

February 2024

the **Bridge**

A community magazine for Bridport
supported by the Anglican Church



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Keep the faith and do small things with great love

We managed to get through Christmas and making our New Year's resolutions. However well intentioned, though, did we aim too high? I'm sure many of us didn't manage to get through January before telling ourselves sticking to them is too hard... maybe next year.

It might be my age, but time seems to be speeding up, and Christmas comes round quicker each year. Because we're British, the weather is one of our main concerns: "What do you think of the weather? Will it snow?"

I think we managed to get the full range this time, including flooding in some parts of town. As the saying goes, we don't have climate, we have weather. A special thankyou to all who helped during that difficult time.

February has now arrived, and we're all awaiting that Valentine's card and/or proposal. Yes, it's a leap year!

On the first Sunday of Advent, the Bishop of Salisbury visited our parish service and gave us a "mission statement" for the year ahead: to make Jesus known. What on earth does that mean? Well, another well-known saying is: "Actions speak louder than words!"

As we look forward to the first signs of spring, I find it hopeful to reflect on the positivity of long daylight hours, new life and hope, and how the bishop's mission may work out in reality. Whether you're a person of faith or not, I hope you'll find reflecting on the words of Mother Teresa of Calcutta and Teresa of Avila interesting and helpful. Here are some of my favourites:

Notice anything different?

I'm sure all our readers have spotted that yes, The Bridge's pages are smaller than they used to be.

Unlike with Snickers (Marathon!) bars and other sweet treats, however, this downsizing brings definite benefits. After a gap of a few months last year, we've returned to working with Bridport's local printer, Creeds. Their state-of-the-art equipment means that producing a magazine at this smaller size (B5, if you're interested) involves far less waste than at A4, and advanced ink-drying technology means less heat and fewer chemicals are needed, leading to a significant reduction in the mag's carbon footprint. Good news all round!



Olivia Daly
Editor

• Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today. Let us begin.

• Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless.

• The most terrible poverty is loneliness, and the feeling of being unloved.

• It's not how much we give but how much love we put into giving.

• I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples.

• God doesn't require us to succeed, He only requires that we try.

• I'm a little pencil in the hand of a writing God, who is sending a love letter to the world.

• Be faithful in small things, because it is in them that your strength lies.

• I used to believe that prayer changes things, but now I know that prayer changes us, and we change things.

• Every time you smile at someone, it is an action of love, a gift to that person, a beautiful thing.

• Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love.



Coral Hatton

Encouraging words as spring breaks through:

People are often unreasonable, irrational and self-centred; forgive them anyway. If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives; be kind anyway. If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies; succeed anyway. If you are honest and sincere, people may deceive you; be honest and sincere anyway. What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight; create anyway. If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous; be happy anyway. The good you do today will often be forgotten; do good anyway. Give the best you have, and it will never be enough; give your best anyway. In the final analysis, it is between you and God; it was never between you and them anyway. (Mother Teresa)

Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which He looks with compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which He blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are His body. Christ has no body now on earth but yours. (Teresa of Avila)

Coral Hatton

Wassail, wassail!

Bridport Community Orchard held its popular annual wassail afternoon on Sunday 14 January. About 250 people went along to join in the fun and enjoy music and traditional dancing from Wyld Morris, storytelling from Martin Maudsley, plus cider from Dorset

Nectar, hot spiced apple juice and cake.

Some brought along pots, pans and whistles to add to the hullabaloo and ward off evil spirits. "We had plenty of good feedback about how everyone had a lovely time," says Alison Todd, one of the organisers. "Everyone's generous donations help us to run the orchard and keep it lovely for the community and for nature, too." Wassailing is a traditional way to bless the fruit trees to ensure a good harvest in the year ahead.

Go green(er) for Lent – and beyond

A Rocha UK – the organisation behind the Eco Church initiative – has published a calendar of monthly suggestions for supporting and nurturing nature around us, whether that's in a churchyard, back garden or out in public spaces. February's entry reads: "The weeks leading up to Easter are a time for self-reflection, repentance and emulating Jesus' obedience to the Father. Is there something you'd like to give up or take up during Lent that will enable you to reflect on God, contribute to our planet's wellbeing and enhance others' lives through sustainable, eco-friendly living?" There are some ideas for going green(er) for Lent at www.arocha.org.uk/go-green-for-lent. St Mary's Bridport and Holy Trinity Bradpole have both signed up to the Eco Church project.

Become a trustee and help refugees

Bridport Refugee Support Campaign is looking for two new volunteer trustees to join its board and increase the charity's skills base. If you are interested in working towards resettling more refugee families in Bridport, you can email BridportRSG@gmail.com to ask for an application pack.



Help our local hospital by getting involved with the Friends

The Friends of Bridport Hospital are looking for some more volunteers.

They particularly need people to take a trolley around the ward selling items that patients might need during their stay, such as toiletries, drinks and snacks, stationery and magazines.

The Friends have been working with ward staff to re-establish a rehabilitation model for patients, rather than keeping them in bed. They are planning to fund some new activity sessions, and have also agreed to buy clothes for patients who don't have relatives or carers nearby, so they can dress during the day.

The charity has also recently bought an examination chair (pictured) for the small room in the Minor Injuries Unit. The chair replaces a couch, which took up too much room.



To find out more about volunteering, ring Heather Purse (423220) or speak to Katie Johnson in the hospital's main reception office. Dorset HealthCare Trust requires all volunteers to complete an application form online and to undergo DBS checks.

Funding for Bridport groups

Several Bridport organisations are among the beneficiaries of Dorset Council's 2024–26 funding allocation of £486,000 for arts and heritage groups and accredited museums.

Bridport Museum Trust will receive £40,000; Bridport Arts Centre and the Lyric Theatre (in partnership) £25,000; the West Bay Discovery Centre £10,000; and The Bank of Dreams and Nightmares £5,000.

Laura Beddow, Dorset Council's Portfolio Holder for Culture and Communities, says: "I'm pleased that we have been able to help so many organisations to bring arts and heritage to all corners of the council's area. It will make a lot of difference for the people of Dorset."

A generously donated grand piano opens up musical possibilities at St Swithun's

St Swithun's Church in North Allington received a magnificent Christmas present at the end of 2023 – a nine-foot concert grand piano.

The instrument is a gift from Dr Richard Godfrey, who lives in Uplyme. It is now in St Swithun's for a six-month trial period and if, as expected, it finds a sympathetic home there, it will become a permanent resident.

Richard is a former organ advisor to the Diocese of Salisbury and was for many years coordinator of its PipeUp scheme, which provides subsidised organ lessons to under-18s. He used the St Swithun's Conacher organ, among others in the area, to teach young players. Last year he spotted the church's potential as a permanent home for his Estonia piano.

Richard and his wife had been planning to live in France, and he had had the piano transported to the Château de Réville, near the Normandy town of St Vaast La Hougue – which, entirely coincidentally, is twinned with Bridport. His relocation plans didn't come about, however, and the piano was left in the château until December, when it made a challenging exit – via a window with the help of a crane – and came to Bridport. Despite the journey it is still in very good shape, and although it will undergo a full overhaul and tuning, it is already sounding completely at home in St Swithun's.

Canon Deb Smith, Team Rector, has welcomed the piano by thanking Richard for his “wonderful and generous gift” and says she is looking forward to hearing it as part of the Allington church's service to local community groups and individual music lovers. Matt Kingston, musical director of the West Dorset Singers (formerly the New Elizabethan Singers) who



The St Swithun's piano in use during the festive season

are contributing to the moving costs, adds that local societies will warmly welcome the presence of such a fine instrument in Bridport. Other organisations using St Swithun's as a concert venue are already building it into their programming.

For St Swithun's the piano forms part of the Repair and Renewal project aimed at increasing the church's offering to the local community. Philip Sturrock, the project leader, says he has been inspired by last year's Channel 4 series *The Piano*, in which amateur musicians played the piano at busy railway stations. He can see the piano being used by pianists young and old, experienced or novice players, as well as in concerts and church services.

St Swithun's is looking for a volunteer to promote and manage the use of the piano. If you are interested, drop an email to chair@stswithunsrandr.org.

A service to mark the beginning of Lent

As well as being St Valentine's Day, 14 February 2024 is also Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent.

The Parish of Bridport will gather together to mark this significant occasion in the Church's calendar at 7.30pm in St Mary's, South Street. There will be a service of Holy Communion with the imposition of ashes, hymns and a sermon.

For this year's Lent study, Canon Deb Smith, Team Rector, has chosen Tarry Awhile by Selina Stone. The

book, subtitled 'Wisdom from Black spirituality for people of faith', is the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent book 2024. Details of Lent study groups in the parish will be published soon online (www.bridport-team-ministry.org) and in the pew sheets.



Join in prayerful action on the World Day of Prayer

The World Day of Prayer (WDP) is a global ecumenical movement that encourages everyone to pray for our world. This year it is on Friday 1 March.

The movement is led by women but seeks to include everyone. The theme for 2024 is 'I beg you, bear with one another in love' and the service has been written by the Christian women of Palestine, who call people to connect with the land where Jesus was born, ministered and died; where the Christian faith began and is rooted.

"Despite living in an area of the world where there is ongoing conflict and the future is uncertain, the women of Palestine are sharing with love a reminder that they are



there, and they want to give hope to everyone," says Sue Bird from Bridport's WDP organisers. "The theme of this year's service seems very appropriate for these women who will not give up witnessing the love of Jesus Christ to all of their neighbours."

The Day of Prayer is celebrated in over 146 countries. It begins in Samoa and prayer in native languages travels throughout the world, through Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the Americas before finishing in American Samoa 38 hours later.

Everyone is invited to join in the service at 10.30am on Friday 1 March for informed prayer and prayerful action at this year's host venue, Bridport Christian Fellowship, at the back of East Street car park.

Help the community by becoming a Friend Against Scams

One in every 100 people living in Dorset is a Friend Against Scams.

Friends learn how to spot the signs of a scam, so not only can they stop themselves falling for one, but they can also spot other people who might be affected by this type of fraud. Through simple, everyday conversations, Friends can help keep others safe: family, friends, work colleagues or anyone they meet.

Friends often encourage other people to get involved, too, helping to grow the scheme in Dorset. They know where to report a scam and where to go to get help.

Anyone can become a Friend, and it's very easy. Just visit www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk and take the 20-minute online training at a time to suit you. If you don't have a computer, then ask at your local library how to access the training from a public computer.

If you are part of a group and would like face-to-face training for all of you together, please email Trading Standards: tradingstandards@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk.

You might also like to consider volunteering to be a Dorset Council Trading Standards Community Volunteer. Trading Standards is always happy to hear from potential volunteers, and will be led by individuals in terms of what and how much they do. To find out more, get in touch using the email address above.



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St John's West Bay: While electrical problems in the church are being sorted out, Sunday services are taking place in Harbour House. The brief Monday services of morning prayer will continue to be held in St John's. For the Service of Wholeness and Healing (fourth Saturday) please look for updates on the church noticeboard.



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February 2024						
Date	St Mary's Bridport	St Swithun's Allington	Holy Trinity Bothenhampton	Holy Trinity Bradpole	St Mary's Walditch	St John's West Bay*
<i>Thurs 1</i>		10am Eucharist			10am Morning Praise	
Sun 4 <i>Presentation of Christ</i>	8am BCP HC	10am Eucharist 4pm CC (hall)			8am BCP HC	
<i>Mon 5</i>						10am Morning Prayer
<i>Tues 6</i>				2.30pm HC		
<i>Wed 7</i>	2.30pm HC					
<i>Thurs 8</i>		10am Eucharist			10am Morning Praise	
Sun 11	8am BCP HC 11am HC	9.30am Eucharist	11am Morning Praise	9.30am Morning Praise		11am HC*
<i>Mon 12</i>						10am Morning Prayer
<i>Wed 14</i> <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	7.30pm Ash Wednesday service				10am HC	
<i>Thurs 15</i>		10am Eucharist			10am Morning Praise	
Sun 18 <i>1st Sun of Lent</i>	8am BCP HC 11am Morning Praise	9.30am Eucharist	11am HC	9.30am HC 11.30am Bradpole Brunch (village hall)		11am Morning Praise*
<i>Mon 19</i>						10am Morning Prayer
<i>Thurs 22</i>		10am Eucharist				
<i>Sat 24</i>						6pm Service of Wholeness and Healing*
Sun 25 <i>2nd Sun of Lent</i>	8am BCP HC 11am HC	9.30am Eucharist	11am Matins	9.30am Morning Praise	11am HC	11am Morning Praise*
<i>Mon 26</i>						10am Morning Prayer
<i>Thurs 29</i>		10am Eucharist				

Why not volunteer for St John Ambulance

If you've ever been taken ill at a large event – maybe a music festival, county show or league football match – the chances are you've met someone from St John Ambulance (SJA).

These trained volunteers provide first aid cover in all sorts of settings where large numbers of people are expected. From bandaging a wound or immobilising a fracture to dealing with a seizure or stroke, these guys can prevent a day out from turning into a tragedy – and, in many cases, save a life.

SJA also supports the NHS emergency response system by giving help on the front line during major incidents, including weather-related situations. This support often includes the provision of the organisation's own ambulances and 4x4 vehicles as well as its highly trained first aiders. And some volunteers work as community first responders, attending emergency calls in their home patch and providing life-saving care before NHS paramedics arrive.

SJA is part of The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem – more



briefly The Order of St John – an international charity that delivers first aid, healthcare and support in 44 countries, mostly in the Commonwealth. Every year the order trains around 2 million people worldwide in first aid, and its volunteers treat more than 1.2 million patients.

These volunteers – about 200,000 across the world – are the beating heart of the organisation, working in groups in their local communities to provide first aid cover and workplace training. The global number includes more than 44,000 volunteers in the UK, of whom half are under 30 and more than a quarter are under 18.

Bridport's SJA unit is one of seven in Dorset and dates back to the 1930s. It meets on Monday evenings at TS Keppel (the Bridport Sea Cadets' premises in Boldwood House, 13 West Allington) with sessions for cadets (aged 10–18)

from 6 to 7.30pm and adults from 7.30 to 9pm.

Unit manager Caroline Rendell has been an SJA volunteer for 46 years, having joined as a cadet. As an adult she became a first aider, and is now an emergency ambulance crew member. She's passionate about the organisation – and about making sure it survives and thrives into the future.

"We need volunteers!" she says. "We'd love to have some new members of all ages, but particularly adults to train as first aiders and help with the younger ones. At the moment we have seven adults and five cadets, although one cadet is moving up to the adult section. In the past we've also had a Badgers section for 5- to 10-year-olds; with some more adult volunteers we'd be able to start that up again. Helping young people to learn first aid gives them skills for life, and some even go on to a career in medicine.

"St John's is the best-kept secret in the country, as it doesn't advertise for volunteers, but we're very much a family, run by local people, and there's so much on offer, with a huge range of training courses and chances to help out and get involved. We cover local events like the raft race in West Bay, and local volunteers also help at national events – in recent years we've attended the late Queen's jubilee events and her funeral, as well as King Charles's coronation last year."

Volunteers from Bridport's St John Ambulance unit at the 2023 Remembrance parade in the town centre



ance in Bridport – you could save a life!

After a DBS check, new adult volunteers go to a welcome session at Dorchester or Poole before deciding whether they want to train as a first aider or fill another vital role, such as youth helper. Those who go down the first aid route can eventually take courses in radio communication and ambulance driving as well as acquiring all the relevant medical skills.

“The youth is our future,” says Kevin Chappuis, Deputy District Manager, Dorset District. “For one thing, young people are better



and quicker at adapting to the new technology we’re using, such as the electronic patient report forms that are replacing paper. First aid is so

important – no one should die for lack of it – and even our youngest volunteers, the Badgers, can save a life with the right knowledge. Please think about joining us!”

If you’re interested in becoming a St John Ambulance volunteer, you can email Caroline at caroline.rendell@sja.org.uk or just pop in to TS Keppel on a Monday evening to find out more. There’s no upper age limit for adult volunteers. Prospective cadets (10–18 years) are also very welcome.

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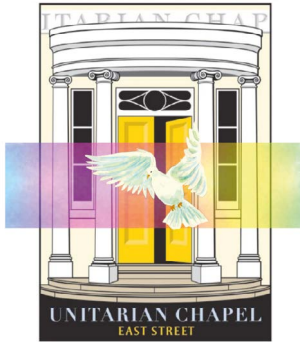
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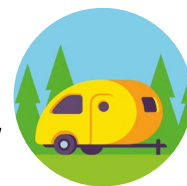
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Sharing her passion for dance with young people: BYD's Nikki Northover



Nikki Northover runs Bridport Youth Dance (BYD), a dance school for young people aged 5 to 21. She studied dance and dance education in London and Surrey, and her career in the field has taken her across the world, but she has continued to work here in her home town alongside jobs elsewhere.

We caught up with Nikki to hear about her lifelong passion for dance and her plans for BYD's future...

The Bridge: What are your earliest memories of dance? Is it a family passion?

Nikki Northover: Music has always been central to my family. Both my maternal grandparents were very musical and my mum has shared many stories of music filling their house in London.

Mum moved to Eype in the late 60s and met my father, the local dairyman. They joined the Bridport Pantomime Players, my mum as assistant ballet teacher and occasionally playing parts, and my dad as stage manager. My family also had a close association with Bernard Gale and his school of dancing in Bridport.

My mum says that as a baby I would sit on her lap watching my older sister in her dance class. I was always captivated. I started dancing when I was two, first ballet and then tap, too, at five. Eventually I also took up stage, ballroom and Latin.

It was in my teens that a Ballet Rambert dancer, Stephen Ward, came to Bridport and ran contemporary dance classes – my first experience of this style,



which I later studied at degree and postgraduate level. I was also lucky to go to tap classes with Roy Castle.

As a girl I was inspired by the films of Gene Kelly and Fred Astaire and at 18 I discovered American tap. I was also the generation to watch Fame, a drama series about New York's High School of Performing Arts. The thought of going to a school where you could dance all the time was thrilling!

TB: You've always retained strong links with Bridport. Why is your home town so special to you?

NN: Bridport has always been my home and in my heart. I realised early that I had a passion for teaching and working with young people. I've always been drawn to education and creativity, and I know this is what I'm meant to be doing – sharing my love of dance with others. Bridport is a beautiful place with a vibrant arts scene.

Over the decades, I've aimed to provide artistic, creative and performance opportunities to help children find what makes their heart sing, and encourage them to

become self-empowered creators. I love to make things happen.

As a response to the pandemic I created an outdoor programme – BYD's ART and DANCE in the LANDscape dance education programme, and through this I was in some ways returning to my roots. As a child I would often walk the fields of Lower and Higher Eype with my dad, making footprints in the earth as the cows were moved from field to field. Now the BYD outdoor programme is taking me back to the land, this time for a new and exciting chapter.

TB: What led you to set up BYD?

NN: After my studies and working in London, I wanted to set down roots. I was spending eight or nine months in London and summers in Dorset as I had set up Summerthing Children's Art Festival in 1994. This ran every August for 16 years, bringing artists from London and the South West to Bridport to lead workshops in dance, drama, puppetry, drumming, music, painting, circus skills and more.

In 2001, on the train from London, I received an intuitive message that it was time to set down roots. It was to be London or Bridport: I had to decide which one I could live without. Stepping onto the station at Dorchester, I knew I was truly coming home – to Bridport. I began to live here and commute to London at the end of the week to work with The West London School of Dance and Danceworks. So in 2001 the very beginnings of BYD were established in weekly classes.

My first baby was born in October 2004 and six months later I put →

Sharing a passion for dance: Nikki Northover

on my first show here in Dorset. I wonder how I managed! I was still working in London at weekends and my mum and baby son would come up to London while I taught.

My second child turned one in 2009; having two young children, some sleepless nights and early weekend starts brought the London chapter to a natural end. This made space to establish more classes for young people in Bridport, including after-school classes, an annual production, the introduction of Bridport Boys Dance and a summer school, Summer Dance Scene.

In 2014 my third child was born and in November 2015 our Steps studio and hub for young dancers was opened, and it has become an important and space for artistic, creative young people.

The Boys Dance programme was established in 2008 by Anna Golding and taken over by local dancer, teacher and choreographer Aimee Symes. At its peak it had 22 boys. Specific boys classes continued until 2020.

Since the pandemic we haven't been able to recover this alongside Summer Dance Scene and live music in our theatre productions, but maybe it will return in time. We have nine boys and young men who dance in mixed classes, and hopefully this will continue to grow.



Brendan Buesnel

TB: The arrival of Covid meant BYD had to close suddenly. How did you maintain your students' enthusiasm during this long period?

NN: In March 2020 we put on Orpheus and Eurydice: The Power of Love at the Electric Palace. Days later, BYD's doors had to close, and remained closed on and off for almost 60 weeks. After the initial shock and dread, the pandemic became a time of possibility, and greatly enriched BYD by enabling a change of direction.

During the first lockdown we established a remote programme but it was clear that the dancers needed to connect with each other. So, following each lockdown, alongside remote teaching, I established an outdoor programme of dance, often with live music. We danced in gardens and on beaches, and we made short dance films: The Dance Weavers series about dancers responding to the land. We also created Choreography Geography, site-specific performances at sites including Charmouth beach, Eggardon Hill and St Catherine's Chapel, Abbotsbury. The audience walks and watches, listens and absorbs as the young dancers connect to and honour the land.

The Dance Weaver films continue today and are a celebration of dance and the young people themselves. Our sixth film, Dancing with Darkness, will be screened in March. Our outdoor dance programme continues alongside work in our studio at Symondsburry.

TB: What are you looking forward to in 2024?

NN: Thanks to continued funding from Arts Council England in 2023, BYD has continued its outdoor

programme of dance together with an outreach and emerging artists programme. The outreach programme took dance into local schools, Sidney Gale Home for the elderly, and a local forest school, and provided dance and wellbeing courses for adults at our Steps studio. These classes are ongoing.

The emerging and young artists programme supports young dancers, performers, choreographers and film makers, providing work and mentorship and giving valuable experience in the dance world, including teaching and design. The young dancers have always been an important and vital part of the creative process.

Specific projects I am looking forward to include our 20th annual production, Paradigm, at the Electric Palace in March.

The outdoor programme is now integral to BYD so – funding permitting – there will be more Dance Weaver films and the continuation of Choreography Geography site-specific performances in the landscape.

I hope BYD will continue to grow and reach more people locally to bring them joy through dance.

Paradigm is at the Electric Palace on Friday 1 March at 7.30pm and Sat 2 March at 2.30pm & 7.30pm. Tickets from Bridport TIC (424901) or electricpalace.org.uk/theatre.

Adult wellbeing dance classes 10–11am every Wednesday and Friday in term time at Steps studio.

From 4 March places will be available on BYD's contemporary tap and urban programme for young people aged 5 to 21. To enrol or for more details, email bridportyouthdance01@gmail.com. See also the BYD website here: www.bridportyouthdance.org.uk.

Riverfly monitoring on the Mangerton and Asker rivers: a report from the volunteer team

Catching and counting riverflies might sound like an unusual activity, but it's very worthwhile as it gives us a way of monitoring the health of our rivers.

There are currently 11 volunteers engaged in evaluating the health of the Asker and Mangerton rivers. Following training from Dorset Wildlife Trust, these volunteers carry out monitoring at roughly monthly intervals from April to the end of September. The results are entered into a national system covering many of the rivers in the UK. Results indicate that a large number of these rivers are polluted by sources such as sewage, storm overflows or run-off from arable and livestock agriculture.

The Mangerton and Asker rivers are the most westerly of the chalk rivers in the UK and, since the UK has 80% of the world's chalk rivers, their health is internationally important. (The River Brit is also monitored in Bridport before its confluence with the Asker, although it is not a chalk river.) Some fixed monitoring sites have been assessed since 2019, including the one by the Co-op in Bridport. Others are at Askerswell village, Folly Farm, Uploders and Loders. The Mangerton is being assessed at Mangerton Mill but also, since 2023, at a place affectionately known as Bradpole Bottom, close to the bridge at the lower end of Higher Street.

So what does a riverfly monitor do? Standing in the water, they kick the river bed to disturb any small animals that are present, then collect a sample in a net. They empty this 'catch' into an examining dish and

count the animals. The main interest is centred on eight animals, selected nationally for their sensitivity to pollution. These animals are: the nymphs of four types of mayfly; stoneflies; a freshwater shrimp; and both cased and caseless caddisfly larvae. At first, identifying these creatures can be quite a challenge, and counting them is perhaps even harder, but after a while the task becomes less daunting.

Scores between 1 and 3 are given for each creature, depending on how many of each are present: a score of 1 for 1–9, 2 for 10–99, and 3 for 100–999. The combined score for all the animals indicates the health of the river. Typically, for the Asker and Mangerton rivers, the score is 12, placing them in the top 20% of healthy rivers in England.

Since 2019 only one minor pollution event has been detected in these two rivers. Importantly, the group of eight creatures provides a 'memory' of pollution since it can take several months for the score to recover from an incident. This means that sampling does not have to take place during the pollution event, unlike chemical testing of the water. Measuring levels of nitrates and phosphates in the rivers confirms a lack of pollution.

Otters are seen frequently at Loders and so it is likely that they will be around in Bradpole, too. Water voles, however, are unlikely



Dave Huth



Bob Hennicks



Colin Haydock

From top: mayfly nymph (*Rhithrogena sp.*); caddisfly larva (*Rhyacophila carolina*); and a much prettier otter for good measure

to re-colonise in this area, because mink – one of their predators – have been detected upstream in the Asker and Mangerton.

Janet Robinson

The monitoring group's full report is online here: www.tinyurl.com/z6hs584d (shortened link to Askerswell Parish website).

Dorset Wildlife Trust is creating three new wildlife ponds at the Kingcombe Meadows reserve north-east of Bridport. The aim is to boost the number of great crested newts, a protected species that's already found on the site. Each pond will be about 10 metres wide and roughly circular, with a maximum depth of 1.2 metres. The work is being funded by DEFRA under its Species Recovery Project.



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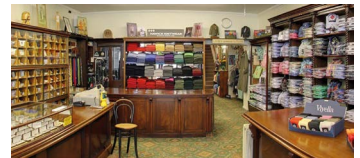


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ST MARY'S Bridport

Parish editor – Peter Wright 456967

Director of music – Tim Linsley

07830 308701

Tower captain – Bob Hardwick 420632

The playing of the merry organ...

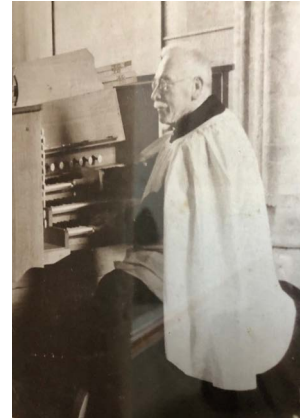
If you sang any carols over Christmas, you may well have joined in the refrain from *The Holly and the Ivy*: “The rising of the sun, and the running of the deer, the playing of the merry organ, sweet singing in the choir.” It’s a strange refrain as it has nothing to do with the ideas in the verses, but it does paint a festive picture of deer running through snowy woods, the sun rising and people singing in celebration.

All this is good, but if you came to St Mary’s for your Christmas carol singing you’ll have noticed that our organ was not “merry” at all: it was plagued with a cypher (the continuous sounding of a pipe even when the note has not been played) and we had to resort to ‘Carols on the Clavinova’ instead.

The organ at St Mary’s has a complicated history, with a number of major rebuilds since the original organ was removed from the west gallery in 1884. In 1934, Binns – the company founded by Leeds-based organ builder James Jepson Binns – converted it to pneumatic action and enlarged it to three manuals with a detached console. An even more radical rebuild took place in 1984 when the Walker organ from Holy Trinity Church in Tunbridge Wells was acquired to provide an attractive new case, the action was converted to electro-pneumatic, and the console was moved to the north aisle.

Our organ has clearly been well loved down the years, not least by the organists who, week by week, have played at weddings, funerals, occasions of civic celebration and remembrance, and for Sunday services. There is a wonderful photo of Albert Stone sitting at the console of the newly restored instrument in 1934. The inscription tells us that Albert, who lived in Barrack Street, was appointed organist of St Mary’s on 1 July 1888 and died ‘in office’ in December 1942. What a great personal achievement it must have been for him to be part of such a substantial improvement project and then to enjoy playing the restored organ in its new location.

Our current organist, Tim Linsley, is a fine musician who works hard to enable the instrument to give of its best. However, it now takes added skill and dexterity, not only to play the music as it is written, but also to minimise the effect of the deteriorating electronic



Tim Linsley (left), the current organist & director of music at St Mary’s; Albert Stone at the organ in 1934

transmission system. Cyphers are regular and more and more of the stops have stopped working.

Leaving the organ to age in such an undignified manner seems wrong, but raising the funds to make good the repairs will also be difficult. Please do contact me if you feel that you could contribute, even in small part, to the remedial work that will bring the organ back to life. Your help in making this happen would be very much appreciated, as well as being a small nod to the legacy of James Binns, Albert Stone and all those who have loved this organ so much.

Lesley Hill, churchwarden

The Advent and Christmas season saw a feast of carol singing and praise in our local churches, and of special note was the Blue Light carol service at St Mary’s on Thursday 21 December. This special annual event gives us a chance to thank everyone who works so hard to keep our emergency services running. The service had the usual carols, interspersed with Bible readings telling the story of Jesus’ birth. Many emergency personnel came along, including a motorcyclist from the Blood Bank riders who told us about their unstinting, inspiring work delivering urgent blood samples all over the south. Special thanks to the Revd Philip Ringer for leading the service.

Covid-19 made an impact in many ways, and many of our regular donors haven’t been able to support the church as they once did. If you can make a donation, whatever you can give, you’ll be helping to maintain our beautiful church and its ministry in the heart of Bridport.



HOLY TRINITY Bothenhampton

Parish editor – Barbara Ffooks 423122
Children & youth worker –
Jean Mitchell 422127
Director of music – vacancy

From the parish editor

Christmas seems some time ago now, but the following are some recollections of events. The season started with Advent and the Festival of Light service held in Holy Trinity for all the churches in the parish. This was a well-attended service of candlelight, readings and Advent carols. The Christmas service of Nine Lessons and Carols included traditional readings by representatives of various groups in the village telling the Christmas story. After the service there was a convivial social gathering in the beautifully decorated church with seasonal refreshments provided by the village hall committee. Thanks to everyone who helped make Holy Trinity look so attractive. The collection at the service for the Children's Society raised £210. A substantial congregation appreciated the earlier time of 8pm for the 'midnight' mass on Christmas Eve, welcoming the beginning of the festival. In the Old Church the memory tree was adorned with many messages remembering loved ones at this time.

Now we are coming into February, and the month starts with a coffee morning in the church on Saturday 3 February, 10am till 12 noon. This is a time to catch up with friends and meet new people over a cup of coffee or tea with something to nibble, and an opportunity to buy cakes, books and cards, and to take part in the raffle. Everyone is welcome.

Later in the month the Luncheon Club will meet again for a hot meal served in the village hall on Thursday 15 February (see above for details). Come and enjoy a home-cooked lunch and the companionship of fellow diners. Please reserve your place with Heather.

During the autumn the village hall was found to be in need of structural repair above the kitchen window. As the kitchen was then out of action, Holy Trinity hosted a number of events as well as the Brownies and Guides sessions that are normally held in the hall. The repair work was nearing completion by the beginning of January. The village hall committee



Luncheon Club

at Bothenhampton Village Hall

Thursday 15 February

From 12 noon; lunch served at 12.30pm

Come and enjoy a two-course hot lunch with others

- Baked gammon or ratatouille & halloumi bake
- Plum crumble

Price £5.50 per head

Please book so we have numbers for catering:

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heatherpurse@yahoo.co.uk



apologises for the inconvenience of closing the hall, and wishes to thank Holy Trinity for their support and use of the church building.

The Parish of Bridport is looking at ways to use some of the churches – other than purely for worship – and so increase the ways in which funding can be improved. Holy Trinity is thought to be the second-best Arts and Crafts church in the country, and therefore could be of interest to a number of visitors to the area. The church has a cosy, supportive and warming atmosphere, so we feel guests would find it a wonderful place to rest after a busy day. Holy Trinity could cater for small groups of up to 10 people, such as walkers and family groups, who would stay overnight. The church would provide camp beds, a kettle and a toaster, plus toilet facility. The expectation would be that guests would go into town for cooked meals. This offer would run between March and October for short stays only, and all bookings would go through the Historic Churches Trust. We realise it would have some impact around the church, such as car parking and groups playing or sitting outside. This information is being given now so you can raise any concerns that we may not have thought about. Also, if you wish to help with this scheme by making the church ready, welcoming visitors or checking the church once the groups have left, we would be interested to hear from you.

Ash Wednesday is on 14 February and is the beginning of Lent. Details of Lent groups will be announced soon, and there is some information on page 5 about the book that the team rector has chosen for Lent study.

Barbara Ffooks

HOLY TRINITY Bradpole

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 Tower captain – Janet Robinson
 07913 549946 / *jrb-jrb@outlook.com*
 For pastoral or personal issues, please
 contact the Revd Janis Moore 425644
 (Wednesday is her day off)

Bradpole Brunch

Everyone is invited to the village hall at 11.30am on Sunday 18 February.

Tots@Ten

Pre-school children are welcome to join others, with parents and carers, every Wednesday in the church where there is lots of space and toys to play with. Refreshments will be served.

The Friends of Holy Trinity

The Friends of Holy Trinity invite you to lunch in the church on Thursday 15 February from 12.30 until 2pm. See below for details.

Village lunch club

Do come to The King's Head for a social and reasonably priced lunch on Tuesdays 13 and 27 February. Please let Daphne King (427552) know if you will be coming so she has the numbers for catering.

Bradpole Parish Council

The council met on Thursday 7 December. The clerk thanked the eight councillors (pictured above right) who attended the Act of Remembrance service at Holy Trinity Church on 12 November. This was the last time the parish council would be represented at the Act of Remembrance, so it was a historic occasion.



Eight members of Bradpole Parish Council attended Holy Trinity's Act of Remembrance in 2023, the last time the council will be represented at this event

The clerk also passed on to all councillors a thankyou on behalf of the church and local community for everything that Bradpole Parish Council has done for them over the years.

The council is in the process of producing a booklet, Bradpole Archives, in print and electronic versions.

The bus shelter on the A35 at the junction with Lee Lane is to be refurbished using funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy.

The election of councillors for the Bradpole ward of the new Bridport Council will follow this timetable:

- Nomination forms and information will be made available online from mid-February 2024.
- Notice of election will be published on Mon 11 March.
- Nominations can be received from Tuesday 12 March. They must be delivered by hand, either individually or in bulk, by appointment in one of five locations (Dorchester, Weymouth, Wimborne, Blandford and Wareham). Times and dates to be advised.
- The deadline for receipt of nominations by the returning officer is Friday 5 April at 4pm. This is also the deadline for withdrawing nominations.

If you have any issues you would like to raise with the parish council, please email the parish clerk: bradpole@dorset-aptc.gov.uk.

The Ivan Andrews Trophy

Many people will remember the late Ivan Andrews, stalwart of Bradpole Church, chorister and local



The Friends of Holy Trinity



'Soup & pud' lunch

Thursday 15 February, 12.30–2pm

£8 on the door • All welcome!

HOLY TRINITY Bradpole continued...

historian, who died in 2019. Ivan was also, perhaps pre-eminently, a bellringer. His ringing began in 1952, and he rang faithfully for services as well as taking part in countless peals and quarter-peals for 67 years. Ivan was a leading member of the Salisbury Diocesan Guild of Ringers, was honoured with its presidency for six years, and later became an honorary life member.

During lockdown, a colleague in the Salisbury area had the notion of constructing a trophy; the beautiful result (pictured right) was dedicated to Ivan's memory and will be awarded, annually, to the winners of a striking competition. The trophy was brought to Bradpole in November so that Ivan's family and church friends could see it before its journey to Bradford-on-Avon, home of the first winners.

Bradpole Buzz Group

The group would love some support with the following:

- Practical help with planting
- Offers of wild plants and seeds from your garden
- Suggestions and general support

Please email bradpolebuzz@gmail.com or phone Rose Van den Akker on 01308 425756.



The Ivan Andrews Trophy

Bradpole Forster Village Hall

The main hall is available for hire by local community groups and private hire and is fully accessible with facilities for the disabled. All enquiries for bookings to Jane Bryant: 01308 427493 / oxeyedaisy101@gmail.com. See also the parish council website: www.bradpole.org.uk/the-forster-memorial-institute-bradpole-village-hall.



ST MARY'S Walditch

Parish editor – James Craddock 458725
walditchbridgejse@outlook.com

Verger – Pat Stapleton 456421

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

Lenten fare

Ash Wednesday – the start of the church season of Lent and a holy day in many Christian denominations – falls on 14 February this year. The day before is Shrove Tuesday, often called Pancake Day, traditionally a day when people were 'shriven' or forgiven of their sins before beginning six weeks of penitence before Easter.

The old county of Dorset was a place of good arable or pastoral farmland, producing a simple cuisine mostly sourced within its boundaries and from the sea as well as the land. The coastline would have given the county's people an advantage in years gone by, as they were

allowed to eat only seafood, not meat, during Lent.

With the exception of the gentry and well-to-do farmers, ordinary people's diet relied heavily on bread until the coming of the railways in the 1860s, when transportation of food staples became easier and cheaper. Unlike today, when artisanal wholemeal and other types of craft breads are at a premium, only the well-off ate white bread, while the majority ate 'maslin', a mixture of mainly rye with some wheat. The poorest people ate 'horsebread', a mix of bran, rye and chaff from the bakery floor. Cheap bread was dark, coarse, heavy and dry.

In times past during Lent, well-off people might have eaten Dorset Wiggs at breakfast time, toasted and spread with butter. These white buns were spiced with cloves, mace and nutmeg. The famous London-based diarist, MP and Royal Navy administrator, Samuel Pepys, describes how on Good Friday 1664 he had a Lenten supper of Wiggs and ale before going to bed.

A modern Lenten apple cake consists of apples, sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, baking soda, vanilla, nuts and raisins. Look up a recipe and enjoy your Lenten fare!
James Craddock

ST MARY’S Walditch continued...

Walditch Garden Group

Walditch Garden Group meets on the last Thursday of every month (except December) in Walditch Village Hall. Everyone is welcome, from near and far, so if you are interested in trying us out, do come along to our next meeting on Thursday 29 February at 10am and enjoy some garden chat, advice and tips with tea/coffee.
Jane Mowatt

Garden tips for February:

Feed and provide fresh water for birds; clean bird feeders often and change bird drinking and bathing water regularly. Cut back overgrown shrubs and hedges before the nesting season starts. Prune winter-flowering shrubs (including winter heathers) when the flowers have faded. Plant and divide snowdrops and winter aconites after flowering, but while the foliage is still green. Remove old stems of herbaceous perennials. Plant bare-root fruit trees and bushes. Prepare seedbeds for vegetable seed sowing outdoors. Prick out or pot up seedlings already growing. Check newly planted trees and shrubs, which may have been lifted by frost, and firm them well. Repot or top-dress shrubs in containers.

Ten flowering plants for February:

Helleborus orientalis; dwarf iris ‘Harmony’; *Cyclamen coum*; *Euonymus fortunei* ‘Silver Queen’; *Erica x darleyensis*; *Clematis cirrhosa* ‘Freckles’; *Viburnum tinus*; *Chaenomeles speciosa*; *Camellia x williamsii*.



ST JOHN’S West Bay

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

From the chapel warden

While electrical problems at St John’s are being sorted out, we are very grateful to the staff at Harbour House, who have welcomed us to hold Sunday services there at 11am. St John’s has remained open daily for quiet reflection and prayer.
Rosemary Russell

News from St John’s

We held our Christmas Day service at the Salt House,

which proved a lovely setting. Boxing Day was possibly the only dry, sunny day for a long time, so the swim and the carols outside the church were able to go ahead.

Sarah West from the Discovery Centre has been doing some research and has found an article about a model boat in St John’s. Mr W Randall, a Salisbury Diocese architect who was responsible for the design of the church, donated a replica of HMS Victory, following a custom for seaside churches in Brittany to enlist prayers for those who go down to the sea in ships, including fishermen. Big thanks to Sarah for telling me about this.

Sadly, Robin Pollock – a regular churchgoer and longtime resident of Harbour House – died peacefully aged 100 in December.
Sue Pollock

West Bay WI

The WI will meet for their regular Knit & Natter on Wednesday 7 February, 10am–noon, and then the →

ST JOHN'S West Bay continued...

following week, on Wednesday 14 February, they have their monthly meeting (2.30–4.30pm) when Teresa Grinter will demonstrate how to make Dorset buttons.

The WI is always keen to see new members. If you are interested in joining the group, please contact Alison Ridge on 01308 897293 or Maggie Hooper on 07720 056310.

Round and about the Bay

Back in mid-November there was an event that I thought captured our weather of recent months to a tee, although I don't think we enjoyed the soggy conditions quite as much as the 1st Bridport Scouts & 1st West Bay Sea Scouts did while taking part in the District Box Kart Race. The event was held in a very muddy Freshwater Beach Holiday Park, with a 100 metre sprint over tarmac and soggy grass followed by the dreaded downhill race, pushing the karts through puddles (*pictured*) and finally carrying them over an obstacle course. Thirty scouts from the West Dorset area took part and finished with well-deserved hot drinks and custard creams.



The Discovery Centre opened for four days over the holiday period, and once again the wet and windy weather meant that people very much appreciated having some indoor entertainment. There were 491 visitors to the centre. It is now closed until Saturday 10 February, when it will be open for the half-term holiday and then just on weekends for the rest of the month. The exhibition of West Bay at War will be running and is well worth a visit.

The West Bay Community Forum (WBCF) committee met on 18 January to discuss, among other things, the work around the harbour, which has been delayed by the weather. WBCF is now a member of the Bridport Business Chamber of Trade & Commerce, a group that meets monthly to discuss local commercial issues of concern or importance.

During one of my early morning walks in December it was lovely to see not one but two large Christmas trees lit up, which really brightened my day. Obviously the one everyone knows is outside the church (*pictured*) and it was lit up earlier in the month by Harbour House resident Sylvia Gardener, who is a regular member of the congregation at St John's. The tree gets battered around and one morning it looked as though it would fall... but happily it survived. The other tree was outside Rise, shining over the River Brit.



Walking round the back of the harbour master's office, I had a chuckle to myself (not something that happens usually at that time of a winter's morn) when I saw a boat parked up on the quayside and noticed the name: 'Costa Fortune'!

Sue Pollock



ST SWITHUN'S Allington

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Distribution – Kevin Payne 07976 534517
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Verger – Graham Williams 07969 826430
graham_williams11@sky.com

Lots of activity at St Swithun's

The second of our Christmas community coffee mornings was held at the beginning of December and was very popular with a steady stream of people coming in on a wet and miserable morning to enjoy free hot drinks, soup and cakes. Also on offer were Christmas gifts, decorations, preserves and raffle tickets, with proceeds going to church funds. There was a lovely atmosphere and it was a great start to the festive season. There are a few photos on the opposite page.

Rose Harvey



The December community coffee morning at St Swithun's kicked off the festive season perfectly

ST SWITHUN'S Allington continued...

Wild & Messy Church: Christmas by the fire

The message of December's Wild & Messy Church event was that God sent us the baby Jesus so we know God is with us; we have his light to show us the way to live, and his love and spirit to help us. God's love is with us still, so close that it is like a fire to warm us.

The gathering was led by Canon Deb Smith with the Revd Lorna Johnson and young leaders.

The Christmas story was told in two parts, with children dressing up in costumes and narrating the events of the Nativity.

There were fun activities for the children to enjoy. As carols played, children searched for the hidden baby Jesus pebbles hidden around the church, with prizes for their success. They were also encouraged to paint their own baby Jesus on a pebble to take home and hide on Christmas Eve, then encourage a search on Christmas morning. This activity was a reminder that Jesus' and God's love can be found in all our homes.

The prayer baubles showed us we always have the light of Jesus to guide us. Each bauble had a battery tealight and a prayer chosen by each child. Wild holly Christmas 'trees' for the birds showed everyone that just as God gives free gifts to us, so we are making presents of food for his creation. The children could also choose a present for a parent or carer and wrap it up.

There was a campfire, which created a cosy atmosphere on a cold afternoon. The children were taken there in groups to toast a marshmallow (regular or vegan!) and everyone sang carols around the fire.

Canon Deb gave the Superman Grace, after which there was a substantial Christmas tea with sandwiches and cakes. Finally, at the door, the departing children got a present from the friendly elves.

A big thank you to all the organisers and helpers who made it such a successful event.

James Craddock



Some of the adults involved in December's Wild & Messy Church



Bridport UNITED CHURCH

Minister – The Revd Jane Wilson
 01308 341159
 Church secretary – Sue Herman
 422598 / bridportsec@gmail.com

incorporating
UPLODERS CHAPEL

Correspondent – Carol Hall
 423163 / carol@gribb.plus.com

Let's not pack away our inner sparkle!

Epiphany falls on 6 January and is the day when nowadays we are supposed to take down all the Christmas decorations and when the streets seem to become rather dark and drear after the last few weeks.

So many people go to great trouble in the weeks before Christmas to decorate the outside of their houses to bring happiness and a smile to those passing or, in some cases, to raise money for charity, and it's always sad when the sparkle goes. I have to say, however, that I leave a lot of my Christmas lights up until Candlemas – 2 February and traditionally the time for taking decorations down – to keep the sparkle going for those passing by, and for myself.

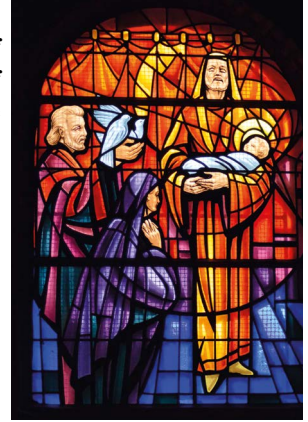
As the great 17th-century English poet Robert Herrick wrote in his poem Ceremony Upon Candlemas Eve:

*Down with the rosemary, and so
 Down with the bays and mistletoe;
 Down with the holly, ivy, all
 Wherewith ye dress'd the Christmas hall;
 That so the superstitious find
 No one least branch there left behind;
 For look, how many leaves there be
 Neglected there, maids, trust to me,
 So many goblins you shall see.*

That sounds like a good recipe to make sure the servants clean up effectively – but maybe we are a bit too quick to want to dismantle everything. I know we put up our decorations much earlier than the traditional Christmas Eve but I do find it sad that the 12 days of Christmas seem to have almost disappeared.

Until a few years ago, some churches I knew were still holding their carol services after Christmas so they could fully celebrate the period of Advent and sing the ancient Advent hymns. Now we seem to try and cram everything into the last week or so before Christmas – and by Boxing Day, for many, Christmas is over.

**Candlemas marks
 the presentation of
 Jesus – the Light of
 the World – at the
 temple in Jerusalem**



And if we lose the outward sparkle as we put the lights away, do we also tend to lose the inner sparkle? That extra spirit of kindness, of wanting to help those we meet, of wishing strangers well, which seems to pervade the atmosphere around 25 December. Have we put all those thoughts and feelings away in a box labelled 'to be opened in December 2024' or have we decided to keep them out and try to use them to make our part of the world a better place? If we do that – however difficult we may find it – then surely the true spirit of the Christmas season will live on in and through us.

Of course it's now February and Candlemas is upon us, so even my Christmas lights have been packed away in a box labelled 'Christmas 2024'. I do hope that my Christmas spirit hasn't been packed up with them and I hope yours is also shining brightly to help lead us all through this possibly turbulent year.

A belated happy and peaceful new year to us all.
Sue Herman

February services at Bridport United Church:

Sunday 4	10.30am	John Walker
	4pm	Soul Space
Sunday 11	10.30am	Jane Wilson
Wed 14	12 noon	Ashing service (HC)
Sunday 18	10.30am	Tony Boyden
	4pm	Healing service with Jane Wilson
Sunday 25	10.30am	Richard Lownsbrough
	4pm	Cafe Church

Regular events at BUC

Coffee morning every Wednesday and Saturday (except 10 Feb) 10am–noon. Lunch Club fourth Wednesday.

Mondays	10am–noon	Art group (inner hall)
	2pm	Art history
	2pm	U3A Tech Group (fourth)
	2.30pm	National Trust (last only)
	7.30pm	Bridport Choral Society
Tuesdays	2pm	Bridport Blind Club (first & third)
	2pm	Bridport U3A (fourth)

Bridport UNITED CHURCH continued...

Tuesdays, cont.	4.30pm	Rainbows
	5.30pm	Brownies
	7.30pm	West Dorset Singers
	7.30pm	Bridport Big Band (church)
Wednesdays	12.30pm	Lunch Club (fourth only)
		All welcome. Two-course home-cooked meal.
		Please book: 422598
	1.30pm	Archaeology (from 21 Feb)
	5.30pm	Kickboxing (inner hall)
	6pm	Fitsteps
	7.30pm	Kickboxing (main hall)
Thursdays	2pm	Thursday Club (third)
		All welcome for tea, chat, games and crafts
	2.30pm	Bridport History Society (second only)
	3.30pm	Messy Church (fourth)
	6pm	Fusion Dance
Fridays	6pm	Kickboxing (main hall)

Special events

Sat 3 February	9–11.30am	Big Breakfast
Sat 10 February		Vinyl Saturday
Sun 11 February	11.30am	Church meeting

From Uploders Chapel

Well, I really can't believe we are already through January! Thankfully the days are beginning to draw out, albeit more slowly than I would really like. Still, at least we've seen some sunshine.



As usual, we have enjoyed some lovely services and activities since I last wrote. We had an unusual service on Sunday 7 January. Sadly, the Revd John Walker was unable to take the service as he was ill. We hope he's feeling better now and we hold him in our thoughts and prayers. We look forward to seeing him again.

Instead, the Revd John Yarrien stepped up and took the service. As can be expected at the chapel, it did have something unusual! John brought his clarinet to play the hymn tunes for us (*pictured*) and we all very much appreciated having real music instead of the music box.

Although the Pop Up Post Office (PUPO) is still going ahead, the IT equipment does at times present some challenges, which is very frustrating for our sub postmaster, Steve, and his team plus any kind souls who have been supporting this facility. Of course, having to change the day and time has led to some confusion at times. So just to confirm, the PUPO is now every **Wednesday** from 1 to 2.30pm. Please keep supporting it, as it's vital to Steve and to the chapel. There will always be cake and cuppas to enjoy as well.

Hopefully Christmas met all your expectations and 2024 will, too. Have a Fantastic February!
Carol Hall

February services at Uploders Chapel:

Sunday 4	10.30am	Peter Jenner
Sunday 18	10.30am	Jane Wilson

**St MARY & St CATHERINE
Roman Catholic Church**

Parish priest – Monsignor Keith Mitchell
keith.mitchell@predtr.org.uk
Presbytery 424754
Secretary – Faith Leborgne 422594
bridport@predtr.org.uk

Messengers of hope

We have scarcely put the Christmas decorations away and it is already time for another Lent. Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, falls on 14 February, and it's a really early Easter this year. It does make you think that maybe there is something to be said for having a fixed

Easter, which would give us time to catch our breath.

Lent is more than a time for giving things up; it is a season of grace. As human beings we are capable of great things... and of awful things. One of the greatest gifts we have is our free will. Our greatest weakness is to be led astray and make bad decisions. That has been true since the very beginning. Remember Adam & Eve? They were created equal in the image of God. However, they made a stupid decision, which destroyed all they had. We are made in God's image, too, but are also capable of bad things. Lent is a time to live in grace, not disgrace.

We see the paradox all around us and within us. In the world, we see the mess of unjust economic structures, ungenerous attitudes, violence, conflict and war as well as acts of generosity, kindness and sheer goodness. Lent is more than a time for prayer, fasting and almsgiving, good as those things are. Lent is also a time to walk more closely with God as He is in →

ROMAN CATHOLIC Church continued...

Jesus in the battle against evil – within and without.

Many politicians and the ‘politically correct’ may tell us that we are coming from a dark period dominated by religion and are moving to a brighter future born of free choice in everything. Experience does not seem to bear that out, however. Adam and Eve provide us with an uncomfortable and unwelcome reminder that we can easily be led astray by short-term temptations to do stupid things. Experience does not show that freedom guarantees human flourishing and grace. Freedom is good but not when it is a cover for the strong to take advantage of the weak and vulnerable. A society will flourish when we and our leaders are not embarrassed to talk about right and wrong, about wise and generous decision-making and about morality.

In what sometimes seems like a moral wasteland, Lent challenges us to promote virtue in our lives and in our world, however unwelcome that message may be. Lent is a time when we take seriously Jesus’ battle against sin and its effects. He has broken the shackles of sin. We take on the battle because we believe the



struggle can be won. Jesus tells us that the devil has not won and that we are all capable of becoming saints. We can change and so can our world. Trust him.

Lent is a time when we make space for that gift, that grace, in our own lives and in our world.

Monsignor Keith Mitchell

Sunday Mass is at 10am and is streamed online at www.bridportcatholics.org.uk and the Bridport Catholic Parish Facebook page. For updates about Sunday and weekday Mass, see our weekly newsletter on our website.

BEACON CHURCH
Priory Lane, Bridport

Church office 456031
office@beaconchurchbridport.co.uk
www.beaconchurchbridport.co.uk

Meet our family

We know God is working in our town and we hope to encourage you by sharing a story each month of a follower of Jesus.

Who are you?

My name is Heather. I moved to Bridport 18 months ago from West Surrey having retired and wanting to move closer to family, but not knowing anyone in the immediate area. I am a keen tennis player so living somewhere with an active club was important and I’ve enjoyed a warm welcome and some excellent tennis at the club in Bridport. I spent many happy childhood holidays in Dorset and as a keen walker having access to the amazing coastline has been a real privilege and joy.



Tell us about your walk with Jesus

My parents were committed Christians and I gave my life to Jesus when I was 11. All through my teenage years, university and working life I knew God was at work in my life, even when I drifted away from Him and other things seemed more important. When I was diagnosed with cancer three years ago, and the initial prognosis wasn’t good, I was able to draw on my personal relationship with God for hope and strength in a very difficult time.

How do you see God at work during your week?

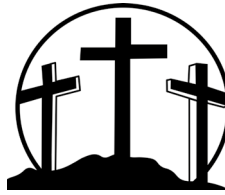
Being part of a church where faith is put into action has always been very important in my Christian life. The most exciting thing about moving here has been getting involved at Beacon Church in different ways. Once a week I volunteer at the community kitchen and it has been such a privilege to get to know those who use it. It’s important that my faith has a practical outworking and I’ve recently completed training to run a money management course produced by Christians Against Poverty. I have also become a trustee of the church, where I have found a new spiritual home and family and I’m praying for a long and healthy retirement!

You are always welcome at Beacon Church. Wherever you are in your journey in faith, and whatever you believe, we’d love to meet you. Our service is at 10.30am each Sunday in the Beacon Evangelical Hall, DT6 3RW.

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

King's Lane (in East St car park)

Office 424437 • David Collins 458227
info@bridportchristianfellowship.org
www.bridportchristianfellowship.org



BRIDPORT CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

We are a member church of the UK Evangelical Alliance and an Ichthus Link Church. We meet for worship every Sunday at 10.30am and at various times during the week.

We seek to bless the community of Bridport with the Good News of Jesus, and everyone is assured of a warm welcome at our Sunday services or when joining in any of our activities.

Our usual pattern of activities is as follows (it varies during church festivals such as Christmas – see online for details: www.bridportchristianfellowship.org).

Mondays: Meals Outreach Project for those who find themselves in difficult times.

Tuesdays: Three House groups meet at 2–3pm, 2.30–4pm and 7.30–9.30pm.

Wednesdays: One House group meets at 7–9pm. Precious Ones, our group for young mums, meets in the church at 9.30–11.30am.

Fridays: One House group meets at 12.30–2pm. You can also come along and join in our Art Group, 10am–12 noon. You don't have to be brilliant at art!

Saturdays: Pray Chat coffee bar with free tea, coffee and cake, 10am–12.30pm.

Sundays: 10.30am–12 noon is our weekly service. On the first Sunday in the month, we also join together for a meal or BBQ after the service.

Bridport QUAKER MEETING

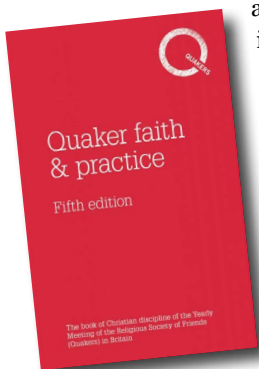
The Meeting House 97 South Street

Correspondent – Jeni Edwards
 538105 / jeni.edwards69@gmail.com



From our correspondent

As this is the first of our regular contributions to The Bridge, may I introduce myself. I am Jeni Edwards, a member of the Bridport Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. We are usually called Quakers, but in fact that is a nickname we acquired a long time ago and we are stuck with it. There is a book called Quaker Faith and Practice, which is regularly updated and which contains a history and an expression of the experience and beliefs of Quakers over the years. Its subtitle is The book of Christian discipline of the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.



“The deeper realities of our faith are beyond verbal formulation and our way of worship based on silent waiting testifies to this.” Early Friends tended to physically shake or quake when the spirit moved them to speak or ‘minister’ into the silence, and the word ‘quaker’ comes from this. It was definitely not intended as a compliment, but has stuck. In the coming months I hope to explain more about the faith and practice of Quakers, but if you have any questions please contact me as the Meeting correspondent.

Meeting is held at the Meeting House at 10.30am for an hour on Sunday mornings and 10.30am for half an hour on Wednesday mornings. All are welcome.

The Quaker website at www.bridportquakers.org contains all the details you need to book a room for an event or to find out more about us.

Jeni Edwards

Get involved: local clubs, groups & societies

Please contact the editor (details on page 2) if you'd like your group to appear here. Entries are free but are limited to a few lines and are for non-profit community groups and clubs and their events (not ticketed events such as concerts). Unless otherwise stated, all phone numbers are Bridport (01308).

West Dorset Flower Club meets at the WI Hall, North Street, at 2.30pm on the second Monday each month with demonstrations and speakers. On 12 February the club will hold its AGM. Phone 456339.

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 & District Model Railway Club meets each Tuesday at Askerswell village hall 7–9pm. Members can run their stock on the club 'test track' or operate a club layout. Chairman Geoff Purse 423220.

Bridport Stage Company theatre group meets on Mondays 7–9pm at the British Legion. They are preparing to perform *The Importance of Being Earnest* around Easter 2024. All ages welcome; no experience needed. Email Valerie: tasterella@hotmail.co.uk

Bridport & District Allotment Society (BADAS) is open to all. Membership is £5/year and gives discount at several gardening suppliers. Contact 250260 / email BADASHUB@outlook.com. More details online at www.bridportallotmentsociety.co.uk

Bridport Blind Club is a social club for the visually impaired. It meets twice a month for tea, entertainment and chat. Part of Dorset Blind Association, which provides personal and technical help. Contact Ian Ibbotson 898484.

Bridport & District Gardening Club will meet on Thursday 15 February at 7.30pm at the WI Hall, North Street. Brian Pettit, who works closely with wildlife reservations and zoos in the UK and globally, will talk about the wildlife of Dorset. Open to non-members at £2. More details at www.bridportgardeningclub.co.uk

Bridport Bridge Club meets Wednesday evenings & Friday afternoons for duplicate bridge at St Swithun's Hall, plus online on Thursday evenings. Friday sessions (not third Fri) are more relaxed. See www.bridgewebs.com/bridport or phone Roy Tarsnane 425298.

West Dorset Music Community Orchestra meets on Wednesdays in term time 6.30–7.45pm at the Christian Fellowship Hall in East Street car park. Contact 456297 / www.westdorsetmusic.org.uk

Friday Dance Group, just for women, meets every Friday 11.30am–12.30pm at St Mary's Church House Hall, South Street. Come along and enjoy dancing as you like to a range of music. First session free. More details from Sue 425037.

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

Free play singing, improvisation and earth/peace movement chants. Spontaneous compositions of sound; few words. Tuesdays 2pm at Bridport Youth & Community Centre, Gundry Lane, for about an hour. All welcome, £1 per person. Phone Pen 07713 008290.

Bridport Folk Dance Club meets every Monday 7.15–9.30pm in the WI Hall, North Street. All welcome, including beginners. Phone 458165 or 459001.

West Dorset Singers (formerly the New Elizabethan Singers) meet for choral rehearsals in the United Church Hall on Tuesdays at 7.30pm from September to May. For more information contact the secretary, Sarah Stamford: sastamford@outlook.com / 425312.

Voices of Hope Singing Group is open to all ages and abilities. Easy, uplifting, joyful songs from around the world, some rounds and some in parts. Borough Gardens (off South Street) or The Chapel in the Garden if it's raining, Fridays at 11am. Suggested donation £5. janesilvercorren@gmail.com / 07887 675161 for more details or to join the mailing list.

Golden Cap Association (West Dorset), in support of the National Trust, organises illustrated talks on the last Monday of the month (except summer) in the United Church Hall, East Street, at 2.30pm. Contact Mike Nicks 459855.

Bridport Scottish Dancers meet on Wednesdays at 7.15pm (7.30pm start) in St Mary's Church House Hall, South St. All welcome, no partner required. First visit free, then £2 per session (incl. refreshments). Basic tuition given in the first hour. Please wear soft shoes if possible. Caroline 538141 / Malcolm 07790 323343 / www.bridportscottishdancers.org.uk

Citizens Advice is here to help

Need advice on benefits, debt, employment or other issues? Pick up the phone and talk to us on Freephone 0800 144 8848. You can also email us via the contact form at www.bridportca.org.uk or drop in to 45 South Street, Bridport (Mon, Tues & Thurs 10am–3pm, Wed & Fri 10am–1pm).



Bridport Choral Society rehearses on Monday evenings at 7.30pm at the United Church Hall. Contact Margaret Foster margefoster1956@gmail.com

Bridport Youth Dance offers classes in tap, contemporary, street, urban and musical theatre. To enrol or for more details contact Nikki Northover 07765 971357 / bridportyouthdance01@gmail.com / www.bridportyouthdance.org.uk. See also page 11 for our interview with Nikki.

Dementia Friendly Bridport has spaces in its gentle exercise group for people with dementia and their carers. It's run by a qualified instructor and volunteers. Tuesdays 1.45–3.15pm at Bridport Leisure Centre. Contact Debra: 07890 649561 / dementiafriendlybridport@gmail.com

Bridport Community Shed, between Mountfield and Bedford Place, opens Mon, Wed & Thurs 10am to noon. On the first Tuesday of the month there is also an evening stitching session (please book in advance). Contact 07593 880428.

Bridport Health Walks are free gentle walks around Bridport. We have a 30-minute walk every Wednesday and a walk of about 60 minutes on the first and third Thursday each month. Meet at the front of the United Church on East Street at 9.45am and return for hot refreshments. No need to book, just turn up. For more information contact 01305 252222 / sarah.davies@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Bridport St Mary's Parkrun is a weekly, free, timed run or walk organised by volunteers. Saturdays 9am at St Mary's Field. Great fun for all ages and abilities. Register online first then bring your barcode on your phone or printed out. Find us on Facebook or visit www.parkrun.org.uk/stmarys

Bridport Tree Planting Group plants & gives away 1,000 trees a year in public and private spaces around Bridport. Three free saplings available per household. Help needed to water and weed young trees. Contact joe@thehacketts.uk for details and to receive newsletter. www.westdorsetfriendsoftheearth.org.uk/index.php/more-trees-please

Bridport History Society meets on the second Thursday of each month (except July and August) at the United Church Hall, 2.15 for 2.30pm. Visitors welcome £5pp. Membership is £10 individual / £15 couple. For more info visit www.bridporthistorysociety.org.uk

Harmony Drop-in provides a safe, social space and peer support to aid the recovery journey of adults in the Bridport area who are living with mental health difficulties. Our group (Mon, Wed & Fri 10am–1pm) offers activities and support, fostering wellbeing and increased self-esteem. Contact 07597 379290.



Bridport Community Front Room offers face-to-face support for people reaching a mental health crisis point or needing wellbeing support. Assembly Rooms, Gundry Lane. Thursday to Sunday, 3.15 to 10.45pm. Appointments 07385 290804.

ASCape offers social opportunities and support for autistic young people and those with social anxiety aged 4–25 and their families. Contact info@ascapegroup.org or visit www.ascapegroup.org

Bridport Inner Wheel meets monthly at Haddon House, West Bay, to enjoy friendship and listen to speakers as well as helping the community. Contact Sue Pollock 07903 558568 / rognsuewbay@btinternet.com

Colmer WI meets on the second Thursday each month at 7.30pm in the WI Hall, North Street. Visitors welcome to come for a no-obligation evening. Contact Sarah Fletcher sarah.fletcher33@hotmail.co.uk

Bridport & District u3a is for people no longer in full-time employment. Monthly meetings are at 2pm on the fourth Tuesday each month in the United Church Hall, East St. The talk lasts about an hour, followed by Q&A and refreshments. On 27 February Steve Belasco presents 'A cruise along the Jurassic Coast' with photos of our stunning coastline. Members free, visitors £3. More than 60 u3a groups meet regularly, covering a huge range of interests. Contact Alastair Forbes 424166 / chair@bridportu3a.org.uk / www.bridportu3a.org.uk

The **u3a Singers Group** meets on alternate Thursdays for a 10.30am start at the WI Hall in North Street.

Contact Heather 425219 / www.bridportu3a.org.uk

Bridport Community Fridge redistributes surplus food free or for a donation. Usually Tues and Sat 10–11.30am at The Chapel in the Garden, East St. Also at St Swithun's Church with **Bridport Food Surplus Stall** on Thursdays 9.30–11.30am. See their Facebook page or email events@bridportunitarians.co.uk

Bellringers in the Parish of Bridport: We always welcome new ringers and are happy to train you on our bells. At St Mary's Bridport we meet at 7.30pm on Thursdays. Contact Bob Hardwick 420632. At Holy Trinity Bradpole we practise at 7.30pm on Tuesdays. We have a ground-floor ringing chamber and training simulator. Contact Janet Robinson jrb-jrb@outlook.com

Bridport & District RNLI holds five or six events (including Seatown BBQ) each year to raise money. Volunteers always needed. Contact Sadie 07811 470127 or Annie 07790 713156.

Disabled Carers & Friends meet on Thursdays 9am–noon at Vernon’s Court Community Room, South Street. Contact *pete.bowditch@hotmail.com* / 423620 / 421213 / 427819.

The Cowshed Wellbeing Gardens group meets Tuesdays 2–4pm and Thursdays 10am–noon. Gardening, talking, art and workshops for people with health vulnerabilities or wishing to enhance wellbeing. Access is to the left of Bridport Medical Centre. For more info please text 07769 720773.

Bridport Community Carnival Committee enables both carnival processions to happen on the third weekend of August each year. Would you like to get involved with planning this sociable event for 2024? Contact *joycedunford@yahoo.co.uk* or visit *www.bridportcarnival.co.uk*

MMMM! Monday Movie, Meal & Mingling is a weekly event from United Diversity Bridport (UDB) & Sustainable Bridport. Mondays 6–10pm in the White Room at the Chapel in the Garden, East St (entry via Rax Lane). Inspiring documentaries and short films by local filmmakers. Admission £3 to cover room hire (UDB members free). Food and drink available. Info and tickets: *www.ud.coop/mmmm*

Bridport Branch Royal Naval Association meets on the third Thursday each month at 7 for 7.30pm in the Bridport & District Social Club, North St. Ex-matelots and all other ex-military always welcome. Refreshments available. Contact Bob Bickers *thebickerage@aol.com*

Somerset & Dorset Family History Society (West Dorset Group) meets at Lodders Village Hall. Members £1, visitors £3. Email Jane: *jferentzi@aol.com*

Bridport Dog Training Society has been active for 60+ years and meets on Monday evenings at St Mary’s Church House Hall, South St. Contact club secretary Sue Palfrey 07787 289425. A trained dog is a happy dog!

Salway Ash Acoustic Sessions are on the first Tuesday every month at 8pm at the Anchor Inn. Sing, play, join in, listen, enjoy. Contact Harry Britton 421225.

Stepping Out Bridport is an exercise and wellbeing programme, led by trained rehabilitation instructors, for people living with or beyond cancer. Monday and Thursday mornings at the Pavilion, Bridport Leisure Centre. All ages welcome. Contact *j.perfect@bridportleisure.com*. More information at *www.steppingoutbridport.co.uk*

Bridport Royal British Legion meets on the third Saturday each month at 10am for a coffee morning. Come along to our hall in Victoria Grove for a chat and to find out about membership and activities. The newly refurbished hall now has disabled access and is available for hire. Contact Linda 425664 (hall bookings) or Mike Thompson 07974 534945 / *mickey_thompson56@hotmail.com* (membership.)

Life+line Bereavement Support is a Parish of Bridport initiative for people of all faiths or none, meeting in a supportive, confidential environment to listen to and encourage one another in our experience of grief. Fourth Monday of every month 2.30–4pm at Greenfields, Bridport Community Hospital. Contact Diana Wright 456967.

The Rotary Club of Bridport meets on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 6pm at the Bull Hotel as well as for other fundraising and social activities. We help charities and needy causes locally, nationally and internationally as well as supporting the local community. Contact Mike Green 07909 990693 / *mikegreen@greenmail.net*

Bridport St John Ambulance unit meets at TS Keppel, West Allington, on Mondays. Cadets (aged 10–18) 6–7.30pm, adults 7.30–9pm. Volunteers are always welcome to join the unit. For details contact *caroline.rendell@sja.org.uk*. Also see our feature on pages 8–9.

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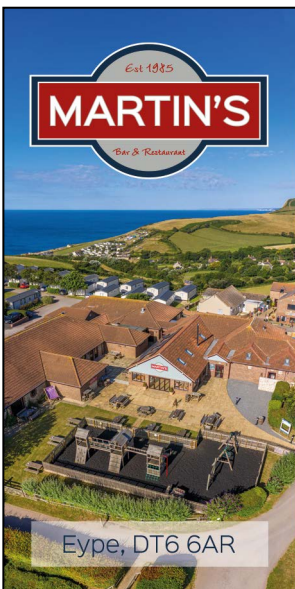
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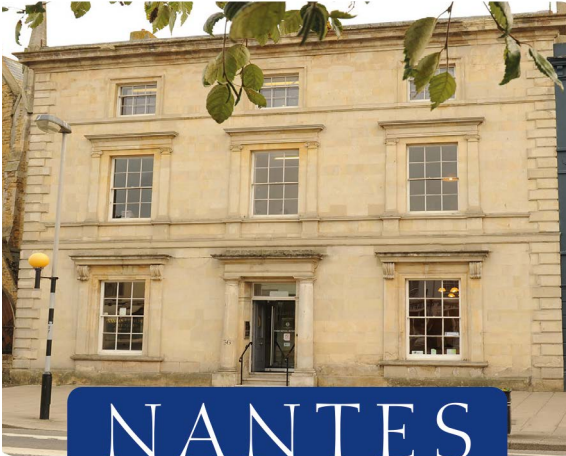
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