

The Ampfield Messenger



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St. Mark Ampfield*

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The Parish Church of St Mark, Ampfield

Our vision: To be channels of God's love in the world

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Contributions to this magazine are always welcome, however it may be necessary to edit or shorten articles. Note that the views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the editor or the Parochial Church Council. Advertisements in this publication do not carry the endorsement of the editor or the Parochial Church Council.

Online Worship

As we continue through Lent, our services are still online only but we do have a new addition to the online services – Morning Prayer using the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) on zoom:

Sunday 9:30am – Sunday Worship or Worship for All (1st Sunday)
(on [YouTube](#))

Sunday 11:30am – Morning Prayer using the Book of Common Prayer
(on Zoom)

Tuesday 5:15 – Visual Compline (on [YouTube](#))

#Live Lent – Sundays at 4pm and all week!

This year's #Live Lent campaign, Live Lent: God's Story, Our Story invites each of us to reflect on our own story of God and how we might share it through our everyday lives as part of our Christian witness.

Our Lent course this year will be at 4pm on Sundays on Zoom. We will be using #Live Lent materials and would love you to join us.

There are also #Live Lent daily reflections which are available in several ways:

a free iPhone/Android app

via email: sign up here: <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/livent-2021-church-resources-gods-story-our-story>

via telephone: using the free Daily Hope telephone line: 0800 804 8044

We encourage you to explore God's story this #Live Lent.

Lent reflections

On Wednesdays and Fridays throughout Lent there will be short video reflections from members of the team available on [our Facebook page](#).

Lent coffee mornings

During Lent the Wednesday Coffee Morning will be following a discussion course called 'Come and See'. It will still be a place to come and meet your friends from church and have coffee together, but will focus more on our Christian Life and faith journeys together. Conversation will be relaxed and will suit those with lots of experience and those with little, it is open to all to Come and See! Please join us on Wednesdays at 11am.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

For the zoom details for any of the above, please email joinin@acnb-church.org.



Abbie West

Letter from Vicar Victoria

Once upon a time, a while ago, I was out riding, when the horse I was riding was spooked by something and bolted, unfortunately she bolted under the bow of a tree causing me to be swept off and dragged some distance. Knocked unconscious I suffered a few pulled muscles which took some time to heal, but the worst was the concussion, loss of memory and confusion. But a few weeks later I was ready to return to normal.



Except that I wasn't. That first day of "freedom", I was due to take a wedding - I managed to get through the liturgy quite well (I don't think anyone noticed I wasn't quite 'there') but when it came to writing the registers, I just couldn't quite comprehend it. My brain was that 'stiff' that I couldn't actually grasp how to spell the names - it ended with me having to produce some corrected copies sometime later for the couple. I couldn't

believe that I just couldn't think. It was a long process of rehabilitation and it was painful.

And things have never been quite the same again.

As we begin to think about coming out of lockdown, we may envisage ourselves returning to doing things exactly as we did them before- but the reality will probably be different. We will probably find that we are in fact nervous about doing things we used to do unthinkingly. We may be made more nervous than we used to be in crowds, or if we hear someone coughing right next to us. We may find things that we haven't done for a while, like trying on clothes in shops or singing in church feel really, really odd, and not at all comfortable. Or it may be that we feel ready to go straight back to doing everything, but that our friends and family members do not. Or even that in this fallow time, we have realised that things we used to do unthinkingly are not the things we still want to do or things that

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I have already heard quite a few people expressing real anxiety about whether a return to “normality” will be safe or will still be 'right'. We have all become a little institutionalised, and we will all need time to heal and regain our strength- our emotional and psychological and spiritual strength. So, if you find that the idea of “unlocking” actually makes you feel apprehensive, be gentle with yourselves - don't rush it - and try not to rush anyone else. Take time to listen to your own feelings and to one another. Many people are coming out of this lockdown bereaved, impoverished and depressed. It's not all going to be magically “over” in June.

The letter to the Colossians (3:12) says

“Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with hearts of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.”

It may take a while, but we will get there. One cup of tea at a time.

Victoria

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OUR LOCAL CENTENARIAN - GEORGE MORGAN

100 ON THE 20TH FEBRUARY 2021



George lived in Knapp Lane, Ampfield, until he moved to a care home in Hedge End. He was a founder member of Friends for Lunch. When she realised he would reach his century on the 20th February, Nancy decided (from her hospital bed at the time!) to set in motion Covid-friendly celebrations to mark the day. With Nick and Rob, friends of George were contacted. Many sent in video messages and written greetings for a large collage, pictured above.

In addition to the many presents that Nancy organised (including a Pompey shirt signed by all the players), **£750** was donated to the British Heart Foundation in George's name.

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George Morgan — Mr. Ampfield

George - "He of eternal youth" reached the splendid age of 100 years on the 20th February. He is in reasonable health, with the main concession he has allowed age, is now having white hair!

George became my 'Good Neighbour' in 1960 when I, a callow youth, started to build what is now 'Chapel Wood House'. There were no fork lifts on small sites back then, so all deliveries had to be offloaded. Often, when we were beavering away to clear a load, George would appear alongside, pick up some gloves and pitch in. Job done, he would depart as quietly as he had arrived. We were so grateful back then, to have had the physical support of most who were to become our new neighbours. Without them my project may well have never come to fruition. George was the most devoted supporter of the cricket club. The last time I saw him was at the presentation of his plaque at the new sports pavilion, but I keep up to date with him via friends and family ... long may he prosper.



Steve White

A Family Man

George was such a major part of Knapp for most of his life, rarely leaving it except when he was in the Royal Marines and when he was on great coach trips together with his wife, Elsie. He left Ampfield School aged 14 and remembers rowing a dinghy on Green Pond. In retirement I loved his routine of going down to Romsey on the no.66, 1st stop for coffee at Judy Webb's the florist and then round the corner to the betting shop, sometimes to collect his winnings! Strolling round Romsey, he soon met somebody to chat to.

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His passion was the gee-gees and Ampfield Cricket Club, he was like their mascot. He is a family man and loved going stay with his son Keith in Carmarthenshire where he would be helping put a roof on a barn or feeding the Highland cattle, Keith has 5 of them. Congratulations on reaching the century as did Captain Tom. So, keep going George, we are so proud of you.



Nancy Atlee

My mate next door

1999 was a good year for me. I moved to Knapp Lane, married the love of my life, and met the next-door neighbour who would become one of my dearest friends. Back then, of course, George Morgan was part of a package deal. He came with Elsie. She did the talking; he chopped the wood. "You've bought the cold side," Elsie said, the first time Wendy and I met them. They'd already lived on 'their side' for 40 years at that point, and they'd seen plenty of people come and go. Elsie's expression that day was half-smile, half challenge.

But we loved our cottage – even though it was cold, small and had a bathroom that was basically part of the kitchen. The problem was our kids. Jack arrived in 2000, then Abbey in 2003. We tried to move a couple of times, but everywhere else had mains drainage, central heating and baths you couldn't reach from the oven. Where was the challenge in that?

In 2002, I went next door with my heart in my mouth. We wanted to extend 174, but there was no way we'd do it without George and Elsie's blessing. I remember laying the plans out on their tiny table and holding my breath. George looked to Elsie; then she looked at me. "We don't want you to go," she said. And I breathed out. Elsie

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lived long enough to approve our extension, but not much beyond. It was a sad day, and easy to think, back then, that 'good old George' might struggle to cope on his own. How wrong we were. George chopped his wood, cut his grass, and took the bus into Romsey most days to put a bet on the horses or chat up the girls in the florists. That's the thing about George. Always a smile, a kind word and a twinkle in his eye. "Say no more, Nick. Say no more."

But we did say more. Over the years that followed, I got to see more and more of my friend. We'd chat over the fence, share a sneaky glass of something, or laugh at some dumb thing. That's what we did mostly. We laughed. Two mates talking nonsense. "You got to have a sense of humour, Nick. You've gotta laugh." For a while, I had this theory that George was ageing backwards. He seemed unstoppable at 90, while I looked I increasingly like a sandwich left out in the sun. So it goes. But of course, as the years passed, George did need more help, and there were legions of us happy to do it. I was lucky – if only through proximity – to get more than my fair share. It wasn't kindness, of course, any more than it was duty or responsibility or obligation. George was, and remains, fantastic company.

The day he left Knapp Lane was one of the saddest I've spent here. But leave he had to, and our loss was *Sunnycroft's* gain. Within days of his arrival, he'd charmed the staff with his humour and positive attitude. The second time I picked him up for a pub run, the receptionist called him "Georgous". Perfect. Lockdown has interrupted our regular adventures, but when we saw him on his 100th birthday, he was as cheerful, positive and inspirational as ever. "Nice to see the old faces", he said, a twinkle in his eye.



I tried not to take it personally.

Nick Warren

Success with a Heritage Fund grant of c.£25,000

Fabulous news; an application for funding to support the urgent restoration work required to the beautiful stained glass windows in the west wall of St. Mark's Church has been successful. A submission to the national Emergency Heritage at Risk Response Fund pulled together by representatives from the PCC (Parochial Church Council) and the Friends of St Mark covers almost entirely the cost of repairing two of the worst affected windows in the west wall of the St. Mark's Church. The total grant is £24,761.33 payable in two instalments as the work is completed.

Time and gravity have taken grip of all the windows, designed and installed more than 150 years ago, leaving the two in question dangerously sagging and bowed. Unrepaired they would eventually crack the historic glass, permanently damaging the windows. The repairs begin later in the year once lockdown restrictions are lifted and will involve the temporary removal of the windows so they can be reset in lead and the structure of the window strengthened. The work will be done by artisans using techniques appropriate for the age and historic value of the windows. Although the cost is eye wateringly high, we appointed a skilled contractor through a competitive tendering approach and believe the work is essential to preserve both the beauty and historic value of the Church that lies at the heart of our community.



The stunning West Wall window, sadly in need of substantial repair

Plans for the future

The pandemic has prevented us all from enjoying St. Mark's to the full, however the grounds have provided a peaceful safe haven for those wishing to walk or meditate. When restrictions have allowed the Church building has also been open for both private prayer and community service with the appropriate protections in place.

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We have seen the importance and value to the local community of making St. Mark's and the grounds available for everyone to use, and despite restrictions curtailing some of our traditional activities, we are hopeful these will return soon. As they do, we turn our activities to those that help bring the community back together, replicating or perhaps enhancing past favourites such as the annual Summer Fete and Dog Show, informal garden parties with cream teas and (although a while away yet), Christmas Carolling.

We must also pay attention to fund raising, which forms such an important part of keeping the building and grounds safe and enjoyable to use. With the most at-risk stained glass windows now covered we can prioritise things that are important to the people that enjoy St. Mark's and its surroundings. Initial suggestions from amongst the community suggest that accessibility is likely to be high on the agenda; disabled access is an issue, both to the church and around the grounds, as is the availability of parking. Having digital access (internet) is also important for those using both the Church and St. Mark's room, which has been enjoyed in the past by a number of small local activities.

As we re-engage around the prospect of coming out of lockdown we wish to encourage everyone to voice their opinion on what we should prioritise, and where they can, support these initiatives. With this in mind we aim to relaunch the Friends of St. Mark group in the Spring. Membership is open to all who enjoy St. Mark's and the grounds and who wish to input and/or support the effort of retaining the heritage of St. Mark's and the surrounding grounds as a space the local community can enjoy. Keep an eye out in next month's addition of the Messenger for more information.

Mark Braund



Basking in the summer sunshine, the eastern entrance to St. Mark's

Ron and Stella's Quiz Night

1. Who is 5th in line to the British throne?
2. How many legs does a lobster have?
3. What planet is known as the Red planet?
4. Which year was the premier league founded?
5. What is the name of Boris Johnsons new born son?
6. In what year was the Chernobyl disaster?
7. In what year was Ampfield Village Cricket Club founded?
8. On average how far away is the moon from the earth in miles?
9. What does HP stand for in HP sauce?
10. What is the height and depth of the Bayeux Tapestry



My wife accused me of being
Immature —
I told her to get out of my fort



A perfectionist walked into a bar
...apparently, the bar wasn't set high enough

Yesterday I saw a guy spill all his Scrabble letters
on the road.

I asked him, "What's the word on the street?"

Once my dog ate all the Scrabble tiles. For days
he kept leaving little messages around the house.

Mark

A Lenten Reflection video is available online on
YouTube, the acnb website and Facebook on
Wednesdays & Fridays. Lent courses are on Sunday
afternoons at 4pm or during the Wednesday
Coffee morning at 11am, both on Zoom. Drop in and
out when you can — don't worry if you miss a session.
For details of how to join, **please email :**

joinin@acnb-church.org.



Happiness

John 15:11

These things have I spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.

Ecclesiastes 9:7

If you have put your full trust in God, you will be granted happiness and don't need to worry about misfortune.

Psalms 144:15

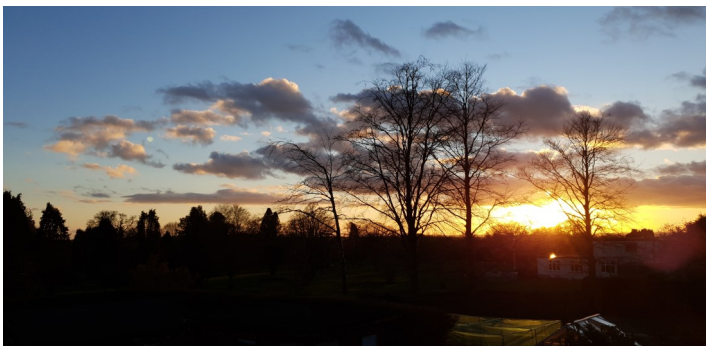
God is the true source of happiness, strength, hope, and wisdom. Those who are in His favor will always have these things

Philippians 4:4

The only source of true happiness is the Lord. All of the things you receive in your life that give you happiness are because you believe in God.

Psalms 1:1-3

“Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers. But they delight in the law of the Lord, meditating on it day and night. They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.”



FAMILIAR OLD FRIEND

Rain fresh, in the morning light
I enter Chapel Wood
that blessed natural haven
I have so come to rely on.
All year it changes
but never disappoints.
A solace in these so dark days
to look and lose yourself
in intricacies of moss
and fungus never seen before.
Who knew they could be so ornate
resembling flowers or tiny shells.
It clears my head, refreshes me
and makes me think of other things.
How many moles are living there
underneath the stretch of lawn?
The textures vary every step,
the rough brown bark
the soft green growths
all fed by damp and rotting leaves.
The comfort of nature
like a familiar old friend.



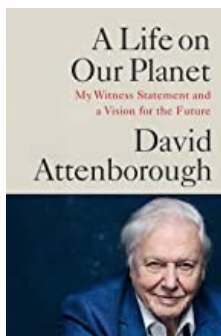
I moved here from a leafy part of London about 7 years ago. When first exploring the area with my dog, I went into Chapel Wood, and fell in love with it. Hence the poem.

Lyn Smith

Book Reviews

A Life on our Planet **David Attenborough**

David



Attenborough has long been the country's (and the world's?) foremost naturalist and, latterly, has become its most authoritative

conservationist.

After reading the above book, one can see the reasons why. For those concerned about the world our grandchildren will inherit, it is a far from comfortable read. It is concise, but virtually every sentence needs to be mulled over. Drawing upon his life in television and his extensive travels, he produces an evidence-based analysis of the loss of the planet's wild places and biodiversity.

From 1937, when he was 11 years old until 2020, the area of the world's remaining wilderness has been reduced from 66% to 35%, a decline of almost a half in the last 83 years. This is at a time

when the world's population has increased from 2.3bn to 7.8bn, and carbon in the atmosphere has increased by 16%.

Attenborough itemises the consequent impact on nature and the environment, and then extrapolates what will happen until 2050 - only thirty years on, and beyond, if these issues are not addressed. For example, the world is currently losing a staggering 15bn trees each year. He paints a truly terrifying scenario - more deserts, arising from over-farming and subsequent soil erosion, ice free polar regions, other severe loss of habitats and wildlife, and a multiplication effect on a rise in global temperatures.

In the final part of the book he describes the herculean task in addressing the various actions that need to be undertaken - clean energy, rewilding of land and sea, sustainable farming, taking up less habitable space, green growth and an economic system that produces benefits to people and the planet, as well as profit.

Attenborough has great faith in human beings: "we have the tools that we need, the thoughts and

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remarkable minds and the immeasurable energies of nature to help us in our work”.

This book left a profound impression. Our grandchildren have a remarkable sense of awareness of many of the problems and practice “green issues” in their everyday activities. The world’s politicians now need to grasp the nettle. We need some influential eco-champions - now!

Before reaching for another alcoholic drink, or chocolate substance, after reading this piece, there is a ground-breaking rewilding initiative in mid-Sussex, which points the way to a more sustainable future. I’ll describe that in the next Messenger.



Alan Edwards

The Crucible’ Arthur Miller.

This play by Arthur Miller dramatises the events surrounding the Salem witch trials in 1692-93 in Massachusetts.

Miller wrote the play as an allegory for the notorious McCarthy persecutions in 1956 which he likened to a witch hunt when those suspected of being sympathetic to communism were questioned by the House of Representatives’ Committee on Un-American Activities. Many of those accused informed on friends and neighbours to save themselves.

Miller was himself famously questioned by McCarthy and convicted of contempt of Congress for refusing to identify those present at meetings he had attended.

A must read to see how intolerance, hysteria and fear can get out of control so easily with devastating consequences. The reading of it alone conveyed a powerful effect upon me which, I suggest, speaks for itself, but when possible I’ll be hot foot to a theatre to see it performed. ☯



A child in Ampfield

1. Home

I grew up in Ampfield and, indeed, still live only a couple of miles away now. Nearly all the folks that I knew there do not live in Ampfield now, nor do their descendants. So, I'm hoping that my reminiscences will still be of interest, if only as a social history comment.



The Old house, now demolished.

My maternal Granddad and my Mum also grew up in the village (though the former was born in Braishfield). Everyone knew each other; there were families who'd been there for generations. The Church, the school, the pub and the shop /bakery were the places to meet and chat. The village had a thriving cricket club and, in my Granddad's day, a football club. Most folks worked on the local farms and Ampfield House (the Big House), owned by the Faber family, were the owners and employers.

As a small child my home was Ivy Cottage on the top of Ampfield Hill. The large yew tree that stood by our front window is still there-though cut into a more rounded shape. The cottage was probably 18th century as it features on some old maps. It housed tenants who worked for the estate. My Granddad Gradidge moved there (as a bricklayer) on his marriage to Mabel Thorp in the early 1920s. My Mum Jean grew up there. I recall that the front of the house faced down the hill, so the cottage was 'end on ' to the road. There was a well with a pampas grass by the gate...our only source of water. The back door was used by all. We had sheds along one side and an outside lavatory. (Chamber pots and candles were used at night). Inside the back door, a brick passageway led to a small scullery containing a 'copper' on one side and to a living room with a range (heating and cooking) on the other side. Up the narrow dark stairs were 2 bedrooms.



Beauty and me by the gate at Ivy Cottage.

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In 1951 my Mum and Dad (married in 1949) lived there with me and my Granddad, who was widowed by then. He had bought Ivy Cottage when the estate had a sale, so it was his to give to Mum and Dad. When I was 4, they decided to buy some land at the side of the cottage to enable the building of a new house further back from the main road, which was becoming noisy. Mr Woodley's Ampfield based building firm was given the job and the foreman, Mr. Rampley, set to work.



The 'new' house.

When completed we were all amazed by the electric lighting and in-door plumbing...no more spidery visits to the privy or candles to drop! The only heating in the new house was one open fire in the tiny lounge (or front room, as we called it) and a Rayburn in the kitchen. The joy of opening the Rayburn door in the morning to sit on my Mum's lap in front of the glowing coals is a memory still dear to me. The house was cold though. The bedrooms had ice on the inside of the windows and my paternal Granny knitted me pink woolly vests to stave off the chill. However, there were no more tin baths in front of the range for me...there was a purpose-built bathroom with H and C running water and a shiny white bath. Also, a toilet which FLUSHED!! The house was named "Heritage" as it had been from Granddad, who died a few months after we moved in. My sister Sara was born and family life continued happily for many years.



Grandad, me, and dog, Beauty.

As I write this, many other memories return, so it's hard to know what to include and what to omit. I must, though, mention the large garden which was our playground and gave us a love of the natural world. Mum, Dad and Granddad worked long and hard growing all the veg, fruit and flowers we could possibly need. Chickens had a large run and provided daily eggs. My sister and I, of course, as children, took it all for granted!

Lynda Emery (nee Rose)

Friends of Chapel Wood

Over the past month, the Friends of Chapel Wood have been singularly inactive as the covid lockdown has continued to impact on our ability to get together for another working party. From the recent announcements, whilst in every other respect, they are very positive and well received, it seems clear that the next working party is unlikely to take place before April.

By that time, we will be well into spring. We hope, by then, to be able to report that all the health and safety related work will have been completed and have some further news relating to the proposed dipping platform.



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In the meantime, we have taken some photos of the wood as it enjoys some long- awaited sunshine after months of rain.



Graham Roads

Report from Ampfield Parish Council Meetings 11th January and 8th February 2021

Ampfield Parish Council continue to meet online, with Meetings of the full Council on 11th January and 8th February, and the Planning Committee have also met to agree comments for Test Valley Borough Council on various applications.

Chapel Wood volunteers have suspended work for the time being, due to the latest COVID-19 lockdown. However, the Parish Council has been able to plan for a new dipping platform for the woods. This will be a feature from which people can observe the wildlife in the pond. It will replace the dipping platform which was destroyed during storms a few years ago. The project will be paid for using an Environmental Grant from Cllr. Martin Hatley together with Test Valley Borough Council's 106 developers' contributions. We hope to have the new platform built in the Spring.

Some scheduled work to trees in Chapel Wood will be carried out by a contractor soon. This will not prevent general access to the woods for walkers.

Another project which should be

complete soon is the construction of two new bus shelters in the village: one near the Potters Heron and the other near to the White Horse pub. These bus shelters have been bought using developers' contributions from the construction of Morleys Green.

We continue to discuss traffic and possible calming measures, particularly for the A3090 through Ampfield village, with Hampshire County Council.

Recently we refurbished the bench which is at the end of Green Pond Lane, and we will be re-decorating our wooden noticeboards when the weather improves.

Due to the lockdown, our forthcoming meetings will be held online. The next Parish Council Meeting is at 7pm on Monday 08 March 2021. Agendas will be published on our website and noticeboards. Members of public are welcome to attend online or by telephone: please let the Clerk or Chairman know before noon on the day of the Meeting, and we will send you the details. You may also send correspondence to the Council at the email below, or 2 The Square, Braishfield Road, Braishfield SO51 0PQ.

Ampfield Parish Council,
clerk@ampfield.org.uk

Report from Parochial Church Council Meeting Monday 1 February via Zoom

This meeting was mainly to discuss the end of year finance situation and the budget for 2021. Our Treasurer commented that as we had not been able to hold any fundraising events, this had made paying the Quota difficult at times. There had been a lot of support from the congregation and community during the year for which we have been very grateful.

Covid 19 Emergency Heritage at Risk Response Fund

Mark Braund, one of our Churchwardens, spoke about the funding we have secured to enable the repair of two of the windows in the west wall of the Church. It is hoped that work will begin soon and needs to be completed by the end of September.

Mark writes in this issue of the Messenger (p.10) about the future work we would like to carry out to make the Church and St. Mark's Room more accessible to those with mobility issues. We are hoping to raise money towards this work.

Pastoral Visitor

Victoria reported that a member of the North Baddesley congregation attended a course on line and is now able to be a Pastoral Visitor in North Baddesley and across the Benefice. She will work under the direction of the Vicar.

Cleaning

There was also discussion about cleaning the Church and St. Mark's Room when the situation enables us to open up again.

Our next PCC Meeting will be held on **Monday 12 April 2021**. It is hoped that the APCM (Annual Meetings) will be held on Sunday 25 April 2021.



Jennie Edwards
PCC Secretary

“Call no man happy until he is dead - till then he is merely fortunate”

The Histories: Herodotus

Cry the Beloved Country

Darwin's law of natural selection states that "Nature allows the best adapted organisms to reproduce, multiply and survive," with the obvious implication that those not so well-adapted eventually become extinct! And it is common knowledge also that human beings' survival did not result from their physical power but through the superior power of their brain. Used wisely, people benefit. Used unwisely could lead to disaster! Now according to the first chapters of Genesis (1:27-28) humankind was commissioned by God "to replenish the earth and be steward to the environment." But the people of Israel failed to obey God's command allowing the land to go to waste and become polluted. In Jeremiah (2:7) God admonishes them saying - (through Jeremiah) "Ye have defiled my land and made mine heritage an abomination." And Jeremiah goes on to warn them of God's inevitable retribution.

Is the question put before us in our present hour of danger not identical to that of the Israelites when they "defiled their land"? Deforestation alone has created a host of problems, for example climate change. This has caused sea levels to rise, contamination of the atmosphere and freak weather conditions (The Christmas Card image of a "White Christmas" was not dreamed up by Bing Crosby but was the accepted norm when I was a boy). But worst of all, the toxic effect is known to be the cause of many of the more recent diseases such as the cancers, cardiovascular and respiratory problems and birth defects. Even the food we eat in the human stage of the food chain could be poisoned through atmospheric pollution. And there is also the pollution of our waterways and oceans into which we dump our waste products which multiplies the dangers we face – all of which WE have created through our frantic desire for industrial and scientific power. And, added to all these obvious dangers, how much destruction of the environment have we caused by our seemingly endless wars? Was there ever a time when there were no "Wars and rumours of wars" and all the needless horror and hatred which goes with them? Are we any less guilty of destroying our environment and perhaps ourselves, than were the Ancient Israelites? Life on earth is thought to be co-eternal with matter and was brought about by a series of specific climatic conditions acting upon that matter. It may safely be assumed therefore that all life - animal and

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plant (and microscopic) – has the same origin. And, by means of various mutations (a la Darwin's theory) it reproduces, multiplies and survives. It would seem to me, therefore, highly likely that our thoughtless destruction and pollution of our environment might well have caused sufficient climatic change as to have spawned (by mutation) the Covid 19 virus - and its second strain! And, in the same way as we, each day, slaughter millions of cattle, sheep, swine, poultry and fish for human consumption, so the virus, in like manner, slaughters us to survive!! We, like the virus which we may have created, are but one form of animal life which survives by killing and consuming other life.

It is an interesting (and relevant?) theme, which runs through much of both ancient Greek mythology and modern Gothic horror -that humans will eventually be the cause of their own destruction. King Midas, for example, had his wish granted that everything he touched would turn to gold. But, when lifting "cup to lips", found, too late, that his greed it was which had led him to "the point of no return". Mary Shelley, in her famous book, describes how Dr. Frankenstein made a "man" from different parts of human corpses to create a monster who eventually caused the death of its own creator!! And, in one way or another, many other stories such as Robert Louis Stevenson's "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde", Oscar Wilde's "Picture of Dorian Gray" and the works of such as Edgar Allan Poe are all of similar genre. These, of course, were the fore-runners of the Science Fiction fantasies of today, in which the fate of the Human Race hangs in the balance.

However, lest the reader should think that I'm being a profit of doom, please refer back to the second sentence of this monologue. That is the key to our survival as a species - human's superior Brain. This it was that conquered the Mighty Mammoth and will, eventually, be the key to our survival by conquering the Vicious Virose Virus.

Roger Barker



A Kitchen Garden

Walking around the garden this past weekend has been a wonderful experience. From dawn to dusk we have enjoyed almost nonstop sunshine. For the first time this year, it has been really possible to believe that spring is on the way. Colours appear brighter and more vivid, the early spring flowers have appeared, there is a very noticeable increase in bird activity, and, on the trees and shrubs, the new season buds are very much in evidence.

Last month, we discussed the importance of looking after the soil and the role that using raised beds can play in this. The incessant rain we have experienced this year offers one very good example. Provided the width of a bed is no more than one metre, all cultivation, including weeding, can be done standing on the path. There should never any need to stand on the earth at all. This avoids compacting the wet soil and helps to maintain a good growing structure. It also helps to avoid the aggravation that tends to follow an unscheduled visit to the kitchen with muddy shoes!



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One other thing that is worth thinking about following all the rain, particularly when it has been so torrential, is the extent to which soil nutrients might have been washed out. Now might be a good time to fork in some well composted organic matter and even a light dressing of fertiliser. This might be even more relevant with containers, as these can also be planted with an early showing of spring bulbs.

On the subject of bulbs, the other day I heard a very determined buzzing. A bumble bee, the first I have seen this year, had landed on a bag of compost just by my elbow, which (without wishing to suggest that one brand of compost has more bee-appeal than another) had a picture of a bright yellow sunflower against a blue background. The bee was continuously landing and taking off from the centre of this sunflower. Finally, with a loud buzz, which had a sort of disgruntled 'herrumph' feel about it, the bee finally gave up and went to visit some equally yellow daffodils a few metres away. As I watched, I had to wonder, did the bee think the picture might have been a real flower?

Hopefully, we can all look forward to getting together again with friends and neighbours during the summer months. The purpose behind these scribbles is to encourage the production of tasty grub later in the year and good fun and experiences in the meantime. We all have good ideas when it comes to producing the little bits of enchantment that we have nurtured from seed to plate in our own backyards. It would be great if we could exchange some of these. Please do contact Chris with your own stories, tips and particularly your own recipes? She would love to publish them!

Graham Roads



Castaway of the Month—Sally Kerson



Sally is a licensed lay minister and the benefice administrator. She is also a Scouter and learned tating from her grandmother.



“It has been incredibly difficult to select 8 pieces of music as I have so many favourites, I therefore decided on pieces that I could dance, cry and reminisce to but probably not all at the same time!

Martha & The Vandellas "Dancing in the Streets"

I was a teenager in the 1960s an exciting time of music and mini skirts! ! So many songs to choose from in that era. My favourite was the Mowtown Sound.

Blowing in the Wind - Bob Dylan

This was a time when there were campaigns for nuclear disarmament, people actually were beginning to look at the world in a different way. Music is a powerful way of getting a message over.



Simon and Garfunkel - The Sound of Silence

I think silence would have to be a good friend of mine if left alone on an Island!

Dancing Queen - ABBA

This song reminds me of the times living abroad and the fantastic social life especially in Hong Kong.

Phil Collins - Another Day In Paradise

I have two sons who when they lived at home obviously played a lot of music but totally different styles! My eldest was and still is a huge fan of Phil Collins and Genesis and even though he is now in his 40's makes mini lego figures featuring them and other musical artists and sells them all over the world.

Suo Gan - Performed by The Ambrosian Junior Choir recorded for the film Empire of the Sun

A film of lost youth, set during the Second World War, the music is a lullaby and extraordinary beautiful. The Mission - Gabriel's Oboe Because it is haunting music and reminds me of the mission we all have in life the trials and tribulations. Have heard it played on a church organ and sounds just as haunting.

The armed man - Karl Jenkins

Such beautiful music that sends a tingle down my spine whenever I hear it.

The book, well I am presuming that the Bible and complete works of Shakespeare are included as I am a Stratfordian! Then it would be A History of the World in 100 Objects by Neil MacGregor, especially being deprived of objects. But also because I wrote about the History of the Church in a 100 Objects some years ago.

Luxury item would be a cooking pot, as I could probably light a fire (Scouting skills) but would so miss my slow cooker!

[Sorry Sally, no practical items are allowed - eds.]

Ah well then can I have a typewriter and some paper? I know it would have to be a manual one but that's fine, my handwriting is terrible and can type faster than write! Might be able to put a message in a bottle"



Recipe of the Month



Here is a delicious soup recipe from Nancy, who made it for one of our Lent Lunches last year.

Parsnip and Apple Soup

Serves 6

30 ml vegetable oil
200gm chopped onion
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tsp ground nutmeg
800 gm parsnips, peeled and chopped
300 gm apples, cored peeled and sliced
1 litre vegetable stock
Salt and pepper
10 fresh sage, finely chopped

- Sauté onion, garlic and nutmeg in oil in a large pan until softened
- Add parsnips and apples and sauté for 5-10 mins
- Add stock and enough water to cover the vegetables and simmer for 20 min or until vegetables are soft
- Allow to cool slightly then liquidise until smooth, add more water if necessary
- Season with salt and pepper
- Sizzle sage in oil and leave to cool
- Serve soup with a drizzle of the sage oil



Sadly, we won't be able to enjoy our Lent Lunches at St. Mark's this year. We hope you will join us in spirit on Fridays, for a Lent Lunch at home. Usually, we would donate our profits to the Romsey Foodbank. If you wish to donate directly, please see details on page 37.

Praying together for the Pandemic

We remember before God those who have died and we pray that God's love will surround all who mourn them, now and always.

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious,
be with those who care for the sick,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may find comfort.

Amen



Victoria also invites you to join her in silent prayer in your home between 9 and 10 am on Tuesdays

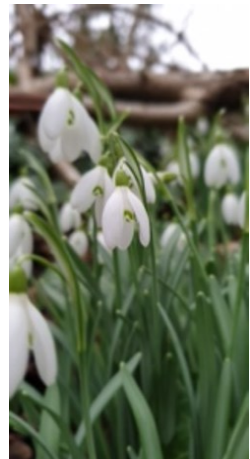
Thought for the Month

As I write this article, outside of my window, there is clear blue sky and the sun is shining. This week it has really felt like Spring has sprung, with slightly warmer weather putting a spring in everyone's step, and daffodils, crocuses and snowdrops pushing up through the ground and opening their pretty petals. I have always loved Spring, it is easily my favourite season; a signal that the long dark hours of Winter, with cold, wet weather and leafless trees, silhouetted against leaden skies, are being left behind, as the daylight hours increase, along with new life and the wonderful colours of nature. Spring gives me hope in my heart, and maybe after almost a year of restrictions and lockdowns, we can really look forward with hope, as more and more people can receive the vaccines, which we have all prayed so hard for, and now that we have a tentative "road map" out of "stay at home," with some dates to aim for.

Of course the past year has been beyond difficult with not just the usual stressors of life to contend with but, in addition, all the issues that Covid-19 has brought into our lives. For many of us life will never be quite the same again. Just yesterday I attended the funeral of a dear friend, who died as a direct result of Covid. She had no other underlying health conditions. I miss her more than words can say, and I know I am not alone in experiencing these life changing events. But if my friend, who loved nature with a passion, was here now she would be saying to me:

"Go on, enjoy the sunshine and the flowers, walk forward with hope in your heart and a spring in your step, and remember I am never far away"

Jo Hooper



Romsey Food Bank in the Pandemic



During the COVID-19 epidemic the food bank is now more important than ever. ACNB churches can also help you access the Food Bank service if you need it.

The epidemic puts Food Banks under great strain. Please donate as much food as you can to support their work at this time.

*Donations can be taken to any of these collection points**

Romsey Foodbank Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday
1030 – 1230.

Waitrose donation point for customers (shop opening hours)
Community Life Centre, Flemming Avenue, North Baddesley
(10 – 12 Mon – Fri)

*All church collection points are now closed, until restrictions are lifted.



Answers to Ron & Stella's Quiz Night

1. Prince Louis
2. Eight
3. Mars
4. 1992
5. Wilfred Lawrie Nicholas Johnson
6. 1986
7. 1888
8. 238,000
9. Houses of Parliament
10. 70 metres or 230 feet Long and 50 centimetres or 20 inches deep.

Information

If you need any Zoom meeting links, would like to join in with readings or intercessions, would like prayers said for you or someone you know, or would just like to comment, please email joinin@acnb-church.org.

Nextdoor.co.uk

In response to Covid-19 **AMPFIELD NEIGHBOURS** working with **unity**. The Test Valley Borough Council Volunteer Support Group . If you live in Ampfield and need help with collecting prescriptions or shopping **contact Unity on the Test Valley Community Helpline - Telephone 0330 400 4116**

Online Facebook groups:

Romsey News and Information Group

The original Facebook Group for Romsey.

Romsey Garden, Nursery & Plants, Info. Sharing etc.

Good source of local plant delivery and availability, seeds and growing information.

Hampshire Coronavirus Helpline - 0333 370 4000

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults - 0300 555 1386

Romsey Community Pantry - 01794 522106

Romsey Foodbank - www.romsey.foodbank.org.uk

Frontline Debt Advice - 02380 552866

Southampton Basics Bank - www.southamptoncitymission.co.uk/basics-banks

Online suppliers recommended by readers:

Donald Russell (meat): hello@donaldrussell.co.uk; www.donaldrussell.com

Regal Fish: info@regalfish.co.uk; www.regalfish.co.uk

Cafe Bingham's will be offering take away fish and chips from Friday 5th February. Please contact its website for details:
binghams@cafebinghams.com

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County Councillor: Alan Dowden; Phone 02380 266458

TVBC Councillor: Martin Hatley; Phone: 02380 254040

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