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Deadline for the May magazine is:

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A special message from the Vicar



Dear friends,

I am writing to reassure you of thoughts and prayers in these unprecedented times. I echo the words of the Archbishop of Canterbury and our own Bishop which suggest that the church is not closed but changing. Whilst we are not able to meet together physically, we are able to be together in prayer and service to one another in various ways.

Technology has helped us, and I am beginning to “visit via the telephone”. I am so encouraged by people’s resilience at this difficult time and their sense of humour. I am also exploring technology to post a Sunday service and will let you know how to access that when I have it working well. I do encourage you to make yourself aware of the World Health organisation advice on mental health and wellbeing as we all experience isolation in one way or another. This is included in this magazine but is also posted on our website. There is also an order of service which I will be using at 8.00 am every morning and if you would like to join in, it would be good to be together in prayer in this way. These are all available in church and the church will be open on Saturday and Sunday but Not for public worship. If you do visit the church for a quiet moment, please do keep your distance from others and adhere to the hygiene protocol which is sign posted in

church. Orders of service and information is available on our website. I am aware of community efforts to serve those who are self-isolating and do take advantage of offers to shop etc, if you are in this position.

Do stay safe and healthy and know that I am praying for you daily.

To end this letter, I include some words from our Bishop Viv.

The Church of God has depths of wisdom. We continue our journey through Lent following Jesus who isolated himself in the desert and emerging stronger from the demands of those 40 days. We know the stories of the earliest Christians living in acute political and economic uncertainty and through these times deepened their faith in the Christ who died, has risen and who will come again. Our own people have endured times of pandemic illness and have emerged from the shaking of social foundations with new life and with hope.

Throughout my ministry I have carried in my cassock pocket a hazelnut (I think I am now on my tenth) to remind me of Julian's vision of the tiny hazelnut in the palm of her hand, and of God's love for the world held which 'lasts and lasts for ever because God loves it'. Julian self-isolated herself during a time of pandemic and from that isolation wrote of the assurance she had been given that "God said not 'Thou shalt not be tempested, thou shalt not be travailed, thou shalt not be dis-eased', but he said, 'Thou shalt not be overcome.'" May we, too, notice tiny details of God's re-creative care for us and the world. May we journey together in these tempestuous and dis-eased times confident in Christ in whom all shall be well and all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well.

Yours in Christ

Jeremy

Overleaf: Coronavirus Golden Rules—Some unofficial advice

Page 34: official advice from the World Health Organisation on COVID 19

A Morning Service for Lent is enclosed with this edition of Focal Point

St Mary's Website: stmarysbitton.org.uk

Coronavirus Golden Rules

Not official advice: – but this, from the Bishop of St Albans, is food-for-thought about our attitudes.

Golden Rule One. Each one of us can think about how we can protect and support our neighbours. So much of the public rhetoric is sowing fear about the danger of other people. So, taking all the official precautions, offer help and reassurance to others – and don't demonise anyone or any group.

Golden Rule Two: Think about who may be suffering more than me. For those of us who are healthy there is much less to worry about but the elderly, the housebound and those with chronic health conditions may be very anxious. How about each church undertaking an audit of all the vulnerable people they know and sharing out the responsibility to phone them each day. There's nothing like a friendly voice to offer solace when someone is worried. A smile can bring cheer, even on the phone. If you visit, follow all the official precautions or don't go.

Golden Rule Three. Don't give into panic and start hoarding food. There is plenty to go around, so practise the Christian discipline of sharing. Ask your neighbours what they need and do you best to help them get it. If you are self-isolating you will of course need some supplies.

Golden Rule Four. Live today to the full. None of us ever know what the future holds. In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6. 25 – 34), Jesus challenged his followers to live each day fully and not be afraid. Every time we are tempted to give in to fear we need to make a conscious choice to respond in trust and openness.

And, along with just over half the adults in the UK, don't forget to pray. Here's a suggestion from the Revd Louise Collins, a Team Vicar in Borehamwood, Herts:

Dear God our Shield and our Defender, guide and protect my neighbour in this time of health emergency; deliver them from all harm and may your love and care ever grow in this place. Through Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Amen.

+Alan St Albans

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The last word first

This magazine is usually put together around the middle of the preceding month and much of April's edition had been gathered together before the very rapid change in government policy that saw, not only the closure of pubs and restaurants, theatres and cinemas but even the suspension of public acts of worship by the Church of England. For the magazine it meant a large number of last minute changes.



The reason: a global pandemic that in matter of a few short months has spread from a single city in China to affect people in every country on the earth. No one, in this country has ever known anything like it, the nearest thing being the flu pandemic of a century ago – but then it took days, even for the few who could afford it, just to cross the Atlantic, weeks to travel from other parts of the world. Now, people can move around the world in hours and a highly contagious virus, as COVID 19 has proved to be, has the potential to affect millions, multiplying (the latest figures suggest) at a rate that see the infected population double every two days. All over the world, governments are placing restrictions on their people. In western Europe, and in Britain in particular, such restrictions are alien and novel; and as the virus seems to affect the more elderly population they have been urged, more than any other group to curb their activities and remain at home. For how long? Who knows? Weeks certainly, perhaps even months.

This comes as we prepare for one of the most important festivals in the Christian calendar that commemorates the passion and death of Christ and his rising again. This year it will be very quiet. Services for the last two Sundays in March which included a special Family Café Church for Mothering Sunday have been cancelled. This year there will be no Palm Sunday procession along the High Street and Church Road, no Easter Service and no Easter Egg Hunt. The chapel in Upton Cheyney will also be closed. St Mary's will be open on Saturdays and Sundays for private prayer and contemplation, and, following Easter will start normal summer opening during daylight hours.

Let us try, however, not to lose the message of Easter, even if we cannot join together to celebrate it. That message of resurrection, salvation and

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rebirth is a message of hope and of love and that at the end of this difficult period we can start again renewed. We might also reflect on the interplay of events in the story of Christ's passion that saw the full range of human behaviours both good and more often, bad. The crowd that acclaimed his arrival in Jerusalem was the same one that condemned him days later, self-interest was put before loyalty as he was both betrayed and abandoned. Yet there was also humility, self-sacrifice and generosity. In the early days of the crisis there are many reports of acts of selfishness in the hoarding of food and lavatory paper, a holiday company sacking people and taking away their living accommodation or selling testing kits at three times their real price. But these are far outweighed by the acts of generosity of people to those who cannot leave their homes, the increased donations to food banks and the willingness of retired health care workers to return to duty.

Finally, may I think those people who commented favourably on the last edition and apologise for the error that reported the Bitton flood as being two years earlier than 1968. I know that small errors like that can undermine the interest in the rest of such articles and, as always, we will try to do better in future.

Jim Heavens



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The Vicarage, Warmley
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Ordained ministers:

Rev Richard Humphrey
Splinters, Kenilworth Drive
Willsbridge **0117 949 0502**

Rev Susie Bishop

revsusiebishop.uk@gmail.com
07415 831488

Lay ministers:

Ken Gibson, 8 Church Road,
Bitton
0117 932 2122

Churchwardens:

Pete Midgley
30 Kenilworth Drive, Willsbridge
0117 932 6898

David Bailey, Westover,
Bath Road, Bitton
0117 932 8949

Jacqui Harris
29 St Anne's Drive, Wick
0117 937 4706

Services in April

It is unlikely that any services will be held at St Mary's during the month of April as the Church of England has suspended all public acts of worship. The church, will, however, be open on Saturdays and Sundays for private prayer and contemplation

Sunday 5 April	PALM SUNDAY
Thursday 9 April	MAUNDY THURSDAY
Friday 10 April	GOOD FRIDAY
Sunday 12 April	EASTER DAY
Sunday 19 April	SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER
Sunday 26 April	THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

St Mary's flower rota

The flower rota has been suspended.

From the Register

Sunday 1st March Holy Baptism
Robyn Alice Chitson





UPTON CHEYNEY United Reformed Church



Sunday services are at 3pm

Due to the COVID 19 emergency and Government advice on events, there will be no services at the Upton Cheyney Chapel during April.

The monthly coffee afternoon has also been cancelled.



News from Upton Cheyney URC

These are strange and stressful times across the world. Its the same in Upton Cheyney, Golden Valley and Beach. We decided on Sunday that we would not hold any more services, certainly until April and probably much longer, whilst the coronavirus is still peaking. There are too many vulnerable people involved and wider than that, far too many vulnerable people with whom each of us comes into contact with, even when we are trying not to. On a positive I am seeing many people in the villages offering to help their neighbours. People who are young and people who are not so young. People who have lived here for years and people who have joined us much more recently. It is a very heart warming to experience.



Stuart Turner

I recently wrote about the people in the village after the war. I was pondering what happened to them and did some of them come back with injuries, physical and mental. Of course what happened was they then had to experience the ravages of the Spanish flu. Is anything written about the villages from that time? Households tended to be larger and more cramped together. The village store was here but with limited provisions. Doctors were expensive and for many unaffordable. For a while they didn't know what they were dealing with. We now have a village email list and WhatsApp group so we can communicate easily with most people. There are very few people not on one or the other. So few that its easy to pop something through their letter box and contact them that way. If all else fails and we are self isolating we can do an online shop. We can do this because so many people in the food chain are still working on through the problems. We should be very thankful to them and to the selfless healthcare workers who continuously put themselves on the frontline of all of this.

Stuart

St Mary's Matters

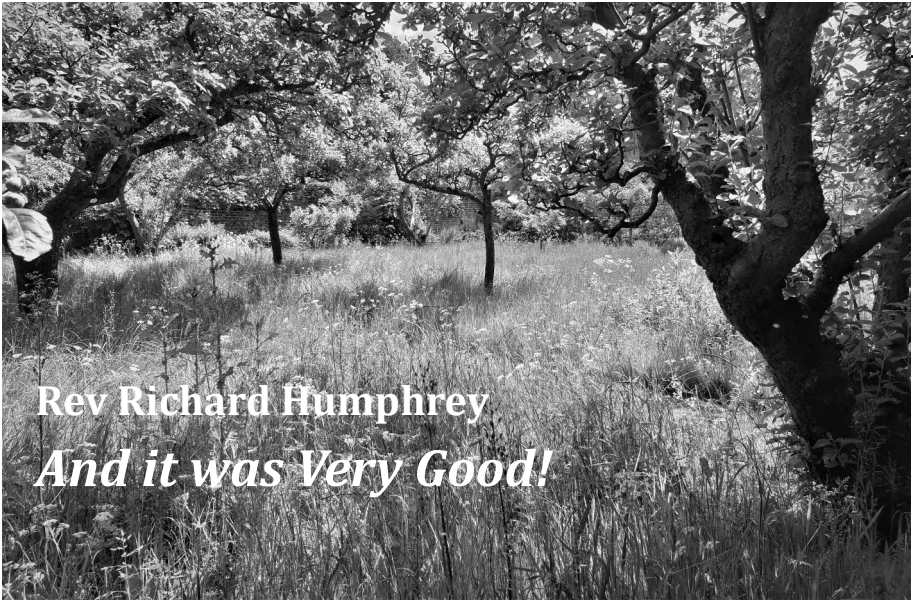
I'm writing on a Sunday afternoon having just run the Bath half marathon. While there was some controversy over the event going ahead it was so encouraging to see that so many people were running for a charity – anything from Mind to Cancer Research. It is wonderful to know that there is such a willingness to raise money and help others in need.

With the Covid-19 outbreak we find ourselves in the midst of a crisis and I have no doubt that when you are reading this the situation will have moved on significantly. There is much advice coming centrally from the church about how we should be adjusting our practices in the light of the epidemic. At Holy Communion we are no longer taking wine from the shared cup, taking the bread only. We are carefully considering how or even whether we should share the peace. We are providing the opportunity for people to wash their hands as they enter the church and we have been advised to take great care over our catering practices. All this to make sure we are taking care of those who are coming to church services.

While all this is very important, I was challenged by a Facebook post from the Archbishop of Canterbury encouraging us to look outward. He helps us understand how we can “walk in faith, resist fear and support those who are most vulnerable”. We can pray for the many people affected in so many ways by the viral outbreak. Importantly we can also, along with those raising money at the Bath Half, support the vulnerable in practical ways. Here are three suggestions: Try to avoid panic buying no matter how tempting so that everyone can have enough; buy something extra to donate to a food bank or similar so as to support the most vulnerable; offer to help someone who is isolated at home – just a phone call can make such a difference. Together we can beat this!



Pete Midgley



Rev Richard Humphrey
And it was Very Good!

As I wrote this as we were just beginning our Lent groups, seeking this year to engage with the pivotal issue of climate change and faith. Jeremy's article in last month's magazine provided a great lead to the subject and this month I'd like to explore a little more about how the modern concept of sustainability relates to biblical teaching.

When God made the world He saw that it was 'very good' (Gen 1: v31). As part of that world we were created as physical beings, made in His image and made from the very dust of Creation (Adam or 'Adamah' means made from the ground.) So right from the beginning the material and the spiritual were joined together, and a bond was created between God, humanity and Creation; and God delights in this relationship. He invites us to share with Him the beauty of the natural world and to fully realise the joy of being human, of being made in His likeness. But in that original garden was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: Adam and Eve were forbidden to eat its fruit on pain of death, but of course they disobeyed, ate, lost their life-giving relationship with God, and were thrown out of the garden. But knowledge itself is not wrong-God doesn't want to keep us in perpetual ignorance.

The problems arise in the way we seek that knowledge and what we do with it when we get it. Because knowledge is very rarely wisdom!

In Proverbs 3:18 we're told that Wisdom is a "tree of life to those who take hold of her." Wisdom, in the Bible, is different from simple knowledge. We're told Wisdom begins with 'the fear of the Lord': 'Fear' not as in terror but as in awestruck wonder when we are almost driven to our knees by the beauty of a sunrise, a spectacular view, or a meadow full of wild flowers. In the Bible, wisdom is very often about observing and learning from wild nature. So we can look at the world in one of two ways. Is it a place of precious, awe-inspiring, multifaceted life and immense beauty, where every single part is touched by God's Spirit; or is it simply stuff to be grabbed, exploited, consumed and destroyed? Our spirituality and discipleship needs to reflect a determination, even in the face of adversity, to maintain and strengthen that bond between the whole created order that God so desires. As Margaret Thatcher once said: "No generation has a freehold on this earth. All we have is a life tenancy with a full repairing lease." We were created to live as part only of the natural order- the term 'Nefesh hayyah' (living being), used to describe Adam in Genesis, is also used to describe the animals! God makes no distinction between humanity and the rest of the natural world. Perhaps we should reflect on the fact that we could not exist without the world, but it could exist without us!

"Your Kingdom come; Your Will be Done on Earth...."

We need to remember too that God didn't just set the world running and leave it to its own devices, and He didn't turn His back on humanity when sin and disobedience came into the world. Rather, He stayed intimately involved with Creation, and 'so loved the world' (Jn 3:v16) that He broke into it through Jesus Christ to redeem not just humanity, but 'to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood shed on the cross.' (Col 1: v20.) So if as Christians we delight in God's love how can we not delight in the majesty of His Creation, of which we are a part, because everything around us is imbued with His spirit? As true disciples how can we not love and respect it as such? Our spirituality needs to reflect God's delight in what He has made back into Creation itself through our care of it, because He will redeem and transform it though Jesus Christ. The Gospel that we are called upon to preach is almost meaningless if we consider that it is for humanity alone. As Tom Wright says, "God will redeem the whole universe; Jesus' resurrection is the beginning of that new life, the fresh

grass growing through the concrete of corruption and decay in the old world.”

Shalom!

So right at the heart of our spirituality and discipleship then should be the acknowledgement that the world belongs to God, not to us—we are simply a part of the created order, albeit with a special role to play. What God



Scene of fall of Adam and Eve in paradise with a dragon tempter on a fig tree. External wall of the Cathedral, Orvieto, Italy

desires for His world is ‘shalom’-wholeness and wellbeing. Interaction and interdependence on the natural world are woven right through the story of God’s people. Most of Jesus’ teaching was done in the open, and many of the parables drew on images of the land and its resources—there was an intimate connection to the natural world that has been lost in today’s post-modern society. Our role as disciples is to re-establish that connection, to live lives that reflect God’s desire for ‘shalom’ and harmony across the whole of the natural world—in other words to live in ways that not only do not disadvantage other parts of creation, but which actually work for, and even enhance them. We are, as Wright says, building for the future, for the renewed Kingdom, and our spirituality should embody “every act of love, gratitude and kindness, every work of art inspired by the love of God and inspired by the beauty of his creation, every act of care and nurture that embodies holiness and makes the name of Jesus honoured in the world.”

I will leave the final word to Bishop James Jones, Bishop of Liverpool until 2013: -

“Jesus teaches us to pray that God’s will be done on earth as it is in heaven. The thought that life on earth among all God’s creatures might reflect the harmonious relationships within heaven is the greatest inspiration for Christians. I have come to see that the future of the earth is central to the mission of God.”

Richard

References: Dave Bookless: Planetwise.

Richard Bauckham: The Bible and Ecology



LENT ON THE EDGE: Volunteers turned out on Saturday mornings during Lent to cut back and tidy the edges of the churchyard paths. Seen here are organiser Ken Gibson and, wielding the broom, Liz Midgley.



Please help keep our Churchyard beautiful

Soon, perhaps, the rain will stop raining and the sun will shine but all the time the grass is growing in our churchyard, which provides such a beautiful and peaceful place for people and wildlife. It is a place of comfort and reflection for so many.

People have been generous with their time, getting together to cut back the path edges in the Lent on the edge project organised by Ken and Jill Gibson, and many thanks for all their hard work.

Jacqui Harris and I think the churchyard never looked better than it did last summer but it takes regular cutting and that takes money, and so we are asking for your contributions to **ST MARYS BITTON CHURCHYARD FUND**. Contact Barbara Merritt 9323926, and of course if *Gift Aided* we get 25% back from the Government

We hope for your help to keep our Churchyard a beautiful green space at the heart of the village.

Barbara Merritt

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Bitton History Group

Mike Gates -
**Local history changes our
perspective**



The 3rd Dragoon Guards violently suppressing the Bristol Riots of 1831:
Artist unknown

Although our History Group meetings have, for the time being, been cancelled, hopefully interest in local history continues. As a boy decades ago, I remember history taught as a subject concerning kings and conquerors, prime-ministers and wars. There was nothing about my grandmother or my ancestors and their struggles. History was the record of the privileged few rather than of the unprivileged and anonymous many.

Fortunately, interest in local history is changing our perspective. Since Bitton Parish History Group was formed six years ago we have been bit-by-bit uncovering and reclaiming our own history. The

Continued overleaf



**Rev H T Ellacombe
Curate and Vicar of
Bitton 1817 to 1850**

Ellacombe wrote a History of the Parish of Bitton, published in 1881.

He also visited Bristol Infirmary after the riots of 1831, but found none of his parishioners among those wounded.

His picture hangs in St Mary's Church

success in achieving this has been because we are all contributing and sharing our records and memories, which together combine to make a different account than the history books. We have rich stories and memories that could only have been told by local residents.

We have uncovered and shared photographs that surprise and delight us. Some of the astonishing discoveries now help us to better understand what have made our communities today. An example is how we met to hear the personal stories of eight people who remember the Great Flood of Bitton in 1968. Their reports are shocking and horrific, yet full of bravery and warning for the future.

In this journey of discovery, we are finding that the common folk, like our unknown ancestors, now and again revolted and were very effectively put down by those above them. One such time was to be

the subject of this month's talk by Professor Alan Jocelyn on the Bristol Riots of 1831. Recent research is shedding a new light on this event in the same way that it did with the Peterloo Massacre of 1819. It is now thought that as many as 500 people died rather than the original report of seven deaths.

The rioting took place after the failure to reform Parliament, in which cities such as Bristol only 6,000 people could vote out of a population of over 100,000. We now have to decide whether the rioters were malcontents and ruffians, as they were described, or were they citizens justly standing up for their democratic rights in a corrupt system. They set light to the important buildings of Bristol, leaving the city in ruins, but hardly deserved to be hacked down with sabres.

We don't know whether local people were involved. In his History of the Parish of Bitton, Revd. H.T. Ellacombe writes; *'I visited the Bristol Infirmary the day after the outrages, but I could not find among the wounded sufferers any person from Kingswood, or other parts of the parish of Bitton.'* However, the journal of Charles Greville, Clerk of the Privy Council, says: *'One body of dragoons pursued a rabble of colliers into the country, and covered the fields and roads with the bodies of wounded wretches, making a severe example of them.'*

We all have a deep need to understand our past and to uncover our history in order to understand the present and the future. Fortunately, we now have the technology to research the many different viewpoints that constitute history and, through our website, we are able to preserve this material and make it accessible to everyone.

www.bittonhistory.org.uk

Before the shut-down : **Keeping Bitton Beautiful**



The wet weather in February and March did not dampen the enthusiasm of residents to get stuck in make efforts to tidy up and improve the local environment. The now annual spring litter pick was this year held on the once in four date of 29 February between hail and heavy rain showers. Organised by Jon Booth, Bags and tools were provided by South Gloucestershire Council and a large haul of litter from roads and lanes was collected and many miles covered

Two weeks later and the sun shone, albeit temporarily on a smaller party extending the coverage of snowdrops. Planted "green" is often the best way to plant snowdrops and this year the Poundfield was selected where trees have recently been planted. Five hundred snowdrops, many kindly donated by Karen Smith were planted.

Sadly, other BVRA activities and those of its connected groups and clubs have had to be curtailed due to the COVID 19 emergency, including the Gardening Club, Flicks in the Sticks and the History Group. Some activities in the open air may be able to continue.

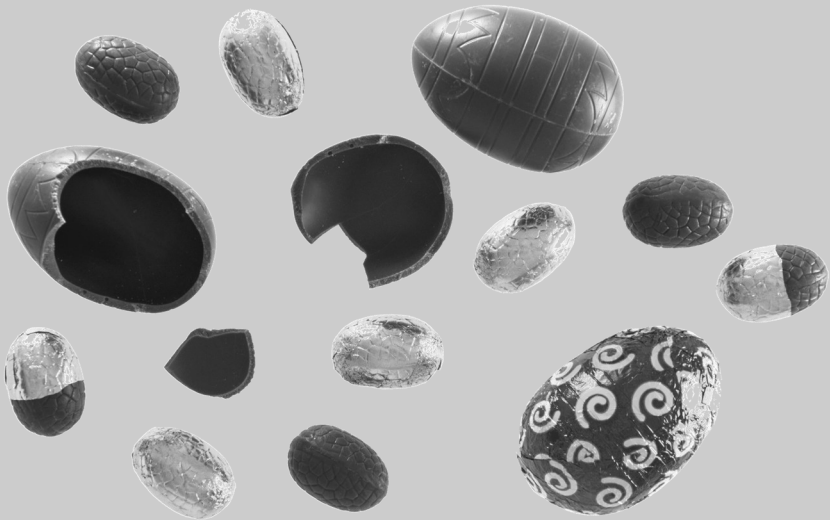


Opposite page: **Volunteers gather with bags and grab sticks to remove rubbish from Bitton's roads.**

Above: **Kate Ward (right) organised a party to plant snowdrops - pictured here on the Pound Field—with special thanks to helpers Pippa and Alex Simmonds.**

Right; **The fruits of previous years' efforts in the welcoming strip of yellow daffodils greeting spring and visitors to Bitton**





THE EASTER EGG - A MORE ANCIENT TRADITION THAN YOU MIGHT THINK

Although our Easter Egg Hunt won't be taking place this year, the items you can still be strip the supermarket shelves of, are Easter Eggs. Easter Eggs are big business: it was estimated that last year £900million was spent on chocolate and other similar Easter treats and while they do seem to be on sale ridiculously early (Cadbury's Cream Eggs are usually on sale from 1 January), there is a rich history and tradition that lies behind them.

They were not always chocolate, of course; but decorated eggshells is a very ancient tradition and eggs were seen as a symbol both of death and rebirth in the ancient cultures of Egypt, Crete and Mesopotamia. Decorated ostrich eggs have been found in ancient tombs.

It certainly seems that Mesopotamia, later Persia and now Iran, is where the Christian custom of stained eggs began. They were stained red representing the blood of Christ at his crucifixion and even today the coloured egg is one of the symbols used in the Persian new year festival of Nowruz. There is a Jewish link too when a hard-boiled egg is placed on the Passover ceremonial plate, and the celebrants eat hard-boiled eggs dipped in salt water as part of the ceremony.

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The route of the tradition into western Christianity may have come via the Orthodox church through Russia in the first instance with the Roman church adopting the custom much later, in the seventeenth century as a symbol of Christ's resurrection. Some scholars believe that the association was much earlier and stems from the prohibition on Catholics from eating eggs during the period of Lent. As the chickens did not stop laying, by Easter there would have been a large stockpile with some hardboiled to ensure longevity. In many parts of Europe they were and are still coloured using onion skins. There were also some extraordinary accounts of egg gifts: in 1290 Edward I purchased 450 eggs to be decorated with colours or gold leaf and then distributed to his household.

As for chocolate eggs, the tradition begins rather closer to home and the first chocolate egg was made by Fry's of Bristol in 1873, with Cadbury following two years later. This was a luxury item, decorated by hand and a gift that could only have been afforded by the rich. The chocolate was dark and bitter and remained that way until Cadbury launched its famous Dairy Milk in 1905 and from then on eggs were made with this lighter and softer chocolate. The lowering of tariffs and the availability of cheap chocolate and cocoa from Britain's empire, as well as improved transportation meant that chocolate Easter eggs became available to the masses, although it was still a refined gift for adults.

Continued overleaf



The Easter Egg Hunt in St Mary's Churchyard last year

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Once rationing ended after the Second World War, chocolate Easter eggs started to be made again and targeted at an children’s market. As for the ubiquitous cream egg, this was first made by Fry’s in 1963 and only rebranded as a Cadbury’s Cream Egg in the 1970s , becoming not only the most well-known Easter egg of all but apparently the most recognisable item of British confectionery.

So, what about Easter Egg Hunts?

Our tradition of hunts seems to have come from Germany and is linked also to the character of the Easter Hare. This was an old folk tradition in which the hare brought gifts of eggs for children who had been good, hiding them around the village for them to find.

At Kensington Palace, the young Princess Victoria engaged in Easter Egg hunts to find eggs left by her German mother. Having married the German Prince Albert it is not surprising that the practice was extended to their children and, of course, what the Royal Family did was copied by their many subjects.

As you tuck into an Easter egg this Easter, think not only of the taste and the calories, but that you are linked to a tradition that dates back not just generations but centuries.





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VILLAGE RALLIES ROUND TO SUPPORT

Social media is being used to help garner support and help within the village. For those who use it, the Bitton Village and BVRA Facebook pages have resources about finding help.

Bitton has its own local Help Group, organised through the BVRA and have used a contact sheet that is being used widely to ensure that anyone who is having to self-isolate is not forgotten. Volunteers drop a contact note through designated letterboxes and then to respond accordingly if anyone needs help or support. If you would like to join them as a volunteer please contact Linette on 07740362958. The notes (a copy of which is printed below) are also available in the village shop—so if you think there is someone you don't know well and that they might need help, please use one yourself.

Many local groups of volunteers getting together to help ill or vulnerable people and the Council is putting together a directory of these groups so you can find one local to you at www.southglos.gov.uk/coronavirus To help while away the hours at home the BVRA is setting up a Jigsaw, Games and DVD Swap Shop.

Hello! If you are self-isolating, I can help



- My name is: _____
- I live in Bitton at:
- My 'phone number is:
- If you are self-isolating because of Coronavirus (COVID-19) then I would be delighted to help with...
 - Picking up shopping
 - A friendly 'phone call
 - Posting mail
 - Urgent supplies
 - Etc

Just call or text me and I will do my best to help (for free)

Coronavirus is contagious. Please take every precaution to ensure that you are spreading only kindness. Avoid physical contact (2m distance) and wash your hands regularly. Items will be left on your doorstep. The BVRA is encouraging this voluntary service but can take no responsibility for any outcomes.

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8 - 10 MAY 2020

VE Day anniversary street party

Bitton street party update

Although at the time of going to press, plans were under way for an afternoon street party in Church Road on Friday 8th May to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day, concerns surrounding the coronavirus mean the event may have to be cancelled.

Please keep an eye out for updates, including at St Mary's.

Notes prepared to help you look after yourself during the COVID-19 outbreak

World Health Organisation Mental Health Considerations during COVID-19 Outbreak

6 March 2020

In short:

Try to avoid listening to the news if it is just causing you anxiety – listen often enough to know what you should be trying to do, but no more.

Share any reports of good news – those recovering from COVID-19 or looking after someone who has.

Remember all the individuals working to help you, and all of us, keep well and looked after – friends, family health care workers.

Keep in touch with your friends and social contacts – USE THE TELEPHONE or the internet. Don't wait for someone to call you – they may be doing exactly the same, and feel just as isolated.

Make sure the news and information you read make sense to you. If they don't, pick up the phone and check it out with someone you trust to help make it clear.

Keep busy doing the things you usually do to keep your mind occupied and yourself as active as you can be in the circumstances.

In January 2020 the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak of a new coronavirus disease in Hubei Province, China to be a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. WHO stated there is a high risk of the 2019 coronavirus disease (COVID-19) spreading to other countries around the world.

WHO and public health authorities around the world are taking action to contain the COVID-19 outbreak. However, this time of crisis is generating stress in the population. These mental health considerations were developed by the Mental Health Department as support for mental and psychological well-being during COVID-19 outbreak.

General population

1. COVID-19 has and is likely to affect people from many countries, in many geographical locations. Don't attach it to any ethnicity or nationality. Be empathetic to those who got affected, in and from any country, those with the disease have not done anything wrong.
2. Don't - refer to people with the disease as "COVID-19 cases", "victims" "COVID-19 families" or the "diseased". They are "people who have COVID-19", "people who are being treated for COVID-19", "people who are recovering from COVID-19" and after recovering from COVID19 their life will go on with their jobs, families and loved ones.
3. Avoid watching, reading or listening to news that cause you to feel anxious or distressed; seek information mainly to take practical steps to prepare your plans and protect yourself and loved ones. Seek information updates at specific times during the day once or twice. The sudden and near-constant stream of news reports about an outbreak can cause anyone to feel worried. Get the facts. Gather information at regular intervals, from WHO website and local health authorities' platforms, in order to help you distinguish facts from rumours.
4. Protect yourself and be supportive to others. Assisting others in their time of need can benefit the person receiving support as well as the helper.
5. Find opportunities to amplify the voices, positive stories and positive images of local people who have experienced the new coronavirus (COVID-19) and have recovered or who have supported a loved one through recovery and are willing to share their experience.
6. Honour caretakers and healthcare workers supporting people affected with COVID-19 in your community. Acknowledge the role they play to save lives and keep your loved ones safe.

For those caring for children

7. Help children find positive ways to express disturbing feelings such as fear and sadness. Every child has his/her own way to express emotions. Sometimes, engaging in a creative activity, such as playing, and drawing can facilitate this process. Children feel relieved if they can express and communicate their disturbing feelings in a safe and supportive environment.
8. Keep children close to their parents and family, if considered safe for the child, and avoid separating children and their caregivers as much as possible. If a child needs to be separated from his/her primary caregiver, ensure that appropriate alternative care is and that a social worker, or equivalent, will regularly follow up on the child. Further,

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ensure that during periods of separation, regular contact with parents and caregivers is maintained, such as twice-daily scheduled phone or video calls or other age-appropriate communication (e.g., social media depending on the age of the child).

1. Maintain familiar routines in daily life as much as possible, especially if children are confined to home. Provide engaging age appropriate activities for children. As much as possible, encourage children to continue to play and socialize with others, even if only within the family when advised to restrict social contact.
2. During times of stress and crisis, it is common for children to seek more attachment and be more demanding on parents. Discuss the COVID-19 with your children in honest and age appropriate information. If your children have concerns, addressing those together may ease their anxiety. Children will observe adults' behaviours and emotions for cues on how to manage their own emotions during difficult times.

For those caring for older adults

11. Older adults, especially in isolation and those with cognitive decline/dementia, may become more anxious, angry, stressed, agitated, and withdrawn during the outbreak/while in quarantine. Provide practical and emotional support through informal networks (families) and health professionals.
12. Share simple facts about what is going on and give clear information about how to reduce risk of infection in words older people with/without cognitive impairment can understand. Repeat the information whenever necessary. Instructions need to be communicated in a clear, concise, respectful and patient way and it may also be helpful for information to be displayed in writing or pictures. Engage their family and other support networks in providing information and helping them practice prevention measures (e.g. handwashing etc.)
13. Encourage older adults with expertise, experiences and strengths to volunteer in community efforts to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak (for example the well/healthy retired older population can provide peer support, neighbour checking, and childcare for medical personnel restricted in hospitals fighting against COVID-19.)

People in isolation

14. Stay connected and maintain your social networks. Even in situations of isolations, try as much as possible to keep your personal daily routines. If health authorities have recommended limiting your physical social contact to contain the outbreak, you can stay connected

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via e-mail, social media, video conference and telephone.

15. During times of stress, pay attention to your own needs and feelings. Engage in healthy activities that you enjoy and find relaxing. Exercise regularly, keep regular sleep routines and eat healthy food. Keep things in perspective. Public health agencies and experts in all countries are working on the outbreak to ensure the availability of the best care to those affected.
16. A near-constant stream of news reports about an outbreak can cause anyone to feel anxious or distressed. Seek information updates and practical guidance at specific times during the day from health professionals and WHO website and avoid listening to or following rumours that make you feel uncomfortable.

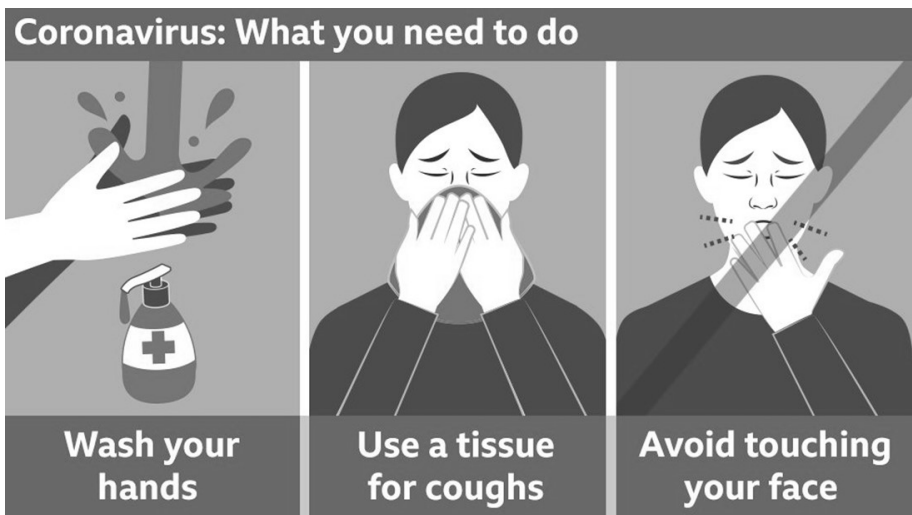
Stay informed:

Advice and guidance from WHO on COVID-19

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>,

<https://www.epi-win.com/>

This is a shortened version of the full WHO update found at https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af_2 17/03/2020



Prepared by M Fletcher for St Barnabas Warmley 17/03/2020

News from Bitton WI

It was another rainy, windy evening on March 9th when members met at St Mary's church hall where Diane Barnard advised us on how to Reduce, Reuse Recycle.

The meeting began with Jean reading the minutes of the last meeting, and a list of outings including the August outing when members and friends can enjoy a day out with a visit to a vineyard.

Clementine then asked for a show of hands about the venue for the Christmas party, the Grasmere seemed a popular choice for the meal in December.

We then introduced the speaker Diane Barnard who grew up in London, where she became involved in nature conservation. Diane then moved to Thornbury, where she joined an ECO church and became a client ambassador for the WI, which practices the 3Rs Reduce, Recycle and reuse, although the 3Rs have now become 8Rs with the addition of Rethink, Refurbish, Repair, Repurpose and Reinvent.

We all know about climate change and that countries are now experiencing weather extremes with drought, flooding and extremely high temperatures, and that we all need to do what we can to improve the situation.

A few years ago we were told of a large hole in the ozone layer, but with the reduction of CO2 in products things are improving.

We should all try to recycle more so that less waste is sent to landfill, which can produce harmful gases.

The use of micro beads used in cosmetics have found to be as harmful as plastic. Large areas of tropical forests are cleared to grow palm trees to produce palm oil used in food cosmetics and numerous other products.

Diane encouraged us to think about the food we waste, and to buy locally produced food,



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also to buy recycled goods, such as printer cartridges and copying paper. There are shops where you can take reusable containers and they can be filled with shampoo, washing up liquid and various cleaning products.

Members already use refillable water bottles and coffee cups, but were surprised that Oxfam will take old bedding, towels, rags etc. and that Specsavers will take old glasses.

Diane then answered questions from the members, after which we enjoyed refreshments.

Our next meeting on 20 April was due to learn about Freewheelers (blood bikes) but in view of the Government advice on public gatherings our meetings will be suspended until further notice

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March's quiz answers

Last month's quiz was on units of measurement of length.. The correct answers are:

1. Yard; 2. Mile; 3. Point; 4. Inch; 5. League; 6. Parsec; 7. Fathom; 8. Furlong; 9. Link; 10. Hand; 11. Ken; 12. Light Year; 13. Stadium; 14. Angstrom; 15. Cubit; 16. Smoot; 17. Rod; 18. Barleycorn; 19. Nautical Mile; 20. Verst

Correct Entries were received from

Jon & Pam Heyes; Anne Burmester; Frank FitzGibbon and team
Pam & Jon Booth

This months winners are Jon & Pam Heyes

The April Quiz

This month's quiz is Spanish words adopted into the English Language

No. Clue

1. Large reptile similar to a crocodile (A)
2. Nocturnal insectivorous mammal covered in bony plates (A)
3. Deep gorge, usually with a river flowing through it (C)
4. Goods carried on a ship, plane or motor vehicle (C)
5. Insect similar to a beetle (C)
6. Festival or Celebration of an event (F)
7. Member of a small independent group taking part in irregular fighting (G)
8. Cocktail with white rum, lime juice, sugar, mint and soda water (M)
9. Flying insect, the most deadly insect on Earth (M)
10. Herb, sometimes referred to as wild marjoram (O)
11. Savoury Spanish rice dish (P)
12. A paved outdoor area adjoining a house (P)
13. A person who deserts and betrays an organisation or country (R)
14. Exhibition of cowboy skills like bronco riding (R)
15. Type of Latin American dance music (S)
16. An afternoon snooze (S)
17. Tropical climbing orchid with long pod-like fruit (V)
18. A citizen who performs law enforcement without legal authority (V)
19. Large house plant (Y)
20. Type of dance emphasising movement of the heels (Z)

Name:

Contact:

Please send your answers to Carolyn
Russell at Martin House, Church Road,
Bitton (the yellow house) or email
mrscussell@icloud.com by 15 April



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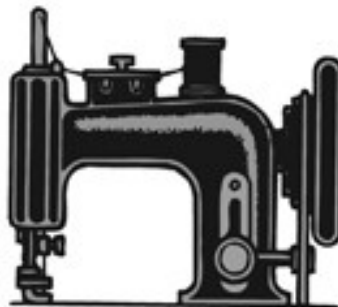
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