

Excalibur

THE CAMELOT PARISHES MAGAZINE

CAMELOT PARISHES WEBSITE - <http://camelotparishes.co.uk/>



NORTH CHERITON CHURCH AT EASTER

THIS ISSUE Coronavirus Information - *see pages 4-7*

Food Bank Collections - *see page 9* Home Schooling - *see page 12*

MAY 2020

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CHURCHWARDENS

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Martin Russell
Anne Warren

EXCALIBUR MAGAZINE

EDITOR - Rob Sage *see opposite*

From the Rectory

In these times of the coronavirus emergency and restrictions a number of us have been keeping in touch through an electronic magazine known as Cutting Edge Camelot. You can find back numbers of Cutting Edge Camelot on this website and if you are not already on the circulation list please do let us know your email address and we will add you to this list.

One question which I asked readers of Cutting Edge Camelot before Easter was how they had found God to be at work in their lives during the coronavirus emergency.

There were three main strands to their responses. First there was a realisation that God is reshaping our lives through this emergency in many different ways. We are all being asked to question what really matters and what our priorities are.

So it may be a time where our faith is tested and where we are led into a greater prayerfulness and recognition of God's protection.

Another theme was how God can bring good out of the destructive evil of this pandemic. Partly this depends on our own response to this crisis. It can be a way in which we are released from our own self-centredness and it can also be a way in which God can slow down our busy lives.



And finally, many people commented on how they were experiencing in these times an outpouring of love, support and encouragement. They were thankful to receive the kindness of other people and they felt a greater sense of connection with them.

The experience of this time of emergency will be different for all of us and we are all suffering hardship and loss in one form or another. Nevertheless, I was encouraged by these responses that I received and they made me think once again of the truth of the affirmation drawn from St Paul with which I concluded my article in the last issue of Excalibur. For in the end when all else is taken from us faith, hope and love remain.

*With my love and prayers,
Tristan*

CAMELOT VOLUNTEER NETWORK

It has been so heartening to witness the rapid growth of many neighbourhood volunteer networks in so many of our Camelot villages. Help has been focussed around shopping and delivering food and medical supplies to the elderly and vulnerable, those who are forced to self-isolate and who are unable to shop for themselves. Do please get in touch with the following people who are co-ordinating volunteers for different villages:-

North Cadbury and Woolston

Keri Montague,
kerimontague@yahoo.com, 07889 678653

Galhampton

Sue Cox, suecox1634@gmail.com, 440596

Yarlington

Amanda Ellingworth,
a.ellingworth@gmail.com, 07775 755889

Bratton Seymour

Debbie Garrett,
dimgarrett22@gmail.com, 33047
and Fran Creffield, 07854 307864,
francreffield@gmail.com

South Cadbury

Samantha Davey,
samanthadavey8985@gmail.com,
441382 and 07809 361895

Compton Pouncefoot

Tony Beadles,
tonybeadles@me.com, 440461

Blackford

Jane Monk, 440666,
jane_s_monk@hotmail.com

Holton

Lisa Prior, lisaprior63@btinternet.com,
07773 440147

North Cheriton

Richard Strachan,
rcstrachan@btinternet.com, 33231

If your village does not seem to be covered by any of this or if you have queries could you please contact the overall co-ordinator, Keri Montague.

The clerk of North Cadbury and Yarlington Parish Council, Becky Carter, 240226, parishclerk@northcadbury.org.uk, has also offered to be a hub to co-ordinate any requests for assistance from residents within the Parish Council area.

The above network may not be complete and if others are organising similar networks in their villages it would be really good to hear from them.

CUTTING EDGE CAMELOT

‘Cutting Edge Camelot’ is a form of electronic magazine which includes scripture passages, a reflection written by one of our Ministry Team, points for prayers, suggestions of new ways of sharing the Christian message in this time and brief news updates.

If you would like to be included in the email list for ‘Cutting Edge Camelot’ could you please contact Rob Sage (details top of

page 6) and give us your email address so that you can be added to the list.

Because of the current restrictions we cannot guarantee to be able to deliver print copies of this material to those not on email but we will do what we are able to do in this respect. Again if you telephone Rob Sage we will see what we may be able to do.

USEFUL INFORMATION RELATING TO THE CORONAVIRUS EMERGENCY

Sources of information

The following are sources of information which we can consult in order to find out the latest government and church guidance on the coronavirus emergency:-

Government - www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response

Church of England - www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches

Diocese of Bath and Wells - www.bathandwells.org.uk/supporting-parishes/ministry-support-vacancies/coronavirus-guidance-and-resources

NHS - www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19

Yeovil Hospital - www.yeovilhospital.co.uk/patients-visitors/visitor-information

Weddings, Baptisms/Christenings and Funerals

The churches can no longer be used for any service.

Therefore there can be no weddings as long as these emergency restrictions are in place. There can be no baptisms/christenings in church although emergency baptisms (when a child's life is in danger) can take place in hospital or at home, subject to strict hygiene precautions and physical distancing.

Funerals can only happen at the Crematorium or by the graveside and only immediate family members (spouse or partner, parents and children) can attend. Those over the age of 70 or with

underlying health problems are discouraged from attending and there should be physical distancing. Crematoria will also have their own rules and may allow only the funeral director and hearse bearers in the building itself, i.e. no ministers or family in the building. As the position is very fluid at the moment it will be necessary to check at the time with crematoria such as Yeovil and Mendip what their current rules are.

Where possible any preliminary meetings for funerals should be undertaken by telephone or Skype and it is recommended that there should be no social gatherings after these services.

For weddings, it is not possible to call banns while public worship services are suspended. Accordingly, the normal legal preliminary will now be Bishop's Common Licence.

Further and fuller information on these matters can be found on the Church of England website (details as above) which is kept regularly updated.

Church Meetings

We are asked only to hold essential meetings. While Holton Annual Meeting has already been held those of the other parishes have not. Accordingly these are being postponed and will be rearranged in due course. The Bishops have made legal changes to enable such meetings to take place at any time up until the end of October. Their actual date will depend on the relaxing of the social distancing measures.

Parishes Office

The Parish Office will only be staffed and open if this is absolutely necessary. We

recommend in the first instance not going to the Parish Office but contacting Rob Sage by email or telephone if you need administrative help at this time. Please use the e-mail at the bottom of page 2. If the Office is unmanned, please ring 01749 850934 during office hours.

Churches

As from Tuesday 24th March and following the Prime Minister's announcement the Camelot churches have been closed and will remain so until the government advises us that these restrictions have been lifted.

CAMELOT FAITH

Consult the diocesan website for information concerning streaming of church services. It currently has a link to the live streaming of services at St John's Yeovil but no doubt more links will be added as the current suspension of services continues.

The Prayer Book Society website, www.pbs.org.uk has details of online streaming of BCP services during the coronavirus pandemic.

On Mothering Sunday we launched a new

Pastoral Visits

Please be aware that under the new restrictions that pastoral visits can only be undertaken when essential and where phone contact is not enough. In cases where people are self-isolating there are even more stringent requirements. Please be aware that Yeovil District Hospital has indicated that the only visitors allowed are immediate family members or carers. This means that clergy cannot at the moment undertake visits to this hospital. Ministry in this respect will be undertaken by the hospital chaplain.

initiative 'Cutting Edge Camelot'. This is a form of electronic magazine which includes scripture passages, a reflection written by one of our Ministry Team, points for prayers, suggestions of new ways of sharing the Christian message in this time and brief news updates.

St John the Baptist North Cheriton has an idea for celebrating Easter by placing a posy of flowers (as a symbol of the Resurrection) in a jam jar by the side of the wall outside the church gate. See the photograph on the front cover.

CAMELOT HOPE

You may find the following websites helpful in terms of suggesting ideas and resources for prayer:-

www.24-7prayer.com/coronavirus/prayer
Thykingdomcome@lambethpalace.org.uk

Here is a prayer which has been submitted by a parishioner:

*'Creator of all that is, each and every day,
remove or render harmless all dangerous*

*viruses from myself, my loved ones, and
then from all infected beings and the Earth
as a whole.'*

This is a prayer which can be repeated for everyone's safety and to restore wellbeing to the afflicted. Our parishioner comments that he finds this to be an especially helpful prayer as it is specifically targeted at the virus and prays for the protection of all and healing of afflicted.

You may also wish to use the following special coronavirus prayer:-

God of hope be with me, calm my anxious mind and remove fear. Surround me, keep me safe until the threat passes. **Surround me with love, and deliver me from evil.**

Protect my **family**, preserve us O God, and keep us in health and provision. May my **community**, despite enforced isolation, be united through acts of loving kindness. **Surround us with love and deliver us from evil.**

Help those in the **NHS** as they care for the sick and deal with the virus; for **businesses** as they manage the economic challenges and for employees sent home. **Surround them with love and deliver them from evil.**

Grant wisdom to our **government** and may the **PM** be surrounded by wise counsel. Guide their decisions today to lead us safely. **Surround them with love and deliver them from evil.**

May those working to stop the pandemic globally make the breakthroughs they need to **eradicate the virus**. Reduce its impact on other nations affected today. **Surround them with love and deliver them from evil. Amen.**

CAMELOT LOVE

Please see details given above of the Camelot Volunteer Network. Special thanks are also due to Bob and Jackie New at the village shop in North Cadbury who have worked so hard to keep the community in supplies in these challenging times. We need to support them and all other local businesses who are seeking to respond to the various challenges that the new social restrictions place on us all.

Do, however, be aware that sadly there are also scams operating in these testing

On Mothering Sunday, we were all encouraged to light a candle and place it in our windows at 7.00pm as darkness fell as a symbol of Jesus Christ, the light of the world and to pray for an end to the pandemic. We might wish to continue to do this.

A Prayer for the Self-isolating

Loving God,
we pray for all those who are suffering because of the coronavirus,
may they know your healing power.

When we are afraid for ourselves
and our loved ones,
give us your strength and courage.

When we feel alone and isolated,
reassure us with a sense of your presence.

Give wisdom to those in authority
and may our community work together
for the good of all.

We give thanks for those
who care for others
and ask you to bless them in all they do.

We ask this in the name of Jesus,
healer and physician. Amen.

times, for instance, people knocking at the door and pretending to test for the virus or emails headed 'important information' which appear to be about the virus. Do not on any account click on any link that you might be unsure about.

If you have any pastoral concern do feel free to phone any of the Camelot Parishes Ministry Team whose numbers are listed at the beginning of Excalibur. As indicated in the 'Information' section pastoral visits can only be undertaken when essential so in the first instance we will do all that we can to help you over the telephone.

Camelot People

We give thanks to God for:

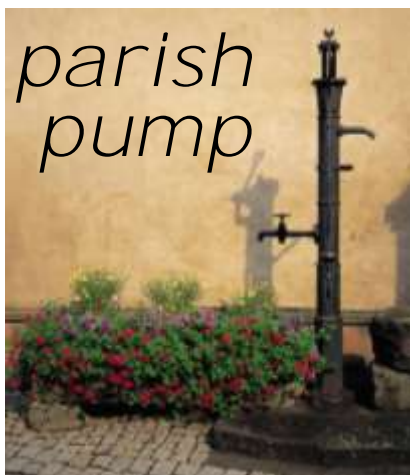
Nicholas Ronald Francis Adams (aged 65). Died on 14th February 2020. Funeral at St Michael's, Blackford on Monday 16th March.

Miles Anthony Ivan Hicks (aged 27). Graveside funeral at St Michael's, North Cadbury on Monday 6th April.

Erna Agnes Dora Rendell (aged 87). Died on 24th March 2020. Graveside funeral at St Thomas à Becket, South Cadbury on Wednesday 8th April.

Robert Charles Stephen Tucker (aged 69). Died on 29th March 2020. Graveside funeral at St Michael's, North Cadbury on Thursday 9th April.

Charles Julian Gordon Hoffman (aged 87). Died on 8th April 2020. Cremation at Yeovil Crematorium on Monday 20th April.



amount requested for next year's Excalibur subscription will be reduced.

Note to Advertisers

Some adverts, particularly those for village halls that are now closed, have been removed to make space and reduce the size of Excalibur.

As Excalibur is now only being published online, all advertisers will be given extra months in Excalibur before being asked to renew when we go back to printing a paper magazine.

Excalibur

Due to the Coronavirus restrictions, hand delivery of the Excalibur magazine is no longer possible. While the restrictions remain in place an electronic version of Excalibur will be placed on the Camelot Parishes website each month.

To compensation for the interruption in delivery of the paper magazine, the

The Lord's Larder

Do you know anyone who is short of food? Are you, perhaps?

Help is available, in confidence, from the Lord's Larder – not directly, but by phoning **01935 479398**.

YEOVIL FOOD BANK

COLLECTION POINTS FOR FOOD DONATIONS

Hello everyone!

Food banks are running seriously short of donations during the current coronavirus crisis.

While St Michael's Church in North Cadbury remains closed, we have no local collecting point for donations to the main regional food bank in Yeovil, The Lord's Larder.

So we have organised three locations for food donations in North Cadbury:

- One food donation box is located on the High Street,
opposite the Catash car park entrance.
- There is another food donation box **halfway down Cary Road** on the right hand side, between the Catash and the school.
- And there is another food donation box at the junction of **Cary Road and The Close.**

We'd really appreciate any food donations that you're able to place in any one of these three donation boxes, in particular:

- Tinned vegetables and tinned fruit
- Tinned meat and tinned fish
- Tinned baked beans and spaghetti
- Pasta, pasta sauces and packets of rice
- Tinned custard and rice pudding
- Packets of breakfast cereal
- Tea and coffee, and packets of sugar
- Cartons of long-life/UHT milk

- Cheese biscuits and sweet biscuits
- Fruit juice and squash
- Tinned baby food and packs of nappies
- Toiletries such as soap, toothpaste and toothbrushes
- Tinned and dried dog food and cat food

We will be emptying the donation boxes daily, and delivering all donations to the Yeovil food bank at least once a week.

To find out more about their work or to make a financial donation, please visit their website:

www.ycstyeovil.org.uk/help-us

There are also food donation points in several local supermarkets, including Morrisons in Wincanton and Tesco in Yeovil.

Thank you!

North Cadbury and Yarlington Parish Council

In light of the Coronavirus pandemic and government advice, all future meetings of the Council are postponed.

Mrs Rebecca Carter, Parish Clerk
Portman House, North Barrow,
Somerset, BA22 7LZ Tel. 01963 240226
Email parishclerk@northcadbury.org.uk

Mr Malcolm Hunt, Chairman
6 Court View, Chapel Lane, South Cadbury
Somerset, BA22 7BP Tel. 01963 440929
malcolmhunt@northcadbury.org.uk

From the Bishop

I wonder - are you someone who gets everything ready long before you need to; jobs done well before time; and someone who is never late for anything? Or are you someone who leaves things to the last minute; works right up to the deadline; and catches the bus or train with moments to spare? Or maybe you are somewhere in the middle?

One of the things that Bishop Ruth and I enjoy doing is writing these articles each month for parish magazines and newsletters. It gives us a chance to keep in touch with people across the diocese and to share the things that are in our hearts and minds as the year unfolds. The only drawback is that we have to write these articles well in advance, so that they reach magazine editors and church administrators in good time. The problem is of course that things may change in all sorts of ways between us writing them and you reading them. I am particularly conscious of that this month, as we are in the midst of the Coronavirus pandemic. Things are changing very fast and it is hard to know what the next few weeks will bring. That inevitably brings with it a certain degree of uncertainty and some of us, especially those who are isolated and



cut off, may be feeling anxious for ourselves or for others.

My hope throughout this time of 'lockdown' is that although some of us may have felt physically isolated from each other, that we have not felt socially or spiritually isolated. Indeed, I have been truly amazed and encouraged by all the stories I have heard of people caring for each other, phoning each other and going shopping for those who cannot get out to buy the food they need. At this stage none of us knows quite how and when this virus will eventually be brought under control. However, I do hope that when we get to the stage that restrictions can be safely lifted and we begin to go out and shop as we did before, that things will be different. Many of us have had difficulty buying the food we wanted. Some of us have had to rely on others for our daily needs. We have had to

***A time to
'Love our
neighbours
as ourselves'***

learn new ways to pray and keep in touch with others in our churches and communities. We have had to trust, hope, and look out for our neighbours, especially those who are particularly vulnerable. We have been humbled by the courage and dedication of those who work in the NHS and care homes and all who as 'key workers' have worked tirelessly to look after and provide for us.

Jesus taught us to 'Love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind' and 'to love our neighbours as ourselves'. My hope and prayer is that as we emerge from this pandemic that we and our communities may be a more compassionate, more generous, more grateful. And may we all have discovered what it is to know in a deeper way the peace and the presence of God.

May the peace and the joy of the Risen Lord be with you.

✠ Bishop Peter

It's easy finding reasons why other folks should be patient. – George Eliot



Gardener

RHS trained

Emma Kane

Telephone: 07800 881590

Email: emmakane41@gmail.com

In His shadow

(Based on Psalm 91)

*As we dwell in the shadow
of mighty God
we will know all the blessings
that he will bring,
his faithfulness will be our shield
under the covering of his wings.*

*Protected by his sheltering love
our refuge we take in him each day,
if we call on his name
his answer will come
as angels will guard us in all our ways.*

*What comfort and peace
we all can know
that God himself will hold us fast,
and keep us safe engulfed in his love
until these days of danger have passed.*

By Megan Carter



*The twins had been doing
Messy Church at home.*



Life in Lockdown

Well, what a strange and different time this has been. Ordinarily we at North Cadbury would have delighted in such a sunny run up to Easter for all of the wonderful events and services that we had planned to mark the celebration of Easter, and would certainly be enjoying a sunny beginning to the Summer Term. But you can't fail to have noticed that the school building remains remarkably quiet at the moment as the majority of our families who have opened their own 'Home Schools' continue to educate their children. Mums and dads have undertaken teacher training in record time, teddies and Lego characters have replaced beloved teachers and playtimes have become much more intimate and quiet affairs. However, the community spirit, fabulous energy and sheer good nature of our school community refuses to be beaten and we have taken 'lockdown' in our stride.



It has been delightful to see the interactions between the children and their teachers online, and I have been really impressed with the ingenious ways that my teachers and our children have communicated their work. Please do enjoy looking at some of our home learning environments. I'm sure you'll agree that North Cadbury parents and children continue to excel themselves.

Daily reading now has some very different backdrops – don't they look comfy!



We still enjoyed a virtual Easter Bonnet Parade, have a look on our website for more!





Our families have made some beautiful rainbows to show our appreciation for the NHS & Key Workers.



Home classrooms in all their glory.

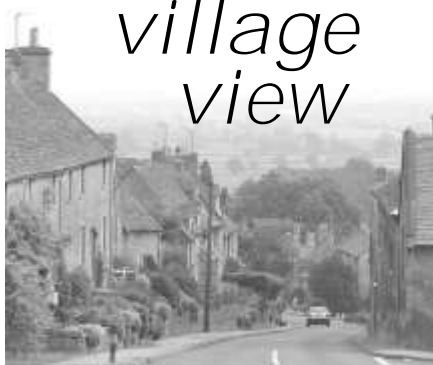


If you have children at home and are in need of resources or lesson ideas, please do drop me a line and I can put you in touch with one of our fabulous teachers. In the meantime, stay home, stay safe and stay healthy.

With very best wishes,

Mrs Lisa Thompson
Head Teacher
office@northcadbury.ppat365.org

village view



Blackford

BOOK CLUB

For details contact 01963 440754.

MAY SERVICES AT ST MICHAEL'S

In light of the Coronavirus restrictions, church buildings are closed and public worship is suspended until further notice.

Bratton Seymour (Bratton St Maur)

CHURCH FLOWERS AND CLEANING

April - Debbie Garrett.

MAY SERVICES AT ST NICHOLAS'

In light of the Coronavirus restrictions, church buildings are closed and public worship is suspended until further notice.

Compton Pauncefoot

MAY COFFEE MORNING CANCELLED

Please note that the Coffee Morning planned for Saturday 2nd May has been cancelled due to concerns about the coronavirus.

MAY SERVICES AT ST MARY'S

In light of the Coronavirus restrictions, church buildings are closed and public worship is suspended until further notice.

Galhampton

VILLAGE HALL BOOKING

In accordance with government guidelines, the village hall has been closed and all upcoming events and activities cancelled. This will carry on until further notice. Both the AGM and VE Day commemoration celebration in May will also be affected and the AGM postponed until a later date. Please check the village website (www.galhampton.com), village Facebook page and village noticeboard for any updates.

COVID-19

If anyone needs to self-isolate or simply wishes to minimise contact due to coronavirus, consider informing your neighbours so that they are aware and can either help or arrange help. There are volunteers willing to help and details have been distributed to houses within the village. Please continue to look out for your neighbours. We have a lovely community here in Galhampton.

VILLAGE PHOTOGRAPHS

Following the success of the 2020 calendar, we to collecting village photographs for the 2021 calendar. These need to be in landscape format and reflect life in Galhampton.

If you would like to submit a caption as well then please include one. Email them to village@galhampton.com by the end of each month. One photograph will be selected to represent each month with the

final calendar being available to buy from November 2020. Keep snapping!

MAY SERVICES AT GALHAMPTON CHURCH

In light of the Coronavirus restrictions, church buildings are closed and public worship is suspended until further notice.

Holton

MAY SERVICES AT ST NICHOLAS'

In light of the Coronavirus restrictions, church buildings are closed and public worship is suspended until further notice.

Maperton

MAY SERVICES AT ST PETER & ST PAUL'S

In light of the Coronavirus restrictions, church buildings are closed and public worship is suspended until further notice.

North Cadbury

MAINLY MUSIC AND COMMUNITY COFFEE MORNINGS

Sadly we have had to make the decision to postpone our pre-school mainly music group and the monthly coffee mornings for a while. We look forward to welcoming everyone back in the not too distant future.

VILLAGE WALKS

Sadly, whilst the current health crisis is upon us, we shall not be holding further walks as a group. Please continue to walk the paths as individuals and keep the growth around them in check! Thank you.

susan@brookcottage-somerset.co.uk

Local Contacts

CIVIL PARISHES

Compton Pauncefoot & Blackford

CHAIRMAN	Jane Monk	440666
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North Cadbury & Yarlington

CLERK	Rebecca Carter	240226
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South Cadbury

CLERK	Carole Burnett	441142
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UNIFORMED ORGANISATIONS

RAINBOWS	Tracey Watson	440059
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BROWNIES	Tracey Watson	440059
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GUIDES	Joy Cross	350936
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OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Blackford

READING ROOM	see advert on page 9
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Galhampton

VILLAGE HALL	enquiries	07534 919195
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Holton

VILLAGE HALL	Lisa Prior	34821
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North Cadbury

ALLOTMENTS	Sam Davey	441382
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BRIDGE CLUB	Nicola Wilson	440642
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FRIENDS OF ST MICHAEL'S	Donal O'Neill	441623
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GARDENING CLUB	Heather Keys-Toyer	441657
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SCHOOL	Lisa Thompson	440420
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TENNIS CLUB	Steve Ingram	440125
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TODDLERS	Helen Wooldridge	440801
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VILLAGE HALL	Marion Whitmore	440911
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WOMEN'S GROUP	Pauline Moylan	440775
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North Cheriton

VILLAGE HALL	Ron Perry	406355
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WI	Veronica Goodenough	33255
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South Cadbury

VILLAGE HALL	Sam Davey	441382
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WI	Julie	220181
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To update the information on the above list, please contact the Parishes Office.

NORTH CADBURY VILLAGE HALL

The Village Hall is closed for all clubs, classes and events until further notice as a result of the government's advice on non-essential contact. We thank everyone for their understanding in the current situation.

TAKE ART

The effect of the coronavirus has inevitably caused a pause to the performances that Take Art promote but the following might be of interest to you once things return to normal!

A fantastic opportunity has arisen for someone to become a trustee on the North Cadbury Village Hall committee as a promoter for the Take Art Rural Touring Scheme.

Take Art is an Arts Council funded organisation that has provided subsidised professional theatre, music, comedy, dance and much more over the last 30 years. In cooperation with a vast team of volunteer promoters they have put on productions in rural settings like our own village hall. Over the years we have hosted a wide variety of shows that have transported us from the peaks of the Himalayas to the music of the Appalachian mountains taking in heart-warming stories and music from around the world as well as a hilariously surreal bird watching adventure!

"Take Art takes great art and culture into the hearts of the towns, villages and rural communities of Somerset and supports our mission to give more people in more places the opportunity to engage in exciting cultural experiences on their doorsteps."

Phil Gibby, Area Director,
South West, Arts Council England

This is a great opportunity to take part in helping bring our community together and to enjoy being involved with some

remarkably talented performers. Please contact me on 01963 440705 for more details.

Piers Keating

NORTH CADBURY & DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB

Meetings have been cancelled until further notice.

NORTH CADBURY WOMEN'S GROUP

The North Cadbury Women's Group meetings have been cancelled until further notice. For more information on the Group please contact Pauline Moylan on 440775 or pmoylan1@gmail.com

MAY SERVICES AT ST MICHAEL'S

In light of the Coronavirus restrictions, church buildings are closed and public worship is suspended until further notice.

North Cheriton

MAY SERVICES AT ST JOHN THE BAPTIST

In light of the Coronavirus restrictions, church buildings are closed and public worship is suspended until further notice.

South Cadbury

SOUTH CADBURY AND SUTTON MONTIS WI

Our scheduled meetings have been cancelled until further notice.

MAY SERVICES AT ST THOMAS À BECKET

In light of the Coronavirus restrictions, church buildings are closed and public worship is suspended until further notice.

Yarlington

SPECIALIST PLANT FAIR

The Specialist Plant Fair at Yarlington House in May has had to be cancelled because of the coronavirus pandemic.

MAY SERVICES AT ST MARY'S

In light of the Coronavirus restrictions, church buildings are closed and public worship is suspended until further notice.



Another Easter bonnet - see page 12.

"What is your kitty's name, James?" asked the visitor.

"Ben Hur," said James.

"That's a funny name for a cat. Why did you name it that?"

"Well, we just called him Ben – until he had kittens."

Bible Readings

MAY

- 1st - *Philip & James, Apostles*
Ephesians 1: 3-10
- 2nd - John 6: 60-69
- 3rd - **4th Sunday of Easter**
1 Peter 2: 19-25
- 4th - John 10: 1-10
- 5th - John 10: 22-30
- 6th - John 12: 44-50
- 7th - John 13: 16-20
- 8th - John 14: 1-6
- 9th - John 14: 7-14
- 10th - **5th Sunday of Easter**
1 Peter 2: 2-10
- 11th - John 14: 21-26
- 12th - John 14: 27-31
- 13th - John 15: 1-8
- 14th - *Matthias* - Acts 1:15-26
- 15th - John 15: 12-17
- 16th - John 15: 18-21
- 17th - **6th Sunday of Easter**
1 Peter 3: 13-22
- 18th - John 15:26 – 16:4
- 19th - John 16: 5-11
- 20th - John 16: 12-15
- 21st - **Ascension Day**
Acts 1: 1-11
- 22nd - John 16: 20-23
- 23rd - John 16: 23-28
- 24th - **7th Sunday of Easter**
1 Peter 4: 12-14; 5: 6-11
- 25th - John 16: 29-33
- 26th - John 17: 1-11
- 27th - John 17: 11-19
- 28th - John 17: 20-26
- 29th - John 21: 15-19
- 30th - John 21: 20-25
- 31st - **Pentecost**
Acts 2: 1-21

Severed from routine and obliged to fashion new habits

The Ven John Barton looks to history for a parallel of what is happening now.

Imagine a world where everything familiar has gone, the capital city's most famous religious landmark has been destroyed, you have been transported to a foreign country, and have no idea when or if you will be permitted to go home. That's roughly what happened to the Jewish people in what is called the Babylonian Captivity more than 500 years BC. Jerusalem and its Temple had been obliterated.

In exile, the Jews weren't treated too badly, but they were bereft of the land they believed God had given them and where they felt Him to be present. When their captors, innocently, asked them to sing one of their religious songs, they bristled, "How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"

But their faith matured in the seventy year exile. Scribes consolidated the Scriptures, new kinds of congregations, called synagogues, sprang up where they could worship and teach the faith.

Their somewhat provincial view of God actually got bigger - not only did they find Israel's God accessible in their foreign surroundings, but their prophets began to see that God was for all people. Here's part of Isaiah, Chapter 45:

*"Turn to me and be saved,
all you ends of the earth;
for I am God, and there is no other.*

*By myself I have sworn,
my mouth has uttered in all integrity
a word that will not be revoked:
Before me every knee will bow;
by me every tongue will swear.
They will say of me, 'In the LORD alone
are deliverance and strength.'"*

Finally, and after many of the original exiles had died, the Persians conquered Babylon, and gave the exiles the option to go home, which many did.

There must be a lesson here for many people round the world who, because of Covid-19, suddenly found themselves severed from routine and obliged to fashion new habits for an unspecified period.

Regular worshippers were banished from their churches. The observance of Holy Week and Easter had to be in a makeshift fashion. Special events were cancelled.

At the same time, on the first Sunday of this 'exile' the Church of England attracted its largest 'congregation' ever. A recorded service led by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, is estimated to have been seen or heard by around five million people. Nearly 30 per cent of those watching online were under the age of 34.

It's too soon to say what the long-term impact will be. But while we cogitate on that, don't forget to send your usual weekly offering to the Church Treasurer!

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Samuel 8:1-10:1, 17-24

Samuel had been a good leader of Israel
but he was now old. The leaders of the
twelve tribes came to talk to him...

We want a king like all
the other countries



God told Samuel

It's not you they are
rejecting but Me.



If you have a king, he will
take your sons to be his
army and your daughters to
work in his palace.



He will take the best of
your land, your crops
and your animals



We still want a king.

Samuel sent them home.



I was
hoping he would choose me...

Saul and his servant were
looking for some donkeys
that had run off.



They decided to ask
Samuel to ask God
where the donkeys were



God told Samuel that
Saul was to be the
king



Samuel called everyone to a
meeting and told them that
God had chosen a king.



God told them that Saul
was to be their king...



but Saul was hiding.

He's behind the luggage.



and they found Saul.

The people cheered!



Long live the King!

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Some adverts, particularly those for village halls that are now closed, have been removed to make space and reduce the size of Excalibur.

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