

INSPIRE



THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE
FOR THE PARISH OF
ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, FROME

APRIL 2024

April 2024

The parish of Frome Selwood in the Frome Local Ministry Group

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Lay chair	Peter Connew	
PCC Secretary	Angela Pater	
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PCC Treasurer	Christine Holland	
Choir Leader	Rosemary McCormick	
Sacristy Team	Margaret Veakins	
Tower Captain	Matthew Higby	
Flowers	Elaine Gilbert	



Some of the Mothering Sunday posy makers at work! See pages 4-5

Dear Friends,

Christ is risen, Hallelujah! He is risen indeed, Hallelujah!

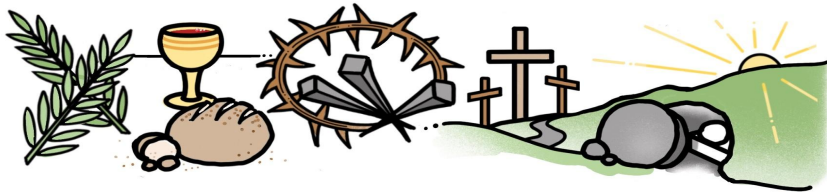
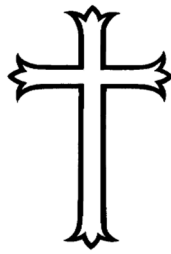
March 31st was Easter Sunday, a celebration of that first day, when people began to know that death had been conquered, there is life beyond the grave and God had visited his beautiful world in human form.

Hallelujah! And all through April our lectionary readings will recall those first encounters with the risen Lord and the wonder of the disciples, who saw their friend and master risen and alive, talking with them, teaching them, eating occasional meals with them, and revealing a new way of living, free of the fear of death.

Which is your favourite meeting with the risen Jesus? His very first appearance to Mary, when the gardener is revealed to be her beloved Jesus? Or the long walk from Jerusalem to Emmaus by Cleopas and his friend (wife?), who chat away to a stranger (Jesus) on the road, telling him about their friend, who they'd thought was the longed-for Messiah, but who had just been cruelly executed by the authorities? Or, perhaps, when Jesus gives Peter an opportunity to prove his total devotion to Him, after his awful failures, and so restore his shattered mental health?

I think mine is Thomas's transformation as he demands physical proof of Jesus being truly risen, and being given it. I was very like Thomas! When a student at university, I was a somewhat cynical agnostic. Religious and philosophical discussions were full of people expressing unprovable opinions and assertions that no one could disprove – much like today, and probably in every generation!

But then I heard evidence for the genuine resurrection of Jesus, a man



who had been killed and buried. His friends, who had all let him down, then passionately claimed he had risen and was alive, and they were unafraid to tell everyone they met, even when facing death for their claims. The killers couldn't produce a body to quash these 'amazing' tales of resurrection, and an unstoppable movement began, which has rippled down the centuries and across the world to us here today.

It seemed to me as close to physical proof as it is possible to have, and so, like doubting Thomas, I confessed Jesus, as 'my Lord and my God'. And my life changed forever.

May you know the joy of the risen Lord this Eastertide – how is he transforming your life?

Rob Martin

One Voice Community Choir concert Sunday 14th April 2.30pm St John's Church In aid of St John's Organ Appeal



ONE VOICE COMMUNITY CHOIR

SINGS FOR
ST JOHN'S ORGAN APPEAL

Sunday 14th April 2024 : 2.30pm

*Parish Church of St John the Baptist
Church Street : Frome : BA11 1PL*

*Refreshments Available
Retiring Collection*

onevoicechoir.co.uk



Mothering Sunday

Mothering Sunday began, for me, several days before*, with an important 'ministry team meeting' in la Strada as Andrew, Rosemary and I planned an unusual service for this important day in the calendar.

At Worship Committee and at PCC we had agreed that this should be a non-Eucharistic service. We did try to publicise this as widely as possible: in last month's *Inspire*, on the pew sheets and by email.

Our apologies if you were surprised when you arrived at church.

Our service was taken by Andrew Alden, one of our Pioneer Ministers who, with his wife Elizabeth, does such valuable work with young people in the town. He told us something of his work, especially in the Giant's Garden, and linked the themes from our important Open Meeting the previous day, with the all embracing theme of Love.

And then the congregation set about planting love-in-the-mist seeds in a delightfully informal session in the middle of the service during



which grandmothers, daughters and grandchildren (and the rest of us!) worked together to create something beautiful.

We also made sure that in the best St John's tradition, everyone was given a posy in recognition of the mothering, caring and loving we

all receive and give. People left church on that Sunday with their hands full!

Our thanks to Andrew for giving us something different to think about, in so many ways.

Janet Caudwell

* My first 'before the actual day' event was picking up a message from Stuart the flower man to say that he was unable to supply the thirty bunches of daffodils I had ordered –it has been a funny year for daffodils! Cue many trawls around the supermarkets.

Another 'blip' was that the time traditionally used for a leisurely posy making session was the morning of the Open Meeting. I am immensely grateful to the noble team who set about making the posies, *at 9 o'clock*, before the meeting, and got them done in record time!

Mothering Sunday at St John's School

As the McCormick 'all purpose' Baby Moses/Baby Jesus doll was unavailable this year, a different doll was pressed into service (thank you Judith and Olivia!). We ended up with ten different people passing Moses from one to another in illustration of the different people involved in 'mothering' that particular baby: midwives, actual mother, sister, Pharaoh's daughter and the various servants who fished him out of the water, washed him, fed him and gave him his first lessons: mothering in its widest sense.

Janet Caudwell

The school's Mothering Sunday display in church





Kathy Yeaman

When we went to print last month we had only just heard of Kathy's death and it seemed too soon to do more than share Elaine's beautiful tribute to her, which had appeared in church the day after Kathy died.

I have chosen some pieces from Kathy's funeral service, in our church filled with

people from a wide range of groups, all of whom knew and loved her.

First my introduction: It is Kathryn who bring us here today. Many of us do not know each other. But we knew Kathy and she knew all of us. Kathryn to some of you –Kathy to others – we love her and miss her dreadfully. But we have created a service to honour her memory, here in the church she served so well. Tears have been shed, but much care has gone into the preparation this service, from the loving attention to detail by Norrie and Kathy's girls, to the choice of music, to the decorations arranged by Kathy's fellow flower team members.

Norrie had asked me to talk about Kathy as part of our church family at St John's: When I came to compose an email to tell as many people as possible about my visit to Kathy in hospital where we prayed together and shared in Extended Communion, I found that I was emailing the Parochial Church Council, the flower team, the Craft & Cake group, the Book Group, the Zoom congregation and the fundraising team and I realised just how many different groups Kathy belonged to within our congregation – just how many lives had been touched by her gentle, gracious spirit.

Here are some of the memories which have dropped into my email in the past few days:

- St John's Family Service in the 1980s --Kathy's choice of hymns for this service very much a reflection of that time...the Parish Camp ... the recorder group which Kathy set up.
- I was reminded that Kathy had served as a governor at St John's First School.

- She loved her garden and we walked around it several times – especially when Frome Festival was approaching as their garden had many unusual flowers. I usually had my trusty secateurs with me and Kathy generously said I could help myself to anything from the garden except Norrie's foxgloves – those I had to steer well clear of!
- My stand out memory on flowers is when we worked together on the Scotland/ Highland Mary stand during the Singer's flower displays at St John's. It featured heather and thistles from their garden, and Kathy brought in a book of Robert Burns poems, a Campbell tartan and a pipe chanter – all very relevant to her life and loves.
- Those were from Elaine from the flower team who also remembers a piece which Kathy submitted for our Weekly Extra issued during the pandemic. It was headed poignantly 'A land without music – a summer without Sidmouth Folk Week'. But it was an exuberant account of the music and laughter and family fun which was so central to Kathy's life.
- Another email message says simply: I have been very thankful for her lovely support over the past difficult years. I shall miss her so much, a lovely kind person with whom I have enjoyed so many conversations over the years as well as her more recent support through the Craft & Cake group.
- Ah, the Craft and Cake group– Kathy's last brilliant way of bringing people in the church together. In the February Parish magazine there was a lovely photo of the group triumphantly holding up their hand-crafted Christmas wreaths.
- And this genuine expression of thanks: Welcome cups of hot tea and deliciously indulgent cake rewarded our efforts. A huge thank you goes to Kathy for providing, guiding and sustaining us so beautifully. Our afternoon wreath making was a joy.

Someone, not a member of our congregation, studied Elaine's tribute to Kathy. 'Who was she?' he asked. And I fetched the February magazine and showed him the Craft and Cake photo. 'Oh yes, 'he said,



the tall lady with the lovely smile who served refreshments.’ That seems to me as good a summing up as any.

There were many other tributes to Kathy at the service which followed at the Crematorium, and during Norrie’s own tribute we learned so much about many different people touched by her.

Another perfect summing up appeared on the meringues which were served at the gathering after Kathy’s services (and appeared in church on the following Sunday). Prepared by members of the Ukraine community in Frome who were so grateful for her friendship, they simply said, ‘In memory of Kathryn, wonderful teacher and kind person.’

Kathy’s daughter, Dulcie, gave a spirited tribute to close the service at the Crematorium, urging us all to ‘Lift up our hearts’, as Kathy would wish.

Janet Caudwell

Members of the congregation and the wider community at the open meeting on 9th March



Report from the Parish Profile Team The story so far



We are now two months into vacancy, and the process of looking for a new vicar has begun. A phrase which was relatively new to me before this started was the ‘process of discerning’ a new priest. The role of spiritual leader for any community is very important – it needs to be a good fit for all concerned – so the appointment goes much deeper than just an advertisement, application form and interview.

Being without a priest for a few months gives us, as the congregation, a chance to consider who we are and what our priorities are as a church. It is also an opportunity to experience different styles of ministry as we welcome our visiting clergy, which might help us as we reflect on what kind of spiritual leadership we would like in the future. However, it can also be a period of uncertainty which many of us find difficult: if you are feeling anxious about the future, or you are angry about the prospect of change, or you feel that your voice hasn’t been heard, please come and talk to one of the following people: Janet, Rosemary, Lois, Mandy.

What is a Parish Profile? Imagine a school prospectus, tourist guidebook and job description all in one document. The PP sets out who and where we are, what we do, what sort of community we live in and what sort of person we hope will come to lead us. Much of the information about the church can be found on our website, which means we don’t need to produce a ‘Not The PP’ that was a feature of the last vacancy – before the days of parish websites or ‘A Church Near You’. Our website will be the first place any prospective candidate will look, so we owe a huge thanks to Mandy who has been hard at work making it more attractive.

Our Parish Profile will be unique, and it is up to us to make sure it gives a true picture of who we are. We need to be open about our

strengths and weaknesses and we need to have a vision for our future. We are blessed with a rich heritage – St Aldhelm, Bishop Ken, Vicar Bennett, Colin – but now we need to be looking forward to where the next chapter will lead.

Who gets to say what goes in the profile? It is important that everyone who has an interest in the future of St John's gets the chance to voice their opinions. We started by reaching out to the community – we are, after all, the Parish church in the centre of the town, and as such we matter to a lot of people, even those who are not regular members of our congregation. I am constantly surprised by how many people come into our church building during the week, some just to look round, but many more come in to pray or to find a few minutes' peace, away from the bustle of a working day. An online survey followed by the open meeting on 9th March, which was chaired by Caroline Bruce, the Parish Development Adviser, provided an excellent opportunity for us to engage with our community as we discussed the joys and challenges of living in Frome. Ram worked hard to analyse the results of those discussions and has produced a document which shows what people consider to be those joys and challenges.

Your opinions matter We would like to engage with you, our congregation, to explore what St John's means to each one of us personally. What is it about St John's that brings us together week by week? What do we find in SJ that we don't find elsewhere in our lives? What sort of person would we like to have as our next vicar? These are big questions, and so we are going to be asking you to reflect on them and then be prepared to share your thoughts with us. We are going to ask you two specific questions:

What is your favourite Bible passage/hymn/psalm – and why is it important to you?

What characteristics would you like to see in the new vicar?

These questions will be printed on sheets of paper for you to write your answers, and then there will be a box at the back of church for you to put them in. You don't have to put your name on or sign them.

On Sunday 14th April, in the morning service, there will be an

opportunity for you to reflect on these questions and discuss them if you want to.

What will happen next? Our PP needs to have been completed and approved by the PCC by 23rd May, when it will be passed to the diocese. There will be a few pages added by the Bishop and the Archdeacon, giving the wider diocesan perspective, after which the post of vicar will be advertised nationally.

The timeline then will be:

Thu 23 May	Draft Profile together with Draft advertisement to go to the Archdeacon
Thu 20 June	Final profile and advertisement to be approved by the Archdeacon
Fri 5 July	Advertisements in the National Press and on the Diocesan website
Thu 1 Aug	Deadline for applications
Tue 6 Aug	Shortlisting
Wed 11 Sep	Candidates visit the parish
Thu 12 Sep	Interviews
Date tbc	New vicar takes up role.

Meanwhile, in the words of Bishop Michael, we all need to 'pray our socks off' that the right person will be called to lead us.

Beloved God, You have welcomed each one of us in Jesus and called us to be his body in this place. We give you thanks for all that has been and all that will be.

We ask for your guidance in this time of vacancy:

guidance to be a light in our community;

guidance to love and encourage one another;

and guidance to draw to us the person that is right for us and our community.

In Jesus's name we pray. Amen.

If you would like to know what a finished Parish Profile looks like, visit the Diocesan Vacancies page:

<https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/-vacancies>

I warn you, it can become addictive!

Rosemary McCormick

News and events at other churches

Eds: In this section of the magazine, we hope to keep you up to date with events etc that other churches in the area are planning. All are welcome!

St Katharine's, East Woodlands: Pam Chapman reports:

Don't forget to drive to the church along the lane of daffodils – they should last a little longer. Stunning as ever this year.

Lots of items are currently being progressed at PCC meetings, but there are vacancies for churchwardens, PCC secretary and new members of the PCC, so new volunteers would be welcomed.

Events in the village hall in April – all welcome:

Pop up Pub, Friday 5 April, 7pm

Murder/Mystery Evening, Sat 6 April, 6.30pm. Supper and licensed Bar. Tickets £12 from Chris and Glyn Carpenter on 01373 462963.

Mary's House

Revd Liz Dudley and pioneers Elizabeth and Andrew Alden report:

The Bishop of Bath and Wells and his staff have approved our proposal to establish a new Christian monastic community in Mary's house. This former vicarage of St Mary's church is on the same site as the Giant's Garden. The vicarage is being renovated to be a space where four self-supporting adults will live in community for a year. As a community, their shared life will be marked by a daily pattern of prayer, weekly work in the local community, and a rule of life with shared values and approaches to missional living. We expect that a wider community of local people will join in some aspects of the community's life and mission.

You are invited to shape and be part of a developing Christian community with a residential expression on **Saturday 6 April, 12 noon to 3pm, The Hall, St Mary's Frome**, which is the first of a series of workshops to help discern the rule of life for this community focused in and around Mary's House. The afternoon begins with a light lunch. Please let us know at info@maryshouse.org if you would like to come, and any dietary requirements.



The Bereavement Journey Course

7 sessions of films and discussion for *anyone* bereaved *anytime*

at **St Mary's Church Hall, Lower Innox.**

Begins **Friday 5th April 12.30–3pm** with lunch included.

To find out more visit:

www.thebereavementjourney.org

To book, email admin@christchurch-stmarys-frome.co.uk

More news from the pioneers

Andrew and Elizabeth Alden write:

We continue to work with young adults in the Giant's Garden and to enjoy weekly times at the YMCA on a Friday lunchtime cooking, eating and sharing with some of the residents of the YMCA. We have been touched by the way some of the young residents make a point of coming to say goodbye as they move on. Please continue to pray for these courageous young people and for the wonderful staff who support them.

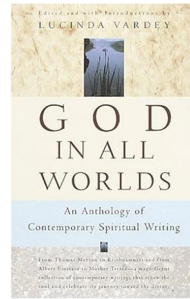


We particularly ask that you pray this prayer from Paul's letter to the Ephesians for the young adults in Frome:

I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you [young adults in Frome] with power through his Spirit in your [their] inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your [their] hearts through faith. And I pray that you [they], being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you [they] may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Book Notes

God in All Worlds



I promised last month to commend to you an anthology of writings on spirituality: *God in All Worlds; An Anthology of Contemporary Spiritual Writing*, edited and introduced by Lucinda Vardey.

First published in 1995, it remains in print, so 'contemporary' refers to the 20th century, though a few of the contributors were born in the 19th. You will not be surprised that some of the Christian authors are those to whom I have referred previously in these notes.

This anthology included excerpts from the works of 140 writers from many beliefs and traditions. Herewith a selection: Maya Angelou, Davis Bohm, Angela Carter, the Dalai Lama, Albert Einstein, Victor Frankl, Bede Griffiths, Vaclav Havel, Michael Ignatieff, Carl Jung, Martin Luther King, C.S. Lewis, John Masefield, Rupert Sheldrake, Teilhard de Chardin, Colin Wilson. The majority of the pieces are prose, but some poetry is included. Some writers come from religious traditions, other from a more secular psychological viewpoint. The extracts are arranged in themes, and vary in length. The editor starts with spiritual journeys, and goes on to highlight revelations that have come to people on their way, the trials that they may have faced, and how they embraced their particular callings. It then moves towards a consideration of death and eternal life, and spiritually universal themes. Though we can gain profound insights from Holy Scripture, and from texts from past ages, all these texts reflect modern experience, from lives lived in a world of experience that many of us have shared in part.

Over the years I have found that this book has introduced me to many authors that I had not encountered before. It has pointed me to paths of thought that I had not considered before. It has opened windows on previously unconsidered vistas. Though I have had my copy for several decades something fresh seems to emerge whenever I open it.

Kevin Tingay



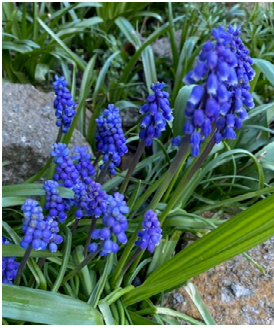
Signs of spring

People of my age were taught a Latin poem about spring: *'Diffugere nives, redeunt iam gramina campis'* – in English *'The snows go away, leaves come on the trees: and grass in the field.'*

We don't need a poem to remind us that this month is a time of renewal and rebirth. The bulbs that have been asleep for a year now come back as daffodils, snowdrops or crocuses. Next door's flowering tree has a tinge of purple as the blossom comes out before the leaves; an interesting consequence of global warming. The birds are singing again, and those absent for the winter are now flying back. Our lawns need mowing, which seems to happen earlier each year: in 2024 Easter is early as well.

It's also a time for our activities to move outdoors. Books, TV and music get put aside for tidying up the greenhouse, the window box or our hanging baskets, and for cutting back the old plants we didn't get around to doing in the autumn, for ordering turf to fill where the old shed used to be, for replacing the old honeysuckle with a new climbing rose, for scouring garden centres for the best offers on new planters or sacks of John Innes No 2. Is it really worth driving to Acres, Dobbies, Rocky Mountain or Crockerton, when you can go to Homebase, B&M or B&Q in Frome? But how do you know what is on offer unless you do drive around?

We have more energy for tidying up the garage and summerhouse



and making decisions about what to keep: do we really need that garden shredder we have kept for 20 years or those three power drills that we seem to have inherited? Why do I have 25 different screwdrivers? On the other hand, essential tools like trowels or secateurs seem to have vanished, at least until the day after you bought a replacement for them.

As we get older, jobs that were straightforward seem to take longer or are impossible, and we have to ask younger relatives for help or pay for such things as lawn mowing. A whole morning in the garden turns out to be a succession of 10-minute pieces of activity followed by 20 minutes of resting or another cup of coffee. Things get dropped more than they used to and you forget where you put the brush, spade or dibber. You arrange things so that ease of maintenance is the important feature. You realise that Monty Don and Alan Titchmarsh are getting on and transfer your interest to Charlie McCormick, which means learning about Instagram instead of the BBC. *'Good heavens, I have a granddaughter older than Charlie.'*

It is at this stage that you go back to the Latin poem and realise the poet is not only talking about nature renewing itself but about how we need to renew ourselves. But this spring is not the same as last spring. You are not the same person. You need to think how best to live out your life based upon the realities of this spring of 2024 and not what you were during the spring of 1947, 1970 or 2000. It is also time to consider whether the time has come to revise one's ambitions, slow down, accept that *'the fever of life'* is over and leave the heavy lifting to others. Or choose new activities, more appropriate to the energy levels of today and not the situation 30 years ago.

An important feature of this need for Springtime reassessment is to realise how we fit into the wider picture. Another poem might be useful here. In *The Hobbit*, Bilbo Baggins sings:
'I sit beside the fire and think; of people long ago; and people who will see a world; that I shall never know.'

In your family you are now regarded as Grandpa, a role once held by your father, and his father, and soon to be held by your children. No longer are you the only one of your family to go to university; a dozen or more have followed the same path. Your 32,000-byte computer of the 1970s is dwarfed by your son using 384 Gigabytes of disk space. You were once proud of knowing all the kings of England. Now grandchildren say, *'Why bother when you can look them up?'*

In St John's we are part of a procession of saints and sinners starting with St Aldhelm and including among many others, Bishop Ken, Vicar Bennett, Maurice Dobbs, Colin and Marian Alsbury and Kathy Yeaman. In turn we will be succeeded by our new Vicar and others than we know nothing about. In the same way, your garden has many plants that need replacing, given better fertiliser or their area given a good weeding over. Often the new plants are completely different from the old, and the garden is much better for them.

Churches and gardens last longer than people. The climbing roses you plant this spring will be enjoyed by people who pass your house in 2044, long after you have left Frome; and the raised bed that you spent so much time creating in the spring of 2024 may be used as a vegetable patch for a generation as yet unborn.

We do not know what the future holds, either for ourselves, for Frome or for the world: but we can rest assured that there will be a future, we will have played our part in creating it, but our beneficiaries will often be people that we know nothing about.

Chris Lewis

Wells Cathedral Passes

You may have seen that Wells Cathedral is to start charging an entry fee for visitors from 22 April.

However, free passes are available to anyone who is on the parish electoral roll (your application form has to be signed by a churchwarden to confirm this). See:

<https://www.wellscathedral.org.uk/your-visit/wells-passes>

SERVICES at ST JOHN'S – MARCH/APRIL 2024

Weekly at 8.45am - Sunday Morning Service on Zoom

Tuesday 26th March

7.00pm Stations of the Cross

Wednesday 27th March

7.00pm Compline

Thursday 28th March

7.00pm Holy Communion with the stripping of the altars

Friday 29th March—Good Friday

12-2pm Private prayer and reflections

2-3pm Words and music for Good Friday

Saturday 30th March – Easter Eve

10.30am Stations of the Cross at the Via Crucis

7pm Easter Vigil

Sunday 31st March – Easter Day

6am Dawn service **at St Mary's**

9.45am Holy Communion

Sunday 7th April - Second Sunday of Easter

9.45am Holy Communion

Sunday 14th April - Third Sunday of Easter

9.45am Holy Communion

Sunday 21st April - Fourth Sunday of Easter

9.45am Holy Communion

Sunday 28th April - Fifth Sunday of Easter

9.45am Holy Communion

Sunday 5th May - Sixth Sunday of Easter

9.45am Holy Communion

Early in-person Sunday services in Frome

1st & 3rd Sundays; 8am Christ Church; 2nd & 4th Sundays; 9am St Mary's

St John's Cafe and Mini Markets 11am to 2pm

Sunday 7th April & Sunday 5th May

– all offers of help welcome!



DIARY DATES – APRIL 2024

March

Thu 28 9.15am St John's School end of term service
2-4pm Craft and Cake (BC)

Sat 30 10am Brass cleaning

April

Wed 3 6.30pm *Inspired to Read* Book Club (BC)

Fri 5 12.30–3pm Bereavement course starts (St Mary's)

2pm Hospital Service

7pm Pop-up Pub (East Woodlands)

Sat 6 9am United prayer (SJ)

12 noon-3pm Mary's House meeting (St Mary's)

6.30pm Murder Mystery (East Woodlands)

Sun 7 11am-2pm Café & Mini Market (SJ)

Thurs 11 9.30am BC Team meeting (BC)

2-4pm Craft & Cake (BC)

Sat 13 10.30am Open Doors & Intercessors team

11am FACT AGM (Wesley)

Sun 14 2.30pm Concert: One Voice Community Choir

Tues 16 7pm PCC Meeting (BC)

Sat 20 10am Worship Committee meeting

Thu 25 2pm-4pm Craft & Cake (BC)

Fri 26 2pm Hospital Service

Tue 30 11am Julian meeting (SJ)

May

Sun 5 11am-2pm Café & Mini Market (SJ)

Open Doors

every 2nd Saturday, 10.30am to 12 noon.

Next date: **Saturday 13th April**

An opportunity for people to deal with baptism/wedding arrangements and for volunteer teams to meet

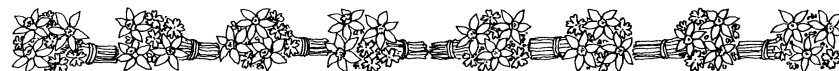
Sacristy team: January & July

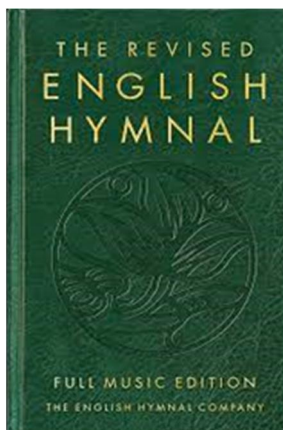
Sidesmen & Welcome: March & September

Intercessions team: April & October

Servers team: May & November

Lesson readers team: June & December





Music Notes

Come, thou long-expected hymn-book

A year ago I wrote an article about the forthcoming publication of *The Revised English Hymnal*, the new edition of that respected hymn book which first hit our pews in 1906. Under the guidance of the English Hymnal Committee, chaired by a former rector of Frome, Rev. Alfred Hanbury-Tracy, and with the music overseen by Ralph Vaughan Williams, *The English Hymnal* provided a welcome alternative to the

established, *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. Over the past century there have been two major revisions. The first, in 1933, introduced some new melodies and re-worked some of the accompaniments. Fifty years later, in 1986, *The New English Hymnal* appeared with its supplementary volume, *New English Praise*, in 2006 and was widely adopted; these volumes introduced some more recent editions to the list of favourite hymns (including one of my own: *How shall I sing that majesty*, known to many of us by the name of its tune: *Coe Fen*), and also included material such as plainsong sentences for the liturgical year and some mass settings suitable for congregational singing.

In November 2023 the much heralded *Revised English Hymnal* was finally published. It retains the distinctive green, embossed cover, font and image redolent of the Arts and Crafts movement, and the internal layout has not changed, the hymns being divided into sections for: The Christian Year, Times and Seasons, Sacraments and other Rites, and General Hymns. I have always liked the layout of the hymns: mostly with the music on the left-hand page and the words on the right, easy-to read notation and helpfully large print for the words. One of the features of the EH has always been the setting of words by significant poets to inspiring music: poets such as George Herbert, Robert Bridges and John Donne have their place alongside more recent hymnists such as Tim Dudley Smith. Our own Thomas Ken has

no fewer than five of his hymns in the new volume which has over 680 items in it!

And this, to me, is its biggest draw-back – *The Revised English Hymnal* (full music edition) weighs in at nearly 1.5kg, significantly heavier than either its predecessor, the *NEH*, or our own *Hymns Old and New*, although it is still lighter than the 2000, orange edition of *HON* which weighs over 1.7kg. Carrying such volumes, especially when singing in procession, becomes quite a test of strength and stamina! And I certainly wouldn't want to carry a pile of them from the stalls to the vestry.

Apart from the weight of it, I have fallen in love with this new hymn book – I took it to read on a long car journey and discovered lots of gems – I was very excited to find one of my favourite Lenten hymns: 'Christian dost thou see him', included (I last found it in *Hymns Ancient & Modern Revised* – the 1950s edition), and there are other treats between the covers: five hymns by Thomas Ken, including two lovely ones for the feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary – they will be heard in SJ over the next few months; three hymns in Welsh – fortunately we have a Welsh speaker in the choir who helped us with pronunciation when the choir sang in Welsh at the service closest to St David's Day. There are still plenty of hymn words by great poets, but there are also a few hymns where the words have been adapted, such as 'Hills of the North', for which the only words that I find acceptable are the ones in my old school hymn book, *Songs of Praise*. Musically there are also some treats in store – more Bach harmonisations than in any previous hymn books, some new harmonisations for hymns that we have, till now, always had to sing in harmony, and some new hymn tunes based on British folk melodies. Together with even more plainsong antiphons, this is a real treasure-trove, and, as you can probably tell, I am really excited to be able to start including things from it for the hymns the choir sing during the communion.

Rosemary McCormick

Dora Bright, local composer

Friday 8 March was International Women's Day, leading to many events and concerts concentrating on women. One Frome concert, by our local piano Trio Paradis, reminded us of Dora Bright, a local composer that most had forgotten about. I thought I would find out more about her.



Although born in Sheffield, Dora lived most of her very long life (1868-1951) locally at Babington House, after her marriage to Captain Wyndham Knatchbull, a retired army officer.

Unlike most women of her time, she was allowed complete freedom to write, perform and teach music, both in in this country and abroad. This

carried on the life she had led before her marriage. She had won nearly all the Academy prizes available and started composing and performing her own pieces before she graduated.

Between the ages of 13 and 20, Dora studied piano and composition at the Royal Academy of Music in London. She was taught piano by Walter Macfarren and composition and harmony by Ebenezer Prout, two of the best-known teachers of the time. At the age of 14, she made her debut as a pianist in the Covent Garden Promenade Concerts and as a teenager was particularly active in the student concerts held in London's St. James's Hall, both as a pianist and a composer. When she was 15, the *Musical Times* reported "*Miss Dora Bright played the Andante and Rondo from Chopin's Concerto in E minor so well as to make us forget that it was the performance of a student*". Child prodigies are nothing new; today she would have been BBC Young Musician of the Year.

If she had been French, she would have won the Prix de Rome because, by the time she was 20, Dora had written and performed the piece that is probably the best known of her works, her Piano Concerto in A minor. As the *Musical Times* reported: "*Special mention*

must be made of the Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, by Miss Dora Bright. It is a well-designed work in classical form, and its melodious and shapely character is further increased in effect by the clever colouring of the instrumentation. The composer played the solo part with much executive ability, and received most hearty applause at the conclusion."

She graduated at 20 and made a smooth transition into British musical life as a pianist and composer. She performed as a soloist with orchestras, organised her own piano recitals and gave many chamber music concerts. She played the music of all the classical composers, as well as her own. From 1889 to 1892 she also gave performances in Europe, as the German press reported: "*Miss Dora Bright, a teacher at the Royal College in London, recently made a name for herself at the Musical Society of Cologne thanks to her pianistic achievements, but even more so due to her talent for composition, which she demonstrated with a piano concerto that was often original, very fresh and extremely melodious in terms of its interweaving with the orchestra."*

Music was not her only interest. In 1892 she married Wyndham Knatchbull and moved to his estate at Babington House, near Frome, still using her maiden name as a musician. Marriage did not diminish her musical activities. They often used the House for musical concerts.

For the first five years, she broadened out her activities into those of an impresario, organising concerts in London and elsewhere in which well-known musicians performed a wide range of music, giving a chance for the music of young British composers, including herself, to be heard. She reduced her activities during the last years of her husband's life, but after his death in 1900 she continued to work and compose with even greater energy for the next 50 years of her life, continuing to live at Babington House.

After 1903 she turned her interests



to the theatre and dance. During the next 15-20 years, she wrote incidental music for plays, operas and, above all, pantomimes and ballets, which she composed in particular for the Danish dancer Adeline Genée, at that time one of the best-loved ballerinas in the world. Dora also wrote numerous songs, including several compositions for children, including settings of six poems from Kipling's *The Jungle Book*. At the beginning of September 1908, her "Pastoral Fantasy" was premiered to great acclaim at the Empire Theatre in London with Adeline Genée as the dancer. She wrote the incidental music to *The Hampton Club* in 1909 and to the ballets *The Dryad* and *The Faun* in 1910. The *Musical Times* said that "London owes to Miss Dora Bright two of the best ballets it has seen in recent years." She had stiff competition. This was the time when Diaghilev was introducing his Ballet Russes to Paris.

Other ballets of the 1910s include *La Camargo*, about a famous 18th-century dancer, using music appropriate to the 18th century, *La Danse*, about the history of dance between 1710 and 1845, *The Dancer's Adventure*, about the life of the dancer Marie Taglioni, and *The Love Song*. She also wrote an opera *The Waltz King* about the life of Johann Strauss II, although both the title and the opera have been completely drowned out by the later Disney film.

Dora Bright was present in British musical life for almost seventy years, from 1882 to 1951, working in many different areas, including as a performer, composer, arranger, music educator and music critic. Her compositions were highly valued and frequently performed during her lifetime but are little known today. This is probably because Dora had no children to publicise her work, and, because of her long life, she had outlived most of her contemporaries who might have kept performances of her work going. However, it is good that recently a small number of her works have been rediscovered and have been recorded or rearranged. It is to be hoped that our local composer can eventually regain the fame she had during her lifetime.

Chris Lewis

My Kitchen Notebook

Rhubarb and Orange Jam



It's the rhubarb season again! It came slightly later this year than it sometimes does, but I always welcome it, as does Neil, who is more likely to get a pudding after a meal than at other times of the year. I have written before in this column about some of my varied uses for this versatile fruit, but I have never shared with you this recipe for one of my favourite types of jam. Rhubarb and ginger is a classic pairing, but rhubarb and orange is equally delicious, and the jars always look attractive with a slice of orange visible through the glass. It is quite quick and easy to make with minimal ingredients, but there is some advance preparation necessary.

You need to start the day before, by putting equal quantities of cleaned rhubarb, cut into about 2-3 cm lengths and sugar into a ceramic or glass bowl (don't use a metal bowl as this can react with the acidity of the fruit). The only liquid you need is the juice of one lemon which, together with the grated zest, you add to the bowl. I use about 1.5kg each of rhubarb and granulated sugar – the jam sets well so you don't need to buy the more expensive jam sugar with its added pectin. Cover the bowl and leave to stand overnight – it doesn't need to go into the fridge.

While that is standing take 2 thin-skinned, medium oranges and boil them in 600ml water for about an hour until they are soft and translucent. Leave them to cool.

When you come to make the jam the sugar will have drawn a lot of the liquid out of the rhubarb.

Before you start you need to cut 5 thin slices from the cooked oranges, removing any pips, and put them to one side. Cut the remaining oranges into small pieces and add them to the bowl of rhubarb and sugar, then put everything (except the reserved slices of

orange) into a large pan. Slowly bring up to the boil, making sure all the sugar is fully dissolved, then boil more quickly until setting point is reached. There are various tests for setting point – I usually put a couple of small plates into the freezer, then, when I think the jam is probably ready, I drop some onto the cold plate and see if it starts to form wrinkles. If it doesn't, I boil it a little longer.

Before putting into hot, sterilised jars, remove any scum from the top of the pan and allow the jam to cool slightly. Half-fill the jars, then carefully slide one slice of orange down the side of the jar, before filling to the top and sealing. In the picture above you can see the orange slice- I think it makes the jam look a bit extra-special.

Rosemary McCormick




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Inspired to Read

The Killings at Badger's Drift

by Caroline Graham



When the *Inspired to Read* book group met in February, we had a discussion about that ever-popular genre, Detective Fiction. Personally I love a good crime novel, so I really enjoyed preparing for this session, reading as many different authors as I could find, from Christie (Marple and Poirot) to Richard Osman, via Ngaio Marsh and PD James, amongst others, and I also took the opportunity to re-watch some of my favourite TV detectives.

About the author

Caroline Graham (b. 1931) is a successful writer whose Det. Insp. Barnaby novels have spawned one of the longest-running series on TV, with season 22 about to be screened, with plans for at least another two series after that! Despite there having been 125 episodes on TV, only the first five were based on books by Graham, and these were adapted for the screen by another of my favourite crime writers, Anthony Horowitz. Graham also wrote episodes for another long-running TV series, *Crossroads*.

From the back cover

The village of Badger's Drift is the essence of tranquillity. But when resident and well-loved spinster Miss Simpson takes a stroll in the nearby woods, she stumbles across something she was never meant to see, and there's only one way to keep her quiet.

Miss Simpson's death is not suspicious, say the villagers. But Miss Lucy Bellringer refuses to rest: her friend has been murdered. She is sure of it.

She calls on Detective Chief Inspector Barnaby to investigate, and it isn't long until the previously unseen seamy side of Badger's Drift is brought to light.

But as old rivalries, past loves and new scandals surface, the next murder is not far away.

A short extract

Barnaby did not reply. He was breathing quickly, his face was flushed, his lips tight. For him the murder of _____ had shocked the case, yesterday so arid and at a standstill, into new pulsating life rich with fresh insights and possibilities. And although the killer still remained faceless, his scent became strong, and somewhere, not very far ahead, Barnaby could sense his quarry no longer running swift and gleeful, laughing over his shoulder, but back-tracking, threshing about, sensible that the distance between them was shrinking.

Graham's first Barnaby novel, *The Killings at Badger's Drift*, which, in 1997, was the first of her books to be televised, won several awards, including the 1989 Macavity Award for 'Best first novel', and was also named as one of 'The Top 100 Crime Novels of all Time' by the Crime Writers' Association in 1990. I thoroughly enjoyed reading it: like all good detective novels there was a strong plot, believable characters, and just enough clues and red-herrings for me to enjoy pitting my wits against the author and her detective to see if I could work out the identity of the killer before I got to the last page.

At our book group discussion we agreed that a large part of the popularity of crime fiction lies in our enjoyment of solving puzzles and riddles. Reading them is an intellectual challenge similar to that of solving a jigsaw puzzle or completing a cryptic crossword. You have to understand the writer or creator of the puzzle in order to be able to see the bigger picture, and how all the pieces fit together. We also agreed that much depends on the likeability of the central sleuth, especially important when he/she might be the central character in a series of novels. Then we discussed the question of why detective fiction became so popular in the 1920s and 30s – was it just that writers such as Agatha Christie and Marjorie Allingham were particularly good at it, or were there other reasons? It does seem to have coincided with the rise of the paperback – a cheap type of novel that can fit into the pocket of an overcoat to be read on the morning commute. And why was it that so many of the 'Golden age' writers were women – Dorothy L Sayers and Ngaio Marsh as well as Christie

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and Allingham? Was it, perhaps, because it was an acceptable way for a woman to earn money at a time when other career options were more limited.

And finally a few thoughts about how well such books transfer to the screen. I made a point of reading this book before watching the episode on TV catch-up. The bones of the story were, of course, the same, but in several ways the story was simplified – fewer characters, not such detailed back-stories, even though this sometimes weakened possible motives for murder. In this instance I found that the central characters of Barnaby and his Sergeant, Troy (and I'd love to know if that is a deliberate reference to Thomas Hardy), were toned down, perhaps to make them more appealing to a wider audience, thus ensuring a longer run for the TV series.

Looking ahead, our next two book groups are:

Wednesday 3rd April: We will be discussing a book: *Girl, Woman, Other* by Bernardine Evaristo – winner of the 2019 Booker prize

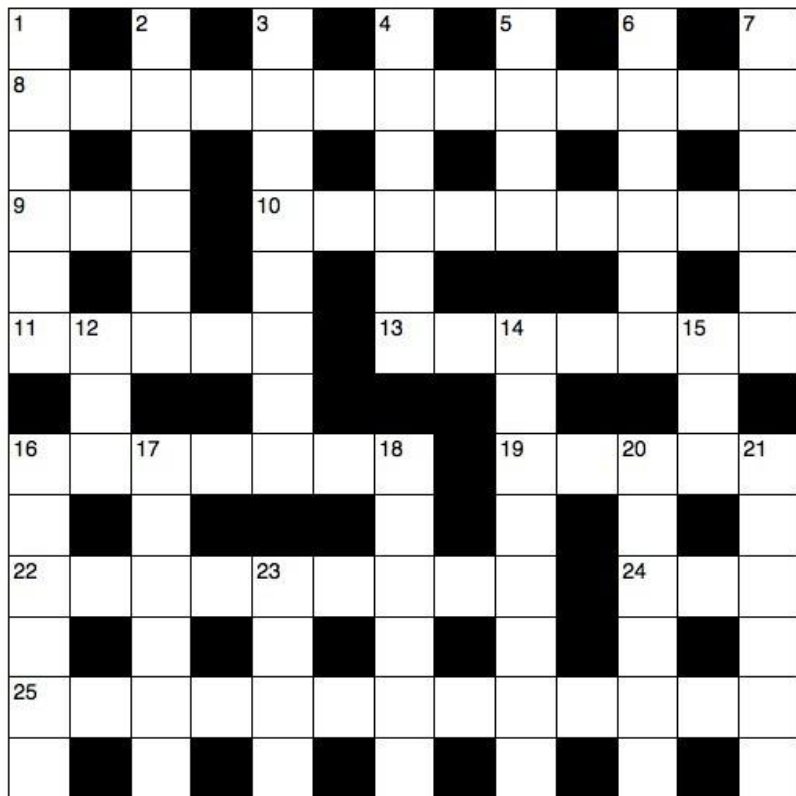
Wednesday 1st May: Poetry evening – details to be confirmed

If you would like to know more about our group, or join us for any of our meetings please contact Rosemary: rosemarymccormick@hotmail.com

If you haven't already found it there is a new book shop in town. Sherlock & Pages has opened at the bottom of Catherine Hill, and it is well worth a visit. It is a very different establishment to our wonderful Hunting Raven as it specialises in non-fiction, and it has a wonderful range of interesting books on unlikely subjects. My eye has been caught by one on the medieval graffiti found in churches and another called *Wild Atlantic Women*. The proprietors describe it as a 'Conservation' bookshop: *'conservation of all we've inherited and all we are responsible to pass on'*. One of the owners also has an Instagram account, 'English Pilgrim', devoted to his exploration of out of the way places of interest. Go in and say hello, next time you are passing!

Rosemary McCormick

APRIL CROSSWORD



The Bible version used in this crossword is the NIV.

ACROSS

- 8 'He poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the — ' (Isaiah 53:12) (13)
 9 'When they had sung a hymn, they went — to the Mount of Olives (Matthew 26:30) (3)
 10 Comes between Galatians and Philippians (9)
 11 'Your heart will — and swell with joy' (Isaiah 60:5) (5)
 13 Muslim holy month (7)

- 16 Ten ears (anag.) (7)
 19 Under (poetic abbrev.) (5)
 22 How Abram described himself to God when he complained that his inheritance would pass to a servant (Genesis 15:2) (9)
 24 'Go to the — , you sluggard' (Proverbs 6:6) (3)
 25 Debar from receiving Communion (13)

DOWN

- 1 My — for His Highest (Oswald Chambers' best-known book) (6)
 2 Festival of the resurrection (6)
 3 'His sons will prepare for war and — a great army' (Daniel 11:10) (8)
 4 'Let not the — string his bow' (Jeremiah 51:3) (6)
 5 Name of the River Thames in and around Oxford (4)
 6 'From then on Judas watched for an opportunity — — him over' (Matthew 26:16) (2,4)
 7 'But Christ is faithful — — — over God's house' (Hebrews 3:6) (2,1,3)
 12 Long-handled implement used to till the soil (Isaiah 7:25) (3)
 14 Order to which monks and nuns devote themselves (8)
 15 Appropriate (Proverbs 15:23) (3)
 16 I, uncle (anag.) (6)
 17 'They gave him — — of broiled fish' (Luke 24:42) (1,5)
 18 'Weren't there three men that we — — and threw into the fire?' (Daniel 3:24) (4,2)
 20 Mountain where Noah's ark came to rest (Genesis 8:4) (6)
 21 'Don't you know that friendship with the world is — towards God?' (James 4:4) (6)
 23 Prominent architectural feature of large cathedrals such as St Paul's (4)

Answers to the Easter crossword in the March magazine

ACROSS: 1, Wine. 3, The alert. 8, Ooze. 9, Passover. 11, Garden Tomb. 14, Cannot. 15, Elisha. 17, Gethsemane. 20, Own house. 21, Lisa. 22, Flogging. 23, Sty. DOWN: 1, Wrong act. 2, Nazarene. 4, Health. 5, Assemblies. 6, Envy. 7, Turn. 10, Before long. 12, Iscariot. 13, Take care. 16, The Son. 18, Loaf. 19, Unto.

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WORD SEARCH - St George of the Golden Legend

St George is Patron Saint of England, but he never actually came here. He was a Christian officer in the Roman army under Diocletian, who refused to abandon his faith during the Terror. George was therefore martyred in Palestine about 300 AD. His courage became legendary, and St George became the example of a Christian fighting -man, a powerful helper against evil powers affecting individual lives. He was the soldier-hero of the Middle Ages. In the Golden Legend of the 13th century, Jacobus de Voragine tells the story of how St George helped rescue the people of Sylene in Lybia from a dragon, especially the princess, who had been offered to the dragon as a sacrifice. With the dragon dead, and the princess returned to her father the King, the people of Sylene converted to Christianity.

George
Patron
Saint
England
Officer
Roman
Army
Diocletian
Terror
Martyred
Palestine
Courage
Example
Helper
Evil
Soldier
Hero
Golden
Legend
Dragon
Princess
converted

E G E N L E G E N D S N N
R G C A E P L R R Y E H E
E O O I A I E P O M E E D
I E U T V R R M M R S E L
D A R E C I F F O A R I O
L O A L N G D M I Y X E G
N L G C E I R N T L L E T
L C E O D E T R E V N O C
I S R I I E A S X R N E E
S G D D N M N H E L P E R
E R L A D T E N G L A N D
N O G A R D H R O M A N E
S R O E L R L I L E D P O



APRIL SUDOKU

				6			3
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		5	2		4		
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1			9				

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YOUR MAGAZINE TEAM

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SERVICES ROTA FOR APRIL 2024

Date/Week	Services	Readings	Duties for the 9.45am service at SJ					
			Readers	Prayers	Sidespersons	Chalice	Sacristy	
Sunday 7 April Second Sunday of Easter	8.45am Zoom Service 9.45am Holy Communion	Acts 4.32-35 1 John 1.1-2.2 John 20.19-end	N McCor-mick S Smith	L Bushell	G Fone R Gosling	J Davies	M Veakins M Smitherman	
Sunday 14 April Third Sunday of Easter	8.45am Zoom Service 9.45am Holy Communion	Acts 3.12-19 1 John 3.1-7 Luke 24.36b-48	S Keyes T Bushell	J Caudwell	M Veakins J Davies	A Crook	R Patten P Connew	
Sunday 21 April Fourth Sunday of Easter	8.45am Zoom Service 9.45am Holy Communion	Acts 4.5-12 1 John 3.16-end John 10.11-18	R McCor-mick E Gilbert	A Hender-son	J Bruges B Essex	M Smither-man	R & N McCor-mick	
Sunday 28 April Fifth Sunday of Easter	8.45am Zoom Service 9.45am Holy Communion	Acts 8.26-end 1 John 4.7-end John 15.1-8	B Essex C Holland	J Bruges	M Smither-man A Crook	C Holland	M Veakins M Smitherman	
Sunday 5 May Sixth Sunday of Easter	8.45am Zoom Service 9.45am Holy Communion	Acts 10.44-end 1 John 5.1-6 John 15.9-17	N McCor-mick The Hud-sons	R McCor-mick	G Fone R Gosling	J Davies	R Patten P Connew	
Vicar: Vacancy Reader: Janet Caudwell		Sun 21st Tea Time at St John's? Tues 30th - Julian meeting at 11am						

Inspire magazine

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**You abundantly water the ploughed fields,
You settle
its furrows and soften the earth
with showers. You bless its growth. Ps 65:10**