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June 2023

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St Mary's Church, Bitton

ANNUAL FÊTE & DOG SHOW

The Annual Fete and Dog Show will be taking place on Saturday 2nd September 2023.

We hope to have all the usual stalls and attractions plus a few new ones.

If you are able to help on before or after the fete, please get in touch. We are looking for people to help with:

- **THE HEAVY GANG**—to erect and take down the tents and tables.
- **RUNNING STALLS & GAMES**—even for just an hour or so, every little helps.
- **SELLING PROGRAMMES** on the gates.

FRESH IDEAS for stalls and games are also welcome.

Please contact the Fete Co-Ordinator, Helen Pugsley on 07767 777019 or email bittoncm@outlook.com

More on our website: **www.stmarysbitton.org.uk**

All proceeds from the fete go to St Mary's Church for its maintenance and upkeep. Local voluntary groups are welcome to publicise their work and seek volunteers. Commercial and independent stallholders are most welcome at our **AUTUMN FAYRE** to be held on Saturday 28 October 2023. Contact as above.



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Focal Point

Bitton Churches Magazine

June 2023

*A monthly church newsletter serving
Bitton, Swineford, Willsbridge,
Upton Cheyney & Beach*

*Published by St Mary's Church, Bitton and
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FOR ALL FOCAL POINT INQUIRIES

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*Deadline for the June edition
is:*

Thursday 15th June

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**Cover Photograph of
St Mary's Minstrels by Jane Clapp**

THE CHURCH HALL ARE NOW RUNNING

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June 2023



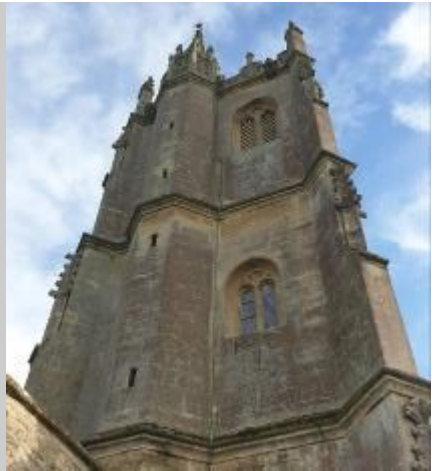
All Services are at 3pm

- | | | |
|---------------|-------------|---|
| Sunday | 4th | Service led by Neil Thorogood |
| Sunday | 11th | Celtic communion led by Richard Humphrey |
| Sunday | 18th | Service led by Steve Britton |
| Sunday | 25th | Bible study led by Steve Britton |



**ST MARY'S
CHURCH,
BITTON**

www.stmarysbitton.org.uk



Vicar:

Rev Jeremy Andrew
The Vicarage, Warmley
0117 967 2724

Ordained minister:

Rev Richard Humphrey
Splinters, Kenilworth Drive
Willsbridge 0117 949 0502

Curate:

Rev Rosemary Radcliffe
revrosemaryradcliffe@gmail.com

Lay ministers:

Ken Gibson
8 Church Road
Bitton
0117 932 2122

David Bailey
Westover, Bath Road
Bitton
0117 932 8949

Churchwardens:

Simon Harris
41 Combe Park
Weston
BATH
07714 615817

Vacancy

Services for June 2023

Services at St Mary's

Sunday, 4th June

TRINITY SUNDAY

10.30am Parish Communion

Sunday, 11th June

First Sunday after Trinity

10.30am Family Service with the
Scout Group and
St Mary's Minstrels



Sunday, 18th June

Second Sunday after Trinity

10.30am Morning Worship

Thursday, 22nd June

10.00am **Celtic Communion**

Followed by

11.00am **St Mary's Tea and Coffee Morning**
(see page 28 for more details)



Sunday, 25th June

Third Sunday after Trinity

8.00am Holy Communion

9.30am Family Café Church



From the Register

Sat 21st May—Wedding

Danielle Gay to David Lancaster



Benefice Prayer Opportunities

Saturday 10 June at 9.00am
Prayer breakfast in St Mary's Church Hall
Tuesday 27 June at 7.30 pm
On Zoom

Church & Church Hall Bookings

The Church Hall is available for hire and is a popular location for children's parties as well as regular events. For larger events such as community meetings or concerts the Church itself June be more suitable.

For Church Hall bookings contact Jill Gibson on **0117 932 2122**.

Rates from £12.50 per hour.

For Church bookings contact the Social Secretary, Jenny Harris by email on **djacharris@hotmail.com**

Rates from £25 per hour (2 hour minimum hire).

THE SISTERS OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE CHURCH LOAVES AND FISHES MINISTRY

Gifts may be left in St Mary's Church Porch between 10.15 and 11.45 on the First Sunday of each month and will be delivered to the Sisters on the following Wednesday.

The Sisters have made a special request for toiletries:

Shower gel, toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, shaving gel, sanitary towels, nappies, wet wipes, toothbrushes.

St Mary's Matters

Like many, I am a creature of habit. In the morning I listen to the Today programme on Radio 4, to catch up on the day's news, mindful that most of the articles now predict what is expected to happen today as opposed to what happened yesterday. I like to listen to the contributors being challenged and attempting a defence of the sometimes unjustifiable.

Later comes Radio 2, on in the background for most of the day, or at least it used to. The recent turbulence of presenters has changed the attraction. Radio is such an intimate experience whether in the home or on the move; it's there, dependable, an old friend. But things change. Having not really listened to commercial radio for years, I followed Ken Bruce to his new home at Greatest Hits Radio and quite liked it. Same old Ken, same old Pop Master Quiz and I even quite like some of the witty commercials. It just goes to show you can teach an old dog new tricks. A reminder that sometimes I need to get outside my comfort Zone and try something new.

Within the church, it's great to see some brighter light streaming in through the windows. We seem to have had quite a lot of rain lately. Which is great for the new spring growth but less welcome to anyone who needs to work out of doors. With the warmer weather and British Summer Time, comes the daily opening of the church, so a big thank-you to those dedicated folk who open up in the morning and lock the church at the end of the day. I often bump into people exploring the Churchyard and who express surprise and delight that the church is open for them to look inside and perhaps take a moment of quiet reflection. I know that this places an additional burden on our church cleaning team and I am very grateful to Pam for her great efforts in this area.



Simon Harris

Focal Point, June 2023

Working closely with Phil, Vowles, we have recently fixed a substantial leak in our heating system which required the plumber to go pot-holing down a services duct below the Choir Vestry and I have spent some time completing a Fire Risk Assessment. A dry old subject, but essential; we now just need to follow up on the observations. The Muniment Room (above the Choir Vestry) has received additional extinguishers as part of the transformation into an office for a Benefice Administration Assistant. Next on the list is a good clear out. We also have some electrical work scheduled for the end of May to place sockets where they are needed and so get rid of the plethora of extension leads that seem to wind out when no one is looking.

Wishing all of our readers best wishes for some brighter weather and reminding us all that communication is a key element of any job or role. There is no monopoly on good ideas and I always welcome your thoughts.

Summer Mid-week Groups

During the months of June and July, all 4 groups will be meeting to learn about the life of King David and discussing what lessons we can take from his many faceted life – some good and some bad.

During the two months each group will meet on 4 occasions and will plan their dates to fit with people's holidays. You will be very welcome at whichever suits you. Just contact the person named below to find out the date upon which that group will be starting:

Tuesdays at 7.30 pm at the Warmley Vicarage

Contact Jeremy Andrew 0117 967 2724

Wednesdays at 10.30 am at Westover, Bath Road, Bitton

Contact David Bailey 0117 932 8949

Wednesdays at 7.30 pm at 8 Church Road, Bitton

Contact Ken Gibson 0117 932 2122

Thursdays at 7.30 pm at Kenilworth Drive, Willsbridge

Contact Pete Midgley 0117 932 6898

Focal Point, June 2023

BATH GILBERT & SULLIVAN SOCIETY PRESENTS

A CONCERT PERFORMANCE OF GILBERT & SULLIVAN'S

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SATURDAY 24 JUNE 2023 AT 7.30 PM

ST MARY'S CHURCH, BITTON

TICKETS: £10

**CONTACT JENNY HARRIS ON 07970 325927
or email djacharris@hotmail.com**

John Sibley—Lay Minister

I come to serve not to be served

Hello Everyone,

As I write this letter, the sun is shining, the birds are singing and a pair of blue tits are frantically going back and forth with nesting material for the bird box on our back wall. We all feel so much better when we have some sunshine don't we?

As a Christian, I always feel so much better after Easter. The period of Lent allows the time and space to think about what being a Christian actually means. It gives us time to reflect on the readings we have heard and then in Holy Week it really all comes into focus, especially on Good Friday when we think about how much Jesus suffered to free us from sin. Then, on Easter Day, we celebrate Jesus glorious resurrection from the dead. We have the evidence now that truly Jesus was the son of God, The Messiah. Every Easter my faith is rejuvenated and I feel renewed and ready to serve God in any way I can. Easter is like pushing the reset button

Jesus said, "I come to serve not to be served", words echoed by King Charles at his coronation. So it is for me as I live my life as a Christian, and I suspect for all Christians. We come to serve, not to be served.

John Sibley LLM

Upton Cheyney Chapel to close in September

It has been announced that the URC chapel at Upton Cheyney will close in September. The last service in the chapel will be held on 10th September.

The news was announced with great sadness, but the chapel, which was rerieved from closure a decade ago does not have sufficient support to continue.

The chapel was built in the 1830s and was one of many non-conformist chapels within the parish of Bitton that offered an alternative to the Anglican Church. A schoolroom was later constructed at the rear of the building, later replaced by the Upton Cheyney School. The chapel was very much a centre of life in Upton Cheyney and until the mid twentieth century had a sizeable congregation.

Although the chapel has proved to be a popular venue for weddings, and retains a small number of dedicated members, this is not enough to maintain the chapel and the United Reform Church has decided that it should close its doors for the last time. The future of the building is, as yet, unknown.



How Bitton celebrated the Coronation



Photo by Douglas MacDonald

The Coronation got off to a wet start on 6th May, with a downpour of rain, but that did not prevent our bell ringers marking the occasion with a special *Ring for the King*. By the next day the weather had improved enough for a village gathering to mark the occasion in the churchyard. Following a blessing of the two trees planted for the Queens' Green Canopy this commemorative photograph was taken.

More pictures on pages 18 and 19.



A PROUD TRADITION

The St Mary's Bell Ringing Team for King Charles' Coronation, *Ring for the King* proudly displaying a photograph of the team that rang for the Coronation of George V in 1911.



GOD SAVE THE KING

There was a toast to Their Majesties, following the Service of Thanksgiving at St Mary's on the day after the Coronation.



COMMERORATION

The blessing of the trees.

THE BIG LUNCH

There was a large turnout on the Pound Field on Sunday afternoon when we were blessed with fine weather.





MUSIC FOR ALL

Among the musicians performing were *The Jazzbeanz* (pictured above) while the *St Mary's Minstrels* take a well-earned break.

(Picture by Jane Clapp)



Are you sitting comfortably?

The answer to that question is probably a resounding “no” if you have had to sit on one of St Mary's benched pews for any length of time.

The pews, which date from the 1880s are unusual, being made of oak rather than the pine that was used very widely in churches during the same period. They also have individually carved ends each traditionally thought to have been designed by the Vicar, Henry Nicholson Ellacombe.

Although the pews give a “traditional” look to the church, they are a barrier to the more flexible use of the building as a community centre and limit the range of activities that can be held.

Now, after a lot of work a new pew has been designed that is both more comfortable and moveable. It has a wider seat and cushions on both the seat and the back. It means that the church will be able to be used in a more flexible way, but also retain its traditional form, with forward facing pews most of the time.



Some have already tried it—why don't you?

Now it is over to you –

The Church Futures Committee need your views about the new pew and its comfort and are holding a DROP IN EVENT on Saturday 3rd June from 11-00am to 3-00pm.

Come and try the new pew and tell us what you think about it and the wider proposals for the future use of the church. Tea, coffee and cakes will be available.

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Get out and discover the past

Anyone who wants to look more closely at the past in a different way, now has new options.

Tour maps

The Bitton Parish History Group, have published a series of detailed tour maps to take visitors and locals alike on a journey through local villages' most significant historical landmarks.



The walks are self-guided, allowing individuals to take their time and explore the area at their own pace. There are separate maps for Bitton, Oldland Common and Willsbridge.

Each walk comes with an easy-to-read illustrated map that guides visitors through the historic sights of the area. The maps also include step-by-step directions, photos, and background information. Accessibility details are clearly indicated on each map.

You can download the maps on the Bitton Parish History Group's website www.bittonhistory.org.uk/walks/ or collect them (free) from St Mary's Church porch as well as other locations in the area.

Continued overleaf



Recent Past

The new audio guides include the story of the Millennium Patchwork and how it became a community project

More Audio Guides

For those wanting a less energetic experience, why not drop into St Mary's Church itself and take a mobile phone with you. That way you will be able to access up to 20 audio descriptions (10 new ones have been added) about treasured and often unusual objects from the church's past.

The oldest item is parts of a rood (a stone carving of Christ on the Cross) which dates back over a thousand years. Many of the objects have fascinating links to faraway places – to Switzerland, Verona, the battlefields of northern France; and even Maryland, in the United States.

Each description has been read by a team of local volunteers and is accompanied by a series of related pictures.

The church is open to visit every day for the rest of the summer.



Art of the Anglo-Saxons

The oldest item the guides cover is that of the stone road, - a figure of Christ—that dominated the interior of the church a thousand years ago.



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Donations sought for the Church Fête

This year's church fete will take place on Saturday 2nd September 2023 from 1.30pm until 5.30pm. .
Donations are already welcome for the following::

- Bookstall** – contact Sarah Heavens 0117 932 5376
White Elephant - Nicola Bennetts 0117 932 4696
Nearly Nu (clothing) Annette Vowles 0117 932 6352
Bottle Stall - Sarah Craddock 0117 932 8644
Tombola - a wide range of items would be welcome for the tombola including toiletries, games, sweets, chocolates , household items etc – Alison Wride
0117 932 4931

Items can be left in the church porch when the church is open (usually 10am to 5pm). Please don't leave them

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St Mary's Church Fête

2nd September 2023

PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

Entries are invited now

Photographs can be in colour or black and white. It must be your own work and have been taken within the last 2 years.

There are 6 categories for both adults and juniors (under 16s). Entry is £2 per photo for adults and free for under 16s.

The categories are:

- **Coronation**
- **Best friend**
- **Happy place**
- **The colour blue**
- **My Bitton**
- **In motion**

Printed photographs must be a maximum of 20x20cms.

The digital limit is 10MB. Digital photographs will be printed 8"x6"

How to enter:

1. **Printed photographs** should be submitted in an envelope with your name, contact details, the date the photo was taken, category from above and your age if you are under 16 to: Rosewell, Church Road, Bitton by **6:00 on Thursday 24th August 2023**. - OR
2. **Submit a digital photograph** online on our website, or using one of these QR codes:

ADULT



UNDER 16



Join us at the fete where all entries and winners will be displayed. The overall winner will receive the David Smith Cup, and there will be other prizes too.

GOOD LUCK

Come for conversation and a cuppa



St Mary's Tea and Coffee Mornings

How are your Thursday mornings? Would they be better with a decent cup of coffee or tea and a chat?

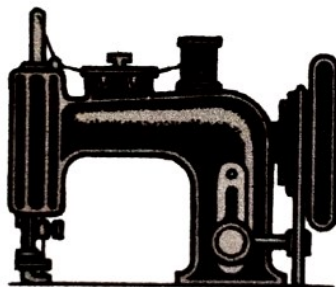
Of course they would, - so, why not drop into St Mary's at 11.00am on Thursday 22nd June, when the Rev Rosemary Radcliffe will be hosting a new **St Mary's Coffee Morning**.

For those who wish to attend there is a service of Celtic Communion at 10.00am, but the coffee morning is an entirely separate event to which all are very warmly invited.

The event will be held monthly on the fourth Thursday of the month and there is hope it will become a regular and popular event.

For more information contact
RevRosemaryRadcliffe@gmail.com

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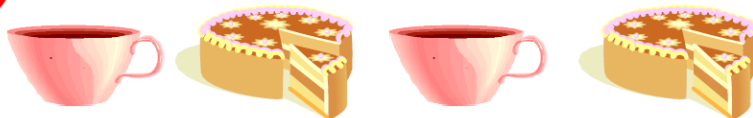
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VEGETABLE GARDEN AVAILABLE

A vegetable garden has become available in Kelston. Would suit a keen gardener or couple wishing to grow more vegetables. The garden has been well maintained but the owner is currently unable to look after it and would like someone to have the benefit. Contact **Pat Jeffries 01225 429448**

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News from Bitton WI

This month's slightly later than usual meeting began with the usual Welcome from our President, Jean and last month's minutes read and agreed.

Our Secretary, Ros, gave us a flavour of the shortlisted Resolution our WI is supporting this year. Entitled "*Clean Waters for People and Wildlife*", it highlights the poor quality of water in our rivers and seas, due to pollution from sewerage and other contaminants regularly pumped into our waterways. The resolution asks WI groups to work with local authorities to stop such pollution and improve the water quality to enable safe bathing for people and the limit the harm to wildlife. We unanimously agreed to support this resolution.

Our WI summer trip this August is to see the SS Great Britain. Members are reminded to put their name down if they wish to go. If you aren't going to be at the next meeting, please email us on **bittonwi@gmail.com** to add your name.

Our Speaker for this meeting was Clive Brain who gave us an interesting and illuminating talk about the M-Shed and the exhibits. Clive told us that before retirement, he worked as a Fireman both on land and on water on a boat called the Pyronaut. Clive would tell us more about the Pyronaut later in his talk.

He began by telling us about the M-Shed and why it was so called. Many of you will know that Bristol was a port city and had ships and boats coming right up into the centre of Bristol as far back as 1200s. The docks gave letters to each of the buildings within the dock and the M-Shed was just that – M Building.



Focal Point, June 2023

He told us how in 1245 the river course was changed by putting in dams and creating a new cut called the Feeder Canal to allow water to remain in the docks when the tide went out. This had previously caused many problems as ships anchored in the docks would often list or fall over when the tide went out! The M-Shed still has 4 cranes alongside, 3 still work and one under restoration. This can be seen working most weekends and the public are allowed to climb into the cabs and have a go at moving one.

Clive told us of the many exhibits in the M-Shed and of some that are kept in-store in their original condition which the public were able to view also. Visitors to the M-shed can take a ride in one of their restored steam trains or a river tour in one of 3 boats which were in service on the river many years ago. The Mayflower, the John King and the Pyronaut are all still running today.

The Mayflower and the John King would tow the larger ships up through the River Avon from Avonmouth into the Bristol Dockyard. In fact, the last working job for the John King was to pull the SS Great Britain back into its' resting place in the Bristol Harbour.

Clive was the Coxen (Skipper) of the Pyronaut when it was in service and recalled how he worked on fires in Bristol as well as now working on the restored boat for M-Shed. The Pyronaut was involved in the Queen's Jubilee celebrations in Bristol and London. Trips around the harbour usually take place throughout the summer at the weekend.

Our next meeting will be held on Monday 12 June 2023, 2 pm, Church Hall, Church Road, Bitton. As always all welcome. Our speaker will be talking to us on "Maya to Mini Eggs". (I'm hoping there will be samples to try!). Any questions or enquiries, do contact us by emailing bittonwi@gmail.com.

A quick and delicious recipe courtesy of our national WI. Lemon Posset is a classic English dessert and extremely indulgent. Perfect to finish any meal.

Karen Davidson

Lemon Posset

Serves 4 to 6

Ingredients

600ml Double Cream
2 Lemons
10ml Dry White Wine
Caster Sugar to taste
3 Egg Whites



Method:

1. Grate lemon rinds finely, add to the cream and whisk until stiff
2. Stir in lemon juice and wine
3. Taste and stir in sugar
4. Whisk egg whites until stiff and fold into the cream
5. Pour into individual glasses and decorate
6. Serve immediately and enjoy

To serve

Whipped Cream & Berries

Bitton Village Residents Association
Invites you to

BITTON OPEN GARDENS

On Sunday 11 June 2023

Gardens will be open to view from 12noon to 5pm when we hope the sun will be shining and the gardens will be looking their best. Please remember dogs, excepting Guide Dogs, are not allowed in the gardens.

As always there will be a Plant Sale and Tea & Cakes serving from 2pm in the garden at Church Farm. Programmes with a list of the open gardens and a map, will be available from the Village Shop, St Mary's Church, Upton Inn and The Swan and digitally from local groups.

Also from Church Farm on the day.

We will also e-mail the programme to you if you are on the BVRA mailing list. If you have any plants that you could donate to the plant sale, we would love to have them. Please can you clearly label them with the plant name and bring them along to Church Farm, Church Road, Bitton in the morning.

For more information contact

Sue Murtagh Tel 932 6232 or e-mail

sue.murtagh@btinternet.com

Gabriel Frankcom Tel 932 6158 or e-mail

gabriel01.wood@gmail.com

Everyone is welcome so do bring your friends

**This event is Free
but you will need cash for the Tea & Cakes and the
Plant Sale**

Puzzle Pages

SUDUKO CHALLENGE

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 5 | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 6 | 4 | | |
| | 3 | 6 | | 2 | 9 | 1 | | |
| | 7 | | | 1 | 2 | | | |
| 8 | 9 | | | | | | 4 | 1 |
| | | | 3 | 9 | | | 2 | |
| | | 7 | 9 | 4 | | 2 | 3 | |
| | | 5 | 7 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | 8 | 6 |

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Answers to both puzzles are available on the church website www.stmarysbitton.org.uk - click on **News & Focal Point** or use this QR code



WORD SEARCH

This word search is themed around the Apostle St Peter whose feast day falls on 29 June.



You are looking for:

Simon
Peter
Fisherman
Bethsaida
Galilee
Andrew
Jesus

Rock
Transfigura-
tion
Raising
Daughter
Garden
Gethsemane

Betrayed
Cock
Crowded
Feed
My
Lambs
Sheep

Keys
Kingdom
Gates
Hell
Binding
Loosing

June Prize Quiz

By Carolyn Russell

This month's quiz is about the names of military aircraft

No. Clue

1. A book of maps
2. East Sussex town, where a battle was fought in 1066
3. Capital city of Australia
4. Spock in Star Trek was one of these
5. A streak of light that is followed by thunder
6. A spear which is thrown in field events in sport
7. Species of cartoon pop stars, Alvin, Simon and

8. Previous name of the Indian city of Mumbai
9. A shooting star caused by an object and turn

10. Tool used to cut and gather crops during the harvest
11. Roman name for the Greek hero Heracles
12. British sports car made by triumph between 1962 and

13. Tropical cyclone that develops over the Northwest

14. Tropical cyclone above the North Atlantic, Central, North

15. Large bird that catch small birds and animals for food
16. Historic city on the River Lune
17. A hooved animal with 1 or 2 humps on its back
18. Mythological creature with a lion's body and a bird's

19. Greek god of the sea, storms and earthquakes
20. Somebody showing great skill or proficiency about our planet

This month we have three options for you to submit your answers, which need to be returned by Friday 16th June:

1. Submit your answers online. Use the QR code opposite or visit the church website and go to the Focal Point section where you will find a RED button to submit your answers.

www.stmarysbitton.org.uk

2. By email to bittoncm@outlook.com
3. By sending your answers to Eastover, High Street (corner of Golden Valley Lane).

The June Quiz by Carolyn Russell



May Quiz Answers

Last month there was a special Coronation Quiz

Answers:

(1) 6th May 2023; (2) Buckingham Palace; (3) Diamond Jubilee State Coach; (4) Westminster Abbey; (5) Queen Camilla ; (6) St Edward's Crown; (7) Queen Mary's Crown ; (8) Chrism Oil; (9) Eagle; (10) The Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem; (11) Faith; (12) The Sovereign's Orb; (13) The Coronation Spoon; (14) Edward I; (15) Wood; (16) 39; (17) Andrew Lloyd Webber; (18) 8 ; (19) 4; (20) Two new trees in the churchyard.

Correct answers :

No entry had answered all questions correctly.

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From the draw of those with 19 correct answers, this month's prize goes to:

Gemma Comley



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The last word



Back to Normal?

The first Sunday in June, this year is Trinity Sunday and the return to what the church calendar calls *Ordinary Time*. Certainly, the last month with a Coronation and three bank holidays has felt less than ordinary and far from normal—whatever that means these days?

But the end of May also brought an end to what seemed like an unseasonably cold and wet spring, even if, according to the meteorologists it was in the normal range for the time of year. That is the problem with "normal" - your normality may not be the same as mine. However, as summer approaches and hopefully the new sunny weather will continue, it is time to get out and enjoy it. Why not take one of the walks provided by the Bitton History Group, or drop in the church which is open daily now. There are also many things to look forward to and not least, this month, the very popular event of Bitton Open Gardens and the welcome return of the Bath Gilbert & Sullivan Society to give a concert of Mikado songs.

Whatever is your normal—do enjoy it.

Jim Heavens

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