeping your mind and body active in lockdown:

- We have recently hosted many Talking Cafes to help you – You can see all past Talking Cafe sessions on the subject under the 'Mental Health & Well Being' or 'Health & Medical' sections, available to watch on YouTube if you are not on social media – go to <https://somersetagents.org/talking-cafes/>. Tune in for the live streams weekdays at 11am to join in the conversation www.facebook.com/talkingcafesomerset
- Download some free games apps you can play with friends – in your device App Store.
- Check out what local places are doing within lockdown restrictions – Winter Watch on the BBC is a great place to get inspiration to go outdoors! For local ideas try: <https://www.somersetwildlife.org/> or the <https://www.rspb.org.uk/>
- Get Creative with the Seed of Sedgemoor Arts project. <https://seedsedgemoor.com/>
- Join Age UK Somerset's Relaxation and Mindful Breathing online programme. There are three sessions each week, and full details can be found here: <https://ageuksomersetcoronavirus.org.uk/staying-well/exercises/ageing-well-exercise-sessions/>
- Fancy a chat with someone? A new friend or a Talk & Support service? We have a new Chat to Connect programme that links people with similar interests so you can connect with new friends! Also, Village Agents can connect you with a befriending or Talk & Support service, or you could call Mind in Somerset listening service if you need a friendly ear <https://www.mindinsomerset.org.uk/> call 01935 474875 (South Somerset and Mendip).
- Do something small each day for 10 minutes, whether that's
 - > a mindful exercise whether that's movement, meditation or colouring:
 - <http://www.freemindfulness.org/download>
 - <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/drugs-and-treatments/mindfulness/mindfulness-exercises-tips/>
 - <https://www.happinessishomemade.net/free-adult-coloring-pages/>
 - > Go for a walk- even a few minutes each day helps your body and mind. SASP have some great ideas: <https://www.sasp.co.uk>
 - > Try an online free exercise class – so much is free on YouTube!
 - > Find a new hobby – speak to us if you want to find something specific.
- Contact Somerset Libraries who can help you with Audio books, films and much more and may be able to offer home deliveries <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-leisure-and-communities/libraries/>

Would you benefit from a free food box?

We are still here to help you with your food needs, no one should go hungry this winter, or if you are a Carer and would benefit from some respite from cooking, we can provide some respite meal packs for you and the person you care for. If you need help with any of this, please do contact your local Village Agent:

Julie Brown: **07985 680262** julieb@somerstrcc.org.uk

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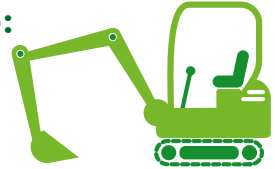
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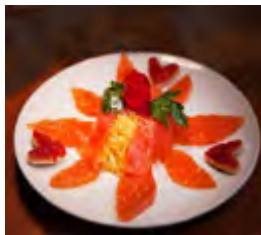


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