

February 2021

the **Bridge**

A community magazine for
Bridport supported by
the Anglican Church

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Cupboard Love food bank

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Hall bookings Halls are starting to open following the coronavirus lockdown. For bookings please contact:

St Swithun's church hall
Details online at www.bridport-team-ministry.org/hall-bookings
or contact Yvonne Welch 459587

Bothenhampton village hall
Pennie Jones (temporary) 458006

Bradpole village hall
Please email bradpole@dorset-aptc.gov.uk

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Please contact Philip Sturrock for all advertising. Rates are online at www.bridport-team-ministry.org/bridge/advertising. If you have an idea for an article, please contact the editor. Otherwise send copy to village correspondents (details inside) at least three days before the deadline, or a week for handwritten/typed copy. We will try to include late copy in the following issue as appropriate.

Opinions expressed in The Bridge are not necessarily those of either the clergy or the editorial team. While we make every effort to ensure the accuracy of the magazine's contents, we cannot accept responsibility for information given or claims made by our contributors or advertisers.

Deadlines for the March issue: Advertising Friday 12 February • Copy Monday 15 February

Rewilding our souls at Candlemas

We have all had a tough start to the year and we continue to hold in our prayers all who are struggling. We need something to celebrate in the long, cold, wet nights of wintertime!

The Church loves an excuse to party, and we have an opportunity to do just that on 2 February when there is a festival called Candlemas. The Church's tradition of celebration goes back to Jesus in Galilee. As Rowan Williams writes in his book 'Being Christian', we know from the gospels that if there was noise and lots of laughter, talking and singing, you could be reasonably sure that Jesus of Nazareth was somewhere nearby. Jesus sought out company and his presence created a celebration, bound people together and drew out hospitality from others. In the Church we believe Christ offers us hospitality today in the Eucharist meal of bread and wine. Christ asked us to have this meal together with Him, promising to be with us in spirit and offer us His empowering love. Deb, the team rector, says the wonderful words we say at this Eucharist service are like the conversation we have at a meal, in the sight of God.

I hope to have the honour of leading this church service soon when I am ordained a priest. I may even be ordained at Candlemas in a very small, filmed service in St Mary's Bridport led by Bishop Karen [the Rt Revd Karen Gorham, Bishop of Sherborne], if it is still safe and sensible to do so. It will be very special if it is at Candlemas as this is a celebration of light, commemorating the time Jesus was presented by his mother, Mary, in the temple and met by the elderly souls Anna and Simeon, who recognised Jesus as the Light to the World they had been waiting for. It is why church candles are blessed at this time and where we get the name Candlemas, or Candle-mass.

In pre-Christian times, it was also a festival of light. This ancient festival marked the mid-point of winter when



country folk looked for signs of spring, halfway between the winter solstice (shortest day) and the spring equinox. It is also the Saint Day of the ancient Gaelic Christian St Brigid, whose kindness, wisdom and deep faith impressed the

pagan chieftain and villagers in her native Kildare, Ireland, where she founded thriving faith communities and lasting centres of learning.

The Bridport parish team of churches will soon be offering opportunities to learn in Lent with five very different books to choose from. Look out on our website (www.bridport-team-ministry.org) and Facebook page for details.



**The Revd Lorna Johnson
Team Deacon**

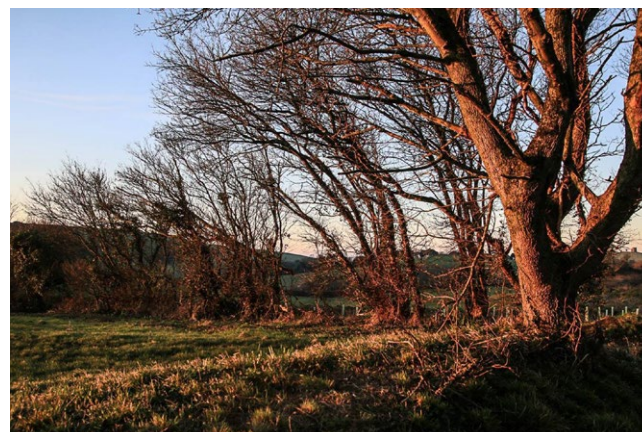
At Candlemas my love of Christ's church and my love of nature meet in one candlelit evening. Because of the Covid restrictions, we cannot host the celebrations we might want to. But we have got good at adapting, haven't we? We can still look for the first signs of spring, marvel at the white crocuses and white blossoms and pray for the farmers and sheep in this lambing season. We can still light candles and celebrate the first milk coming through by having a supper of cheese and enjoy the days getting lighter.

Here is a special prayer for your Candlemas celebration. It's from Steve Aisthorpe's book 'Rewilding the Church'. There are also some photos to invite you to consider the gifts of nature as Jesus prompted us to, from your armchair or when walking on the beautiful Dorset hills and beaches – and, for those hardy few, when wild swimming in our seas!

Almighty loving creator, maker of beautiful biodiversity, founder and head of your church, help me to engage with thoughts of nature and church with a mind and a heart open to anything and everything you want to show and teach and do. In the name of the wild Messiah, Jesus, and in the life-giving, fear-quenching power of your spirit, re-wild my soul and your church. Amen.

These photos were taken by Margaret Preuss-Higham, a priest in the benefice of Abbotsbury, Portesham and Langton Herring, just along the coast, and rural officer for the Sherborne Archdeaconry. Her inspiring photos help give me 'eyes to see'. You can find more photos on her Facebook page (search Margaret Higham Photography) and her website, www.margarethighamphotography.com.

Lorna Johnson



Margaret Preuss-Higham



Jill Beed

Thanks to Jill Beed for this great photo of a cheery shrub behind Holy Trinity Bothenhampton. Jill sent the pic to the Bridport Lockdown project, a collection of photos and stories documenting local people's experiences of the pandemic .

Jill writes: "Lockdown 3 is proving to be particularly difficult for so many reasons. The daily exercise is really important and if you are able to get out for a wander around, in our beautiful town and/or surrounding villages, then that's all the better, particularly when you come across something that makes you not just smile but laugh out loud, as this decorated shrub did for us. Found while wandering around Bothenhampton."

The Bridport Lockdown project was started at the beginning of the first lockdown and is still open for submissions. Find them on Facebook or visit their website, www.bridportlockdown.org

Generous businesses put on a special festive spread

Bridport's Red Brick and Soulshine cafes got together to lay on a delicious free lunch for people who would otherwise have been alone on Christmas Day.

Thirty people went along to the Soulshine Cafe in South Street to enjoy turkey or beef and all the trimmings (with a nut rissole for the vegetarians) plus pudding and a glass of bubbly. Framptons had donated the beef and a farm in Holsworthy had given the turkey.

There was also a gift for everyone, courtesy of two local shops. The Book Shop had donated and wrapped some books, and Malabar Trading had given some creams and soaps. The tables were decorated with trimmings and tealights and it was a very festive occasion.

One of the diners says: "The atmosphere was jolly, the food was delicious and the bubbly went down very well... Thank you to all the dancing, singing staff who made our Christmas Day so special."



Local solicitors make a difference with Christmas gift

Like many other businesses, Porter Dodson couldn't hold its usual staff Christmas celebration, so the regional law firm donated £6,000 to charity instead.

The company has chosen charities that have been particularly hard hit this year, as their services have been needed more than ever but their fundraising events have been cancelled.

The charities benefiting from the donation are: The Pilsdon Community; The Portland Foodbank; Julia's House; Sherborne Primary School food drive; Open Door, Taunton; The Trussell Trust, Wellington Foodbank; The Yeovil Community Meals Service; and The Lord's Larder in Yeovil.

Richard Baker, head of the family law team and corporate social responsibility partner, says: "Being able to reach out into the community at these challenging times means a lot to us... Everyone should have a roof over their head and food on their table every day and we know that this year has been very challenging for many people."

News from Trading Standards

If you're having problems with parcel deliveries, you're not alone, as half of British consumers have had these issues since the first lockdown in March. Trading Standards suggest these ways to make successful deliveries more likely:

1. Check delivery policies

Before placing an order, find out the delivery times, costs and return policies for the items you've ordered.

2. If you're out of the house during delivery...

Consider asking a neighbour or friend if your parcel can be delivered to their address if you're going to be out.

But beware, if you do provide details of a safe space or nominated neighbour, and something goes wrong, it may not be the seller or courier's responsibility.

3. Online trader or online marketplace?

Make sure you know whether you're dealing with a trader or a private seller on an online marketplace. If you have an issue with a trader, you can raise a dispute directly with them, but with a private individual it may be easier to go through the marketplace's dispute process.

4. Trader reviews

Check reviews to see if the trader is genuine. It's always worth doing this to check the company's reliability and how well they deal with complaints and refunds.

5. Who to deal with when a parcel goes missing

Your contract is with the seller. If your parcel goes missing, speak with the seller, not the courier company.

For advice on a consumer problem, or to report something to Trading Standards, contact the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on 0808 223 1133 or visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer

Daily online worship brings light & hope

The Bridport Team Ministry (BTM) has made the very difficult decision to suspend all public worship in its buildings – but there is still plenty going on.

The Revd Deb Smith, Team Rector, says: “The sense of lockdown déjà-vu is the unwelcome place we all find ourselves – there are, again, no ‘in person’ services and our buildings are often closed – so all the more reason to seek out signs of light and hope. We are offering new ways to worship together even though we are apart.

“We are in the wonderful season of Epiphany, which is all about having our eyes and hearts open to glimpse the bright moments, flashes of hope, magnificence in the mundane and, in these days, finding ways to gather while scattered.”



As well as the weekly Sunday service, the team is now offering all kinds of online gatherings and reflections as well as some printed materials or phone access for those who find it difficult to access technology.

Mondays at 10am

Join us for Morning Prayer via Zoom
<https://tinyurl.com/yykdzktv> (click to go to Zoom)
 Meeting ID: 879 5494 5956 Passcode: 438752

Tuesdays at 2.30pm

Online Service of the Word from one of our team churches, available on our Facebook page and the BTM website.

Wednesdays at 4pm

A member of the BTM will be sharing a reflection, offering space to take time out to contemplate as a community of faith. Available on our Facebook page.

Thursdays at 10am

We will be celebrating Low Mass from St Swithun’s. Available on Zoom, Facebook and the BTM website.

Saturdays at 10am

High-energy interactive kids’ worship available on Zoom, Facebook and the BTM website.

Sundays at 10am

Livestreamed service on Facebook and the BTM website.

**The Revd Deb Smith,
Team Rector**



Our church buildings are also open for private prayer as follows:

Tuesday	10am–12 noon	St Mary’s South Street
Wednesday	10am–12 noon	Holy Trinity Bradpole
Thursday	10am–12 noon	St Swithun’s Allington
		St Mary’s Walditch
Friday	10am–3pm	Holy Trinity Bothenhampton

Please remember to wear a face mask if you are coming into church.

Learning about Lent

BTM is also looking ahead to the season of Lent and inviting anyone who would like to join the team to use this time to study, meditate and ponder together.

“We don’t know how long this latest lockdown will last,” says Deb, “and we remember that our first experience of lockdown started during Lent last year. ‘Walking together through Lent: Jesus says you’ll never walk alone’ is the title of our Lent journey in the Bridport Team for 2021.”



Courses on offer cover everything from looking at the challenge we face with the global environmental crisis to delving into poetry to look at Lenten themes with fresh eyes. If you’d like to know more, visit the BTM website for details.
www.bridport-team-ministry.org
www.facebook.com/bridportchurches

A new lockdown, and a return to a digital-only Bridge

This issue of The Bridge is being published in a digital format only.

This is because our much-valued team of volunteer distributors cannot make house-to-house deliveries within the current legislation during a full lockdown.

This situation is far from ideal. Many of the people who benefit most from the

magazine as a means of contact with their church and community are the people who aren’t online. But we are where we are.

We circulate the digital edition as widely as possible, but are bound by GDPR regulations that prevent us sending unsolicited emails. Please, if you’re reading this, help us by forwarding the digital magazine to your

friends and family who might like to receive it.

We hope to return to print next month if restrictions are relaxed. At the moment we’re aiming to start deliveries during the second week in March, slightly later than our usual schedule. We will post updates on the Bridge page of the BTM website and on ‘Bridport Banter’ on Facebook.



**Olivia Daly
Editor**

Help for those in need during lockdown

Sadly, the pandemic has meant people who would not normally use the local food banks and other community groups are coming forward for help. To ensure that everyone in the town and surrounding area knows how to access the available services, the Bridport Local Food Group has published the following list:

Cupboard Love at St Mary's Church, South Street, is the town's main food bank. Access is via referral from various sources including Citizens Advice (CAB), the Job Centre and local doctors. No one arriving without a referral will ever be turned away but will be asked to get a referral for future visits.

Cupboard Love is open on Wednesday mornings 11am to 1pm for collection of food parcels. In certain circumstances home delivery is available. Out of hours, messages can be left on the number below and they will be checked and actioned on Wednesday mornings.

cupboardlove.bridport@gmail.com / 07443 596096

Bridport Community Fridge operates from the Chapel in the Garden on East Street and during the current lockdown is open on Tuesdays and Saturdays 10am–1pm. On Thursdays the Fridge has a pop-up stall at St Swithun's Church, North Allington, also 10am–1pm.

Surplus food is supplied from local supermarkets and other places. Anyone can come and help themselves as the aim is both to help the needy and reduce food waste. More details are on their Facebook page or call the number below.

events@bridportunitarians.co.uk / 01308 422448

The Garden Glut & Food Stall is in St Swithun's Church car park, North Allington, every Thursday 10am–1pm. Jointly run by the Bridport Local Food Group, Transition Town Bridport and the Community Fridge, it supplies surplus food, ready meals and fresh produce from local growers, all for free or an optional donation. More details from the Chapel in the Garden or Bridport Local Food Group.

www.bridportfoodfestival.co.uk / pjwilson8@btinternet.com

Hopeful Hampers operates from the United Church on East Street. They provide emergency hampers of tinned, dried and fresh food to families in urgent need. They have a small stock of food kept at Good Books and they shop for fresh food if required, usually after talking to the recipient about their needs and preferences. They also supply organisations such as CAB, primary schools, housing associations and nurseries with dried and tinned food to give out to anyone in need. To access, please email with family composition, ages of children, address and contact details.

bridporthh@gmail.com

Bridport Christian Fellowship, 4–5 Kings Square, East Street, DT6 3QE. Open to everyone who is in need or struggling. Happy to be contacted at any time. Offer bespoke food parcels when needed as well as a cooked meal on Mondays at 1pm. Contact Lindsay Goodrich as below.

linjohngoodrich@yahoo.co.uk / 01308 281829

Community Soup Kitchen, Beacon Church, Priory Lane, Bridport DT6 3RW. Hot, fresh soups and meals for anyone who needs them. Open Wednesdays and Fridays 12 noon to 2.30pm. Takeaway and delivery. No charge.

office@beaconchurch.co.uk / 01308 456931

Other contacts:

Bridport Town Council 01308 456722

Bridport Citizen Advice (CAB) 0800 1448848

Dorset Council 01305 221000

Bridport Coronavirus Community Support 07401 243585 (can help with collecting shopping and prescriptions).

In an emergency, phone Bridport Town Council or CAB during office hours or Bridport Community Support at other times.

Zoom quiz raises vital funds

Christian Aid's Christmas campaign coffers were boosted by a magnificent £890 (including Gift Aid) following a fundraising quiz towards the end of November. The money will go to help the water-starved villages of Ethiopia.

The quiz was, naturally, held over Zoom, but those taking part still managed to have fun. "Afterwards it felt as if we had all just had a good time with friends round for the evening, but without the clearing up!" says organiser Jill Henderson. "It was a wonderful evening with an astonishing outcome."

An anonymous donor made a very generous contribution, accompanied by a verse from the Bible: "Those who plan what is good find love and faithfulness." (Proverbs 14:22)

You can still make a donation at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/BridportXmasQuiz

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SOLICITORS & ADVISORS

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- First time buyer advice
- Buying to let
- Property auctions
- Buying & selling land

For legal advice on residential property matters



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ST MARY'S Bridport

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 Director of music – Tim Linsley
 07830 308701
 Tower captain – Bob Hardwick 420632

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan

How often have we heard or sung this? As we enter the depths of winter and reflect on the strange year that has just ended, it's easy to get caught up in 'moans'. And yet, despite all the Covid restrictions, the anxieties, the pain of separation and the losses, at St Mary's we have welcomed small shafts of light beaming into the gloom:

- meeting again for worship, joining with isolated members of our community through live streaming;
- hosting services for the whole team;
- hosting the Team carol service with choir, clavinao standing in for broken organ, and children singing Silent Night;
- the Christmas Day service ending with two excited children singing, suddenly joined by their younger sister not wanting to be left out and grabbing the microphone! If you haven't seen it, do look it up on the team website;
- the introduction of the Tuesday afternoon service, an opportunity for a more informal reflective service;
- senior members of the congregation receiving their first injections of the Covid vaccine;
- and the amazing response from the town to the Hamper & Stockings appeal.

As we celebrate these small sparks of light piercing the gloom, let's continue to pray for our community as we



Michael Day

wait eagerly for the coming of spring and the hope that Easter brings.

And if, as many do, we feel powerless in the current situation, let's remember the concluding lines of the carol:

What can I give him, poor as I am?

Yet what I can I give him – give my heart

It is the heartfelt commitment to the ongoing support of those in need that mitigates our moans and proclaims Christ to our community.

Peter Wright

While St Mary's is closed for public worship, the church will be open for private prayer every Tuesday from 10am to 12 noon.

Covid-19 has made a huge impact in so many ways and many of our regular donors have not been able to support the church as they once did. If you can make a donation, whatever you can give, you will be helping us to maintain our beautiful church and its ministry in the heart of Bridport.



HOLY TRINITY Bradpole

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 douglas.baldwin@seaside20.plus.com
 Churchwarden – John Adams 425766
 Tower captain – Peter Carnell 420716
 If you have any pastoral or personal issues, please contact the Revd Janis Moore 425644
 (Wednesday is her day off)

West window in the church – memorial to the Revd Alexander Broadley

The stained-glass window in the west wall was severely damaged by wind pressure last year and was taken apart and stored. As an emergency measure it was temporarily replaced with plain polycarbonate.

Applications were made to various funding bodies, resulting in awards amounting to £7,500 in total from The Erskine Muton Trust Fund, The Society of Antiquaries, The Glaziers Trust and Dorset Historic Churches Trust. The church council was very grateful to receive these grants given the many applications those organisations have

received during Covid-19 when fundraising activities have had to cease. The grants have allowed the council to go ahead with the reinstatement of the window.

The largest of the grants was from The Dorset Historic Churches Trust, whose main income is from 'Ride+Stride'. People from the church who took part in last year's sponsored event raised the largest sum since Holy Trinity has been involved. Thanks are due to them for their efforts, which will have helped the trust to make its grant.

Thanks from the village correspondent

Thank you to the many people who sent me cards, texts and emails following my emergency surgery and period in Dorset County Hospital Intensive Care Unit – they were much appreciated! As I write this, at the beginning of 2021, I am well on the way to recovery but this will take time.

I am extremely grateful to the staff at the hospital whose care and attention was outstanding, and to the ambulance service who got me there. We are truly blessed to have such a wonderful NHS hospital virtually on our doorstep.

Douglas Baldwin

While public worship is suspended, Holy Trinity will be open for private prayer every Wednesday from 10am to 12 noon.

HOLY TRINITY Bothenhampton

Village editor – Barbara Ffooks 423122
 Churchwarden – Heather Purse 423220
 Children & youth worker –
 Jean Mitchell 422127
 Home communion –
 The Revd Kay Watters 427290
 Director of music – Sue Smith 456955

From the village editor

Although we are coming into February, and the festive period seems a long time ago, I want to record the success of the Advent Sparkle event held on the three Saturdays before Christmas.

Everyone was invited to prepare an Advent or Christmas scene in an open-fronted box for visitors to see in Holy Trinity. The response was wonderful – such creativity and fun! – ranging from Nativity tableaux and the Annunciation by the Angel Gabriel to winter designs and Christmas flowers. The church sparkled with light, decorations and floral arrangements depicting our journey from the dark to the light of Christmas.

We have given the visitor donations from the last Saturday (a total of £147.85) to the Children's Society as we were unable to hold our usual informal carol-singing evening when we collect money for the charity. We did have some carols, though, as the weather was kind enough to allow the choir and over 30 visitors to sing outside the church on the last Advent Sparkle morning. Thank you to all who decorated the church and made boxes, particularly the younger ones whose contributions were very imaginative.

The pallet tree that stood outside on the grass amazingly survived the strong winds and gained many poems, sayings and pictures, as well as ornaments shining in the sunlight.

Residents on the High Pavement decorated and lit their windows and had a grand switch-on on 5 December, and what a joy it was to see. Bothenhampton certainly sparkled during the Christmas season.

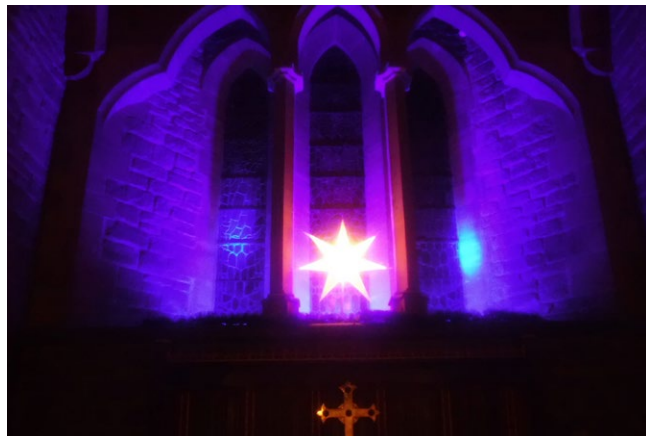
Now we are moving through the church calendar and thinking about Lent, which starts on Ash Wednesday, 17 February. Please look at the BTM website or online pew sheets if you can for information about Ash Wednesday and Lent study.

Barbara Ffooks

While we are in lockdown all public worship has been cancelled until the R rate in this area has dropped sufficiently to reduce the risk of virus transfer. When it is considered safe enough the congregation will be welcomed back to Holy Trinity once more, but for now the church will be open for private prayer only on Fridays from 10am till 3pm.

Our photos show the church decorated for the Advent Sparkle event with Nativity tableaux and floral arrangements around the font. There was also an illuminated star in the east window (top)

Star photo by Ro Windsor, others by Mary-Kay Cresswell



ST MARY'S Walditch

Village editor – James Craddock 458725
Churchwarden – Chris Wellman-Herold
281096 / chris.w-h@hotmail.co.uk

Verger – Pat Stapleton 456421

If you have any pastoral or personal issues,
please contact the Revd Ann Ayling 424896
(Wednesday is her day off)

From the village editor

After the long dark nights of winter, February is the month when there are signs of approaching spring in Walditch. Bulbs begin to appear, wildlife starts waking up, light levels increase and daytime temperatures rise. February has Shrove Tuesday (or, more commonly, Pancake Day) so beloved of children, then the 40 days of Lent starting on Ash Wednesday, 17 February, and lasting until just before Easter Sunday.

Lent can be a period for reflection and preparation for Easter signified by almsgiving and self-denial. After many months that saw us all trying to avoid catching Covid 19, the new vaccines now give people hope that the national pandemic will slowly recede, and with this in mind we can reflect on the joys of spring in West Dorset. Should a more sparse Lenten diet be unattractive, why not just give food or money to the local food bank, Cupboard Love?

During Lent you could try a gentle ramble for reflection around the parish, starting from St Mary's Church in Walditch and walking to Bothenhampton Nature Reserve and back. There a few steep climbs and muddy ways but also dog-friendly stiles.

Start at St Mary's Church. Then walk east through Walditch village past Shute Haye and Manor Farm Court. Then turn right into the Spinners Lane path signposted 'Shipton Gorge'. This sunken green lane leads to the top of the hill. You will encounter two stiles and a gate before reaching the top. Once through the gate continue upwards, crossing three fields. At the summit turn left across the field then go over a stile bearing right into Milvers Lane (note that this lane may be rutted and muddy).

Turn right at Bennett's Hill Farm, where you will have views over the Brit Valley, then walk west towards Bothenhampton Nature Reserve, crossing two fields. Follow

the clear waymarks (the path is on the Brit Valley Way) until you encounter the nature reserve, which has a circular walk. At the end of this go into Bothenhampton village, turning right by Holy Trinity Church into Crock Lane. At its end turn right into Walditch Road, proceeding once more back to St Mary's Church.

Christina Rossetti sums up the spirit of the season in her poem 'Lent':

*It is good to be last not first,
Pending the present distress;
It is good to hunger and thirst,
So it be for righteousness.
It is good to spend and be spent,
It is good to watch and to pray:
Life and Death make a goodly Lent
So it leads us to Easter Day.*

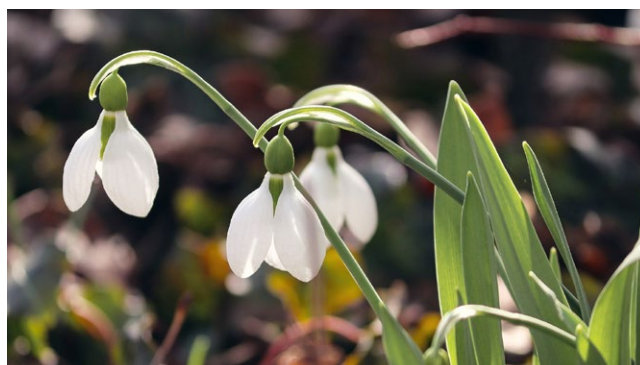
James Craddock

While public worship is suspended, St Mary's Walditch is open for private prayer on Thursdays from 10am to 12 noon.

Get an uplift from snowdrops and primroses

As I write this on New Year's Day, snowdrops in St Mary's churchyard and under the horse chestnut on the Green have stirred from their slumber. Some already show their white buds, and the odd one here and there is even in flower, while there are others still to emerge. By the time you're reading this in February, however, the much-loved snowdrop should be a splendid sight in the churchyard and on the Green for passers-by to enjoy. A little later a superb show of primroses will appear in part of the churchyard's conservation area. Surely our spirits will be lifted, with spring and the hope of better times around the corner.

Robin Stapleton



Manfred Richter

ST JOHN'S West Bay

Village editor – Sue Pollock 07903 558568
Chapel warden –
Rosemary Russell 423013

From the village editor

So 2020 ended without the normal festivities (although I did hear a few fireworks), but we all have had to adjust to the current norm. We had been able to continue with the Monday morning prayer meeting at St John's once the second lockdown was over, and there was a service

on Christmas Day although it was very quiet compared to previous years. My Christmas Day was just not the same as usual; I didn't go to church because my husband was self-isolating, but I was there in spirit if not in person.

It was good to see people still managing to get into the Christmas spirit, however, and I wonder how many of you saw the Santa paddleboarders in West Bay. There were about 40 of them paddleboarding around the harbour to raise money for Action for Children. I was pleased to hear they managed to raise over £500.

On Christmas Eve we were finally able to see the great conjunction, having been watching out for the previous three nights, which unfortunately were too cloudy. I am sorry to say that if you missed it you're going to have to wait till 2080 for another chance! This event is when Jupiter →

ST JOHN'S West Bay continued...

and Saturn come into near alignment with Earth. We were able to see some of Saturn's moons through binoculars looking out over the West Cliff – quite a sight.

The Boxing Day swim was cancelled, as I suspected would happen, mainly I think because of its popularity with both swimmers and spectators, although it's not something I would do. However, I learnt that the wild swimmers were out in action over the festive period – they really are a hardy bunch! And after the recent storm the conditions were just right for surfing. I managed to capture a picture of them – there were 17 brave souls, the most I've ever seen.

Unfortunately we still saw pictures in the local and national papers of people standing and sitting on the clifftops taking photos. I just wish the message could get across that the area is very unstable and falls come with no warning.

Sue Pollock



Sue Pollock

St John's is not currently open for private prayer while services are suspended. See p5 for ways to join in with the Bridport Team Ministry's online worship.

ST SWITHUN'S Allington

Village editor – June Goodburn 423061

Churchwarden – Jo George 426457

Children and youth worker – 423061

Moment of Light

During lockdown Radio 4 is airing short pieces called 'Moments of Light', reflecting people's experiences of this difficult time and what they have done to make it more bearable or to use their time in a different way.

Recently, a woman of 84 told how she had re-learned the piano during lockdown. She talked about the difficulty of picking up playing again, having not done so for many years. She played a Chopin nocturne for us and said how she had had to painstakingly re-learn it. It was enchanting and inspiring.

We asked members of our congregation to send us their experiences of lockdown and times that had inspired them or become their 'Moments of Light'. Here are some of their responses:



I have discovered wonderful walks and views around Bridport in the last 10 months that I never knew existed. What were once only names of roads and places suddenly came to life as I discovered them on my daily walk. We were spoilt in that first lockdown by glorious weather. I kept a diary and am amazed that I covered so much ground. The peace and tranquillity gave me time to think and appreciate life and the people around me.

My morning ritual is to walk down my ropemaker's garden. I look out for bulbs pushing through and see whether any plant needs an extra blanket of mulch during this frosty weather. I talk to the robin and blackbirds that nest by the house and the busy wren who sings a crystal-clear song which cuts through the mist.

In the past it was just swimming. Last year, early one morning, while on a walk down to the bay, the sun was shining and the waves were gently breaking on the beach. That is when, in a rash moment, swimming became wild-water swimming. Every morning I would dive into the crisp, clear waters and experience an inner peace, a sense of achievement, this feeling of being close to nature, to escape the news and be in the moment. Floating on my back, I looked up at the clouds and became truly thankful!

I have found solace in the discipline of yoga, which I have been doing on and off for years. It's now how I start my day, looking out of the window at the glorious oak tree in my neighbour's garden [see photo]. I have watched it change with the seasons since March and have been delighted to notice small things about it that I had never seen in previous years when life was busier.

On my birthday last year I was given a ring-backed notebook. One of my sisters sent me a book on pilgrimages and the other sent shells from Scotland. So I decided to embark on a written pilgrimage... not a diary but a scrapbook. It started by recording my birthday: a pure, blue sky, hot sun, a walk by the sea and a supper cooked by my daughter and eaten in her new garden. A newspaper cutting of the Thames at Teddington evoked wonderful memories of learning to swim there, aged nine, and rowing with friends. There have been lovely phone conversations,

ST SWITHUN'S Allington continued...

plant exchanges, odd bits of unexpectedly relevant poetry. I have a precious collection of memories that the unaccounted-for time of lockdown has allowed me to re-visit.

A prayer from the Bishop of Salisbury, the Rt Revd Nicholas Holtam

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy in this time of uncertainty and distress. Sustain and support the anxious and fearful, be with those who care for the sick, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may rejoice in your comfort, knowing that nothing can separate us from your love, in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen

If you have a pastoral issue, or just need someone to talk to, please contact Revd Dan on 01308 426514 or Revd Lorna on 07501 408221.

A Low Mass service is broadcast from St Swithun's at 10am each Thursday. It's available on Zoom here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82315119178>. You can also listen by phoning 0203 481 5237 or 0203 481 5240; when prompted, key in the meeting ID 823 1511 9178. Calls are at your local rate or free in your phone plan. Contact Revd Lorna as above if you need help with this. Please note: attendance at this service in person is not permitted.

St Swithun's is also open for private prayer on Thursdays from 10am to 12 noon.

Bridport UNITED CHURCH
Minister – The Revd Peter Clark 425978
Church secretary – Sue Herman
422598 / bridportsec@gmail.com

**incorporating
UPLODERS CHAPEL**
Correspondent – Carol Hall
423163 / carol@gribb.plus.com

I lift up my eyes to the hills – from where will my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. (Psalm 121:1–2)

There was a time when I registered with a gym and got my exercise regularly there – although, over time, as life got busier and busier, I found it increasingly hard to find the time to drive up there, change, exercise, shower and return to work. It felt increasingly self-indulgent and, as my attendance reduced, so the cost per session increased. Eventually my 'meanness gene' kicked in and I cancelled my membership.

Since then I have tended to get my exercise by walking. Sometimes just around town, sometimes (when I visit

Dorchester, for example) by parking outside town and walking in. Sometimes, when it's raining, I simply walk up and down the stairs at home.

I have a smart watch that measures the distance I've travelled (call me old fashioned but I have not the slightest idea what a 'step' means so I prefer it in good old miles!) and I have a daily minimum target. The average significantly exceeds that, so by and large I am satisfied that walking is a far better option than gym membership for me.

But the walking I like best is in the local hills. Indeed, during the first lockdown (which was in remarkably good weather, if you remember) I was blessed with additional opportunities to walk up Watton, Allington and Bothenhampton hills. I found that not only did I easily exceed my distance targets, I also found a level of peace that was absolutely essential to maintaining my equilibrium in those distinctly unnerving times. And without a feeling of self-indulgence either!

I don't know how many times I have said this but I think it's worth saying again: this has been a horrible time for this nation and the world, but I have often felt truly blessed to be experiencing it here in Bridport. I don't want to diminish the pain of separation, loss and aloneness that many in this area have suffered when I say it, but for me, the presence of the Dorset hills gives me a reassurance and a peace that I have never felt elsewhere before.

It has seemed at times that the old (I think Benedictine?) motto of 'to work is to pray' has in my case this year been replaced by 'to walk is to pray' as I have lifted up not only my eyes but my whole body to the hills. And there, I have encountered the presence of the Lord and felt assured that He is, indeed, where my help comes from.

The Revd Peter Clark

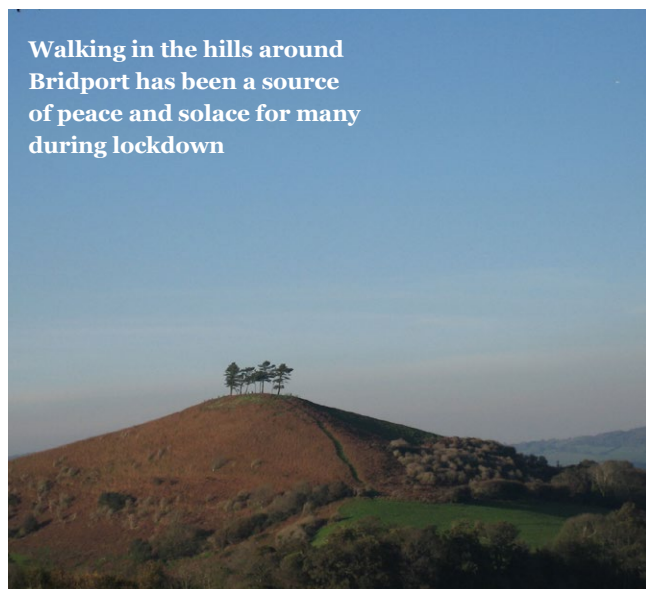
Sunday morning service at Bridport United Church has been cancelled until further notice. Online services and audio services (the latter from the United Reformed Church) are available – please see www.buc.cool for details and links.

From Uploders Chapel

Even though things are very different from this time last year, nature, of course, goes on much the same. The sun is shining and everything is looking tranquil, although it's a bit breezy outside. We are indeed fortunate to be living here in Delightful Dorset, especially here in the west of the county.

Life has changed dramatically since the first lockdown was announced on 23 March 2020. None of the usual activities

Walking in the hills around Bridport has been a source of peace and solace for many during lockdown



Sheila Thomson

UPLODERS Chapel continued..

at Uploders Chapel like coffee mornings, craft afternoons or concerts have been able to go ahead. Still, we did manage to have two lovely services in December, one taken by Chris Hatton and the other by the Revd Peter Clark. They were very different (apart from the social distancing, mask-wearing and lack of singing) and both very enjoyable.

Things keep changing as the virus tries to get the better of us by mutating. There is hope, however, that the vaccines will do what is needed and people will be able to look ahead

to a more positive future. Sadly we are now in lockdown again and the hoped-for services have had to be cancelled as we don't want to put folk in a possibly risky situation. However, we can still have the same sort of online services as in the earlier lockdown (see the BUC information on the previous page for details).

So although it is tempting, let's not be grumpy for what we can't have but be grateful for what we can. All the best for the coming months. Let's make 2021 a year of fun as much as possible!

Carol Hall

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Secretary – Faith Leborgne 422594
bridport@prcdtr.org.uk

Marking Candlemas and Lent

What a Christmas and New Year it has been! It will probably be best remembered as a season of absence. The thing we most missed was being able to be with our nearest and dearest and our extended church family. Yet what we were celebrating was the presence of our God as He is in Jesus. He lived among us, he was one of us, he is the light in the darkness. He was not born into an ideal world but into a messy dark world, just like the one we live in. Yet unless we know darkness, we cannot appreciate the light.

February begins with Candlemas on the 2nd, which this year is a Tuesday. In accordance with tradition, and as with all first-born sons, Jesus was presented in the Temple, an offering to God. Yet while the Holy Family were there in Jerusalem, an amazing thing happened. An old man, Simeon, had been told he would not die until he had seen the Messiah. He was there when Mary & Joseph brought in their little boy and took him in his arms and blessed God, saying "my eyes have seen your salvation... a light to enlighten the pagans and the glory of your people Israel" (Luke 2:22-40). It is only when we know the dark that we can appreciate the light. All light (and we have seen plenty of it in the darkness of this last year) is a reflection of the light Christ brings into our world. His is the light that no darkness can overcome.

Normally we would celebrate Candlemas in church with the blessing of candles and carrying them in procession. That will not be possible this year because of the Covid restrictions, but we need in these days to proclaim and to affirm the light in life that Christians believe is but a reflection of Him who is the Light of the World.

Not far behind will be Lent, which begins on Ash Wednesday (17 February). How we shall be able to keep it this year is anyone's guess! Perhaps one good discipline would be to open our eyes to the light, to the blessings and graces we receive in our lives. For Christmas I was given a 'joy jar'. The idea is that each day you write down on a slip of paper something good that has happened in your life and



**The Presentation at the Temple (c 1455)
by Andrea Mantegna**

put it in the jar. It's really amazing how much light there really is, even in what is not the best of times. It would be a brilliant Lenten project. It doesn't take much organising, and we don't have to meet together to do it. How about putting aside an empty Christmas mincemeat or pickle jar? Have a Lent full of light!

Mgr Keith Mitchell

Services at St Mary and St Catherine

Sunday Mass is at 10am when government regulations allow. This Mass is streamed through Bridport Catholic Parish Facebook page and on the parish website: www.bridportcatholics.org.uk

For updates about Sunday Masses and daily weekday Mass in the parish, please see our weekly newsletter on the website.

Please note that the parish office is currently closed, but answerphone messages are being picked up daily.



Get involved: local clubs, groups and societies

Most groups have not been active during the coronavirus restrictions but we are giving their usual arrangements in the hope that they can resume soon. Please get in touch if you'd like your group to appear in these listings. Unless otherwise stated, all phone numbers are Bridport (01308).

Colmers WI meets at the WI Hall in North Street. Contacts are President Gill Smith 301201 and Sarah Nicks 459855.

West Dorset Flower Club (Bridport) meets at the WI Hall in North Street with regular visiting speakers and demonstrations. For details phone 456339.

Bridport Blind Club is a social club for the visually impaired. Contact ian.ibbotson@btinternet.com / 898484 or contact Leah Cross for personal or technical help 07789 997620.

Bridport Stroke Club meets weekly Sept–Christmas and Feb–July at the Community Room, Vernon's Court. Contact the secretary, David Lawrence: dandhlawrence@gmail.com.

Bridport Hearing Club meets on the first Monday afternoon of each month at Good Books, Gundry Lane. Cost £1.50pp to cover refreshments. For details phone 862608.

Probus, for retired/semi-retired professional men, meets at the Eype's Mouth Hotel on the third Wednesday each month at noon for lunch. Contact Graham Pitts 01297 561569.

Burton Bradstock Duplicate Bridge Group meets at the village hall on Tuesdays 1.45–4.45pm. Contact Kathy 485626.

Bridport Choral Society rehearses on Monday evenings at the United Church Hall and hopes to resume activities soon. Margaret Foster (Secretary) margefoster1956@gmail.com.

Bridport & District Gardening Club meets on the third Thursday of each month at 7.30pm at the WI Hall in North Street. Contact Peter Gough 459469.

The Arts Society (West Dorset) has regular Thursday talks at 2.30pm at Bridport Town Hall. Contact Sandy Lovelock 01305 848390 / sandylovelock@btinternet.com.

Dorset Wildlife Trust (West Dorset Group) meets at the United Church Hall on the first Friday in each month. Contact Monty Crook 423442 montycrook@rocketmail.com.

Disabled Carers & Friends meet Thurs 9am–noon at Vernon's Court Community Room, South St. Call in for a chat or advice. Contact pete.bowditch@hotmail.com/423620/421213/427819.

Bridport Bridge Club meets Wed & Thurs evenings (duplicate bridge, good standard) & the first two Fri afternoons in the month (relaxed bridge) at St Swithun's Hall. Roy Tarsnane 425298.

British Sugarcraft Guild meets at Groves' Ivy House cafe on the second Tuesday each month. Contact Jan 281085.

Bridport ASD and Social Anxiety Group for carers and young people 7–11 and 11–18. www.bridportasd.wordpress.com plus Facebook. Email indigo.may.counselling@gmail.com.

Bridport Child Contact Centre facilitates contact in a safe environment for non-resident parents following family breakdown. Volunteers always welcome. Phone 07792 075972.

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A new advertising admin manager will join the team next month, but we are still looking for someone to make some **advertising sales** calls a couple of times a year so we can continue to attract new advertisers. This is not a high pressure sales job! We are building a positive presence among Bridport publications and our prices are competitive. Please get in touch if you're interested in taking this on.

Donations welcome!

We'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who made a donation to The Bridge following our December appeal. The easiest way to support us financially, and allow us to reclaim Gift Aid if you are a taxpayer, is to pay online at the address below. All contributions are very welcome.
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