

St John's and St Katharine's WEEKLY EXTRA Monday 20th July 2020



Photo: Jane Bruges

Happy Birthday to Stephanie Cloete, Donna Whitcombe
and Michael Wilcox this week



Chew Valley Lake. Photo: Richard Lawless

Reflection: We'll meet again

When we meet together again as a congregation in St John's and St Katharine's I wonder what thoughts each of us will bring to that 'reunion service'. Some of our thoughts will be saddened as we see the spaces left by those who have been loyal worshippers in the past – Win Webber, Irene Stephens, Joyce Ball – and by a new friend we were enjoying getting to know, Elizabeth Essex.

Some of us will reflect on the new experiences we have lived through during lock down. As a senior citizen, my thoughts turn to queuing outside M&S, waiting for it to open for the oldies between 8:30am and 9:30am (I did think it seemed to expect a lot of those of advanced years to be compos mentis enough to go shopping at 8:30am!)

However, I have made new friends chatting in the queue: the lady who told us how her book club had coped when book shops were closed – the members, who lived fairly close to each other, hunted out the books they did not want to read again, and left them on a table in the garden for others to help themselves. Then there was the gentleman who worried that he might not find all the items on the shopping list his wife had given him. Shopping was a new experience for him.

On my exercise walks I have talked to complete strangers as if we have known each other for years – not to mention their dogs. It has been comforting to know that friendly canines do not go in for social distancing – they prefer a closer contact.

Continues ⇨⇨⇨⇨

Somehow this lockdown has shed new light on the teaching to 'love your neighbour' in that we have reached out to one another more readily perhaps than we would have done in the past. Maybe we will be able at our church reunion to give thanks that God has widened our horizons and made us much more aware of those around us and beyond our church building.

Jesus said: 'I have called you friends.' (John. 15:15) Have we begun to understand more clearly our Lord's teaching about friendship?

Rev'd Pat Lawless

End of term

Our schools are 'breaking up'! But this year we have had no celebratory services in church looking back over the past year; no *One More Step Along The World I Go**; no tearful presentation ceremonies – how we have missed them! A cheerful conversation with St John's School revealed how much they have enjoyed having some of the children back in school, and the really good things they have all been doing at home and at school. Another conversation with a teacher from a different Frome school revealed just how much effort has gone into ensuring the physical and mental well-being of their students before they even begin to think about lessons. And now it is the school holiday. But I imagine that much of that 'holiday' will be spent wrestling with the logistical and educational challenges which September will bring. We wish them all – staff, pupils and their families – a safe and, if possible, restful time. **Janet Caudwell**

*For readers of a certain generation this is the equivalent of *Lord Dismiss Us With Thy Blessing!*

Frome's new eco-warrior: Inspired by an episode of *Blue Peter*, and saddened by pictures on the news of Bournemouth beach covered in litter, Pepi, a pupil at St John's School, decided to go litter-picking. She went down to the river by Welshmill Park and filled a bin liner in no time. The school are really proud of her and they are keeping their fingers crossed that she has earned a Blue Peter badge.
Eds: a big 'well done' from us too, Pepi!



Nature notes: Home for a hive

When we first moved into our present house, where we are lucky to have a big garden, I cherished a dream to keep bees. I went to a course run by Frome Beekeeping Association, but quickly realised that there was rather more to it than just dressing up in a funny suit and enjoying the fruits of the bees' labours! I have several friends who keep bees and am full of admiration for their skill and dedication – and their ability to identify a Queen Bee amidst the thousands of workers.



A week ago, while eating lunch outside, I glanced up into the tree (socially distanced at 2 metres away from us) and saw a strange mass hidden in the branches. I watched it for a couple of minutes and realised that it was a swarm of bees. Alice jumped up in alarm and ran into the house while Neil made some phone calls; within 20 minutes Oisín, a local bee-keeper (from Keyford), arrived at our back gate. After donning his protective clothing, he carefully cut the branch that the swarm had attached itself to and lowered it into a box. We then waited while the bees left outside made their way in to join the rest. Neil then told me that the day before he had seen the swarm preparing to leave its previous home – a hole in our garden wall – but that he hadn't seen it establish itself in the tree. While we were waiting for the bees to settle we were talking to Oisín about where he keeps his hives, and Neil and I had the same idea – would Oisín like to keep a hive at the bottom of our garden?

By the time most of the bees had gone into the box (their temporary home) and been fed with a special sugar syrup, we had agreed that Oisín would set



up a hive beside our back wall, adjacent to the chicken run, and the next day he came back and moved our swarm into its new home. This morning they are buzzing around quite purposefully, and Neil has yet another excuse to spend time at the far end of the garden communing with nature! I am looking forward to starting my apprenticeship as assistant bee-keeper and maybe when I retire I will be confident enough to keep my own hive.

Rosemary McCormick

Anniversaries in 2020

The music of the future – Ludwig van Beethoven 1770-1827

Eds: Our thanks to Simon Keyes for his insight into this key anniversary.

It's said that when a violist complained that Beethoven's "Rasumovsky" string quartets (Op 59 1806) were "not music", the composer replied "they are not for you but for a later age".

Earlier this year the ever-enterprising Wiltshire Music Centre in Bradford-on-Avon celebrated Beethoven's 250th birthday year with dazzling performances of eight of the sixteen quartets by the young Marmen Quartet. I submerged myself in the experience and was astonished by the modernity of the music. Even after the quartets of Bartok and Shostakovich, the late Beethovens have a scale of formal invention and freedom of tonality and dissonance that take the listener into a new sound world. This music "reveals before us the realm of the mighty and unmeasurable" as the critic ETA Hoffman said in 1810.

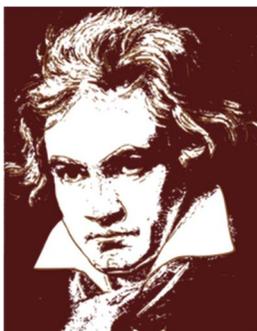
The unhappinesses of Beethoven's life are notorious. His fiery temperament denied him the approval which the Viennese aristocracy lavished on his teacher Haydn. His romantic affairs all ended in rejection, even by the mysterious "Immortal Beloved" to whom Beethoven wrote, but perhaps never sent his famous letter. Chaotic with money, his brusqueness made him enemies. He treated his nephew Karl so badly that he tried to kill himself. And then there was "the infirmity of the one sense which ought to be more perfect in me than others" – his progressive deafness from the age of thirty. As his biographer Jan Swafford says, "the most astonishing thing about him was that he survived the burden of being Beethoven".

Beethoven is the supreme musical alchemist and architect. He builds vast structures through the relentless transformation of tiny cells of material – his themes are often just a few notes long. His music is organic, always growing, becoming not just being. It's music which constantly turns towards the future.

Happy birthday Ludwig.

Simon Keyes

Note: Beethoven's birthday was probably on 16 December. If conditions permit Simon hopes to have a musical celebration on that day.



Memories of the 2012 Olympics

Being a gamesmaker

Eds: No Olympics this year, but thank you to Mandy Hulme for helping us to remember good times at the 2012 London Olympics. We'd love to make up a page or two of other Olympic memories – so please do send in yours – with photo if possible!

In 2012 I was one of 70,000 volunteers – or 'gamesmakers' – doing a whole range of tasks for the London Olympics. I went for training at the Copper Box in the Olympics Park, where I got my first view of the whole massive site, still being constructed, and also received my uniform: shirts, trousers, trainers, jacket, hat, socks, bag and (most important) a swatch watch – everything except underwear!

My son, Alex, was living in London at the time, so I was able to stay with him throughout the two weeks of the Olympics. I worked in the 'Common Domain' area at the main Olympic site on shifts from 2pm to 11pm for 12 of the days the Olympics were on, and my job was to scan tickets at the main gates into the Olympic Park, answer people's questions, direct people to their venue and generally help to keep things flowing.

It was a great experience during which I met lots of new people, and although I wasn't able to get any event tickets, I was able to soak up the atmosphere and feel part of the whole experience. I did get into the main stadium to see Mo Farah win one of his gold medals, which was extremely exciting. I also worked on the gate for 'important people', and I scanned the tickets of Zara and Mike Tindall, Zaha Hadid (architect of the Olympic pool), Michael Phelps's mother and Bill Gates among others. All in all, it was a hugely rewarding experience and a memory that I will treasure.

Mandy Hulme

A 'Usain Bolt' moment – Mandy is second from right



PLACES WE LOVE TO VISIT

Thailand part 2

Eds: Chris Lewis concludes his insight into Thailand – many thanks, Chris.

Bangkok is a city of over 8 million people, full of canals, ornate shrines and vibrant street life. Its population, tourists and traffic have expanded too fast for its own good. Only in the last 15 years has Bangkok begun to catch up with modern necessities such as international airports, a rapid transport system, urban motorways, hotels and shopping malls, new universities and bridges across the river. Its wealth is rapidly advancing. It is already way ahead of nearly all African and SE Asian cities but still has some way to catch up with Tokyo or Seoul. Tourists look out for shopping, theme parks, canal trips and street food, sea-food restaurants, temples, royal palaces, museums, boat trips on the Chao Phraya, Thai boxing and ladyboy shows (sophisticated entertainment, mainly cross-dressing.) Cultures are conserved: villages in the NW enable the Kayan people, pushed out from Burma, to live their traditional existence, including the wearing of rings around their women's necks. In fact Thailand is often a

refuge for oppressed minorities from Burma as well as providing jobs for refugees in catering, construction and transport. Other customs that prevail are the importance of the family, eg the young care for the old so there are few care homes in Thailand: and those most well off are expected to contribute more: so, as 'well off foreigners', we get the bill for a restaurant meal for twelve!

Traditional dress of a Kayan



Wat Arun Temple, Bangkok



It is interesting to compare Frome with our village, Yang Talat. Our house is in the centre of the village, close to banks, supermarket (Tesco Lotus), the hospital, schools, police station and council offices. The photograph below is a tourist hotel, 10 minutes from our house, where I spend many happy days, reading my Kindle or swimming in the pool (cost £1) while my wife visits old school friends. A street market is open most days opposite our house and on Saturdays it expands into the road, so getting your car out is difficult, as for Frome Sunday Markets.

Local services are often much better in Thailand: the village hospital is open to all Thais, who pay £7 for each treatment, however, small or large; eg paracetamol or cancer chemotherapy: doctors, often trained in the US, do not just treat symptoms but look for the underlying cause; the police will turn out to a call in minutes as there are about 20 officers specific to the village and there is not a lot of crime: when our cesspit overflowed, the local sewerage firm appeared in 5 minutes, put things right straight away and charged £1.50. You can take your ironing to a nearby house and it will be returned the next day. A massage lady will spend the whole morning at your home, giving all the family a going over for £5 each: a lady will come to do your hair, your nails, or your feet. Often they will stay for a meal.

Most religious ceremonies are carried out in people's homes. When we got married, Buddhist style, in 2560, all nine monks from the four village temples came to our house to conduct the ceremony, which was attended by all the family and by lots of people from the village who just wanted to see the show. **Chris Lewis**



WORD PUZZLE: WILD FLOWERS

– with thanks to our photographers for these pictures taken on walks.
Fit the plants into the grid – as clues, three of these start with animal names, and three are girls' names.



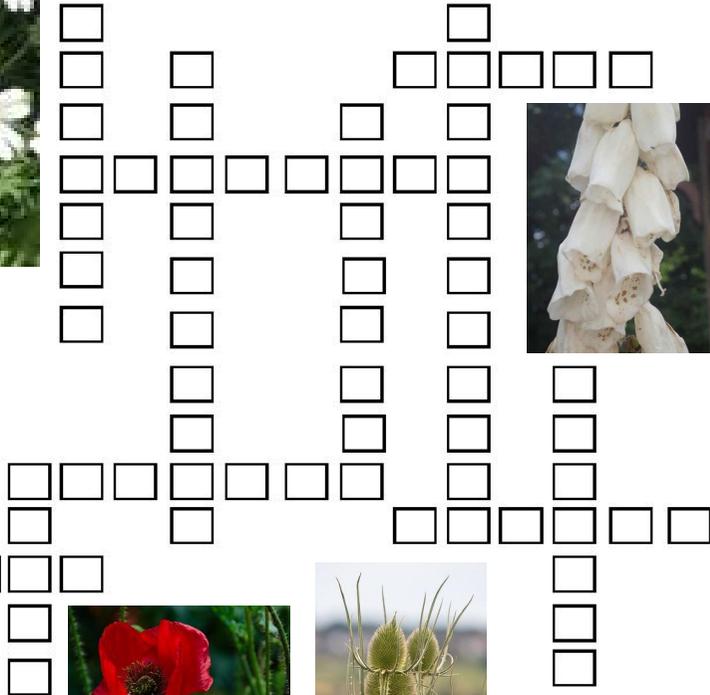
The 'greater' variety



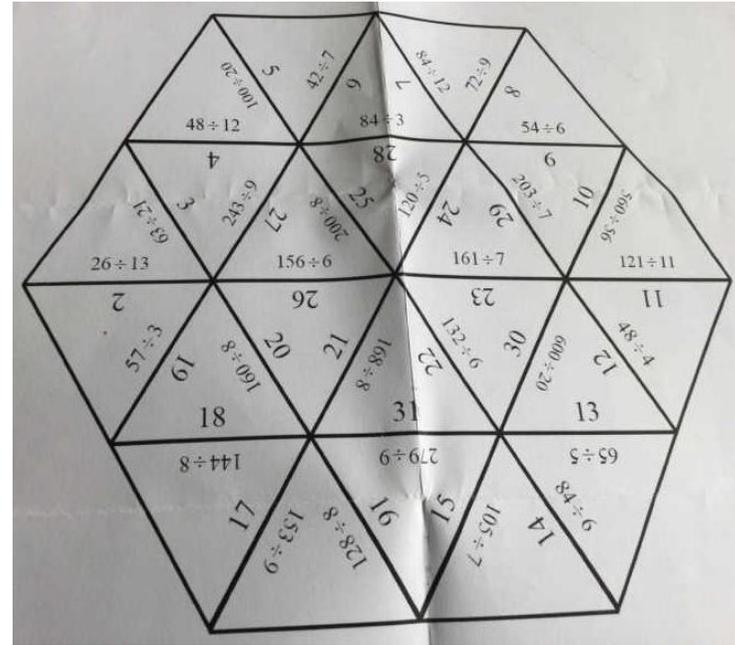
The 'canine' variety



The 'red' variety



Times Table puzzle - answers



We may look cute but please keep your distance – you're not in our social bubble ...



With thanks to Terry and Josie Gale for sending in this lovely photo

This week's SUDOKU

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9				3			5
1					6		
3			6				7
5	7				1	9	
4					8	5	3

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