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The Ampfield Messenger



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St Mark's Church Ampfield*

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The Parish Church of St Mark, Ampfield

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

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The office is staffed 9 - 12 noon, Monday, Wednesday & Friday.
Please let us know if you have any news of those who are sick, in trouble, leaving or about to arrive.

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Note that the views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the editor or the Parochial Church Council.

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AMPFIELD VILLAGE HALL

Bookings taken for private parties and receptions. Clubs and other organisations are welcome.
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Worship Online Continued

Since last time I wrote, the churches of Ampfield, Chilworth and North Baddesley have continued live streaming an online service at 9:30am each Sunday. I think we are all getting a bit more used to online worship – those leading the services, those controlling the technology to get it online and those joining the services on YouTube.

Speaking of YouTube, thank you for adapting again as we switched the services from Facebook to YouTube. We switched to make it simpler, both for those of us setting the videos up and (we hope) for those accessing them (particularly for those without Facebook accounts). It's lovely to see people saying hello on the chat that accompanies the video. If you have a Google account (email/calendar/whatever) and are signed into it when you watch the video then you should see a chat box that you can type into and you should see messages from others. When you first start typing it might ask you create a channel, in which case, do so (you can then safely ignore it) and then you will be able to chat.

Worship For All Goes Online

Most Sundays the services have followed a liturgy for home worship but on 3rd May our activity based Worship For All service also went online. We were thinking about objects or things that help us to hear the voice of God including skies, the sea and a cross. We received responses from some of you watching (for which, thank you) including agreement about 'the sea' and a picture of the beach at Dungeness. Worship For All will be online again on Sunday 7th June.

Wednesday Morning Coffee

There is now a regular Zoom coffee morning at 11am on a Wednesday, attended by people from across the benefice. It's a chance to see and catch up with people. If you'd like to join but don't have the details drop us an email at joinin@acnb-church.org.

Letter from Vicar Victoria

Dear Friends

I'm writing this during week nine [I think, it's hard to keep track!] of lockdown, as things are beginning to be relaxed very slowly, very tentatively so it feels a natural time to reflect on these last weeks.

Over these last weeks I have made a conscious effort to use my daily exercise time to re explore this wonderful gift of green space and woodland, God's creation, that surrounds us in this Benefice. Because of the time of year I have found myself watching the bluebells appear, first as a blanket of green and then as individual little blue bells and then the terraces of these lovely flowers covering the woodland floors.

I'm told that the bluebell, historically, has many names, wood bell, fairy flower, cuckoo's boots, lady's nightcap. I can see why, can you? Also that in Victorian times flowers were given their own special meanings. The bluebell stood for humility, gratitude and everlasting love, for me a flower for this time. Humility reminds us, perhaps, that humanity's lack of humility may have been part of the reason for us to be in this situation we find ourselves in? Those that have been most important, most needed during this time have predominantly been those often missed, unseen and forgotten in our society, maybe we could say those working in the most humble occupations, the nurses, the home carers, the shop workers, delivery drivers, postal workers, transport workers, community volunteers.

Of course that takes us to the second meaning, gratitude, which I don't know about you but I certainly now find myself extremely grateful for all those mentioned in the list above, but also for so many other things. I find myself seeing God's world, God's creation anew, so grateful for the gift of this fine weather,

Contributing to the Messenger

Contributions to this magazine are always welcome, however it may be necessary to edit or shorten articles. Copy should reach the editors by the 15th of the month please. As a guide, one page = approx. 325 words.

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...Thought for the Month continued from p 31

But, as well as all the glorious miracles of nature, we are often inclined to forget the greatest miracle of all - MAN - made, as he is, in the image of God. It did not, however, escape the discerning eye of William Shakespeare who wrote:

"What a piece of work is man...how infinite in faculties... In action how like an angel...in apprehension how like a god...the beauty of the world...the paragon of animals."

And those that seek the sun's warm ray.

On earth or sea or in the air,

Beauty surrounds us everywhere.

It is, indeed, on sea or land -

A joyous symphony from 'The Master's Hand'.

Roger Barker

This month's Messenger continues the theme of the Coronavirus. When this time has receded into distant memory this edition may remind us of these groundhog days when we strained at the leash to escape the house. We remembered fondly those happy hours spent shopping(!), regretted not seeing more of our family and friends or indeed anyone. We longed for the time when we could take off at will to do our own thing unencumbered by the necessary restrictions on our freedom.

Perhaps we need now need a bit of cheer and positive thinking on how to give effect to those things we have said we miss doing and to give greater purpose to our lives?

With this in mind we invite contributions for next month's issue to arrive on or before 25th June, please. Keep safe

Rob and Chris

for the technologies that keep us in touch with loved ones, for creative people trying new ways to keep us connected, for the time to reflect, review, and renew my spiritual life.

That thought leads me to the third meaning for this unique flower, everlasting love. The love God has given and continues to give us no matter what mistakes we make, we just need to look at God's creation to see the abundance of his love. The love you and I share each week when we clap our gratitude every Thursday at 8.00pm, or when we gather together to worship virtually whilst our building remain closed. The love of family and friends, so very much missed. Not forgetting the love shared by our children when they paint their love and hope through the many rainbows placed in so many windows to brighten our days!

May the love of God bless you all always.

Victoria



Bluebells in Ampfield Wood

Information

Facebook Groups/websites:

The Church of England in Ampfield, Chilworth and North Bad-desley

For church info. and links to online services. (Sunday service 9.30am, Morning Prayer Thursdays and Coffee morning Wednesdays).

Romsey News and Information Group

The original Facebook Group for Romsey.

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

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

Nextdoor.co.uk

Neighbourhood hub for connecting with local services.

Local Representatives

Member of Parliament: Caroline Nokes; Phone: 01794 521155

County Councillor: Alan Dowden; Phone 02380 266458

TVBC Councillor: Martin Hatley; Phone: 02380 254040

Ampfield Parish Council: Chair Bryan Nanson; Phone: 02380 267760

Takeaways

White Horse Ampfield—now have a limited takeaway service, Wednesday, Thursday and Fridays from 6-7pm. Phone 01794 368356 and see website for menu—whitehorseampfield.co.uk.

The Spice of India—Takeaway and delivery to the Romsey area, Phone 01794 523976/01794 517177; spiceofromsey.com

Cancellations/postponements

The Ampfield Fete and Fun Dog Show has been cancelled.

The Romsey Festival has been postponed until 2021 and St. Mark will host an event in July 2021.

Our thoughts are with the many couples who have had to postpone their weddings

But, as well as the more expansive spectacles of our world, there are all around us myriads of minor miracles of sight and sound - in the streams and rivers, in the fields and hedgerows, in the hills and dales and in the forests and woodlands. Wandering through an English wood in spring is an especially delightful experience. The trees are starting to burst into leaf while catkins and burgeoning blossoms bedeck many a bough. And each silent sun-dappled glade seems to possess a cathedralesque atmosphere of reverential mystique; holding us captive in the balm of its enchanting splendour. In the branches above the birds are busy building their nests or serenading their mates with their own special love song. Indeed “the wise thrush” as the poet reminds us, “sings his song twice over lest you think he never could recapture his first fine careless rapture”. Or by the silvery light of the moon’s pale glow the nightingale pours forth his heart with such exquisite ecstasy it stirs the very soul of all who chance to hear his dulcet tones.

One day, while strolling in the countryside, I happened upon a wing feather of a wood pigeon, and, for some unknown reason, felt compelled to pick it up and examine it more closely. And, as I did so, I came to realise what a marvellous miracle of functional design it really was; light and flexible enough to allow for the complex movements of flight, strong enough to provide powerful uplift against the air, lightly oiled to act as a water-repellent and delicately soft and protective providing a thermal blanket ‘gainst the chilling winds of winter.

And each bird species has its wings especially adapted to its own particular pattern of flight. The albatross and terns, for example, have wings enabling them to travel with ease over vast distances. The raptors can dive with extreme accuracy from their aerial heights, while the humming bird’s wings can beat up to 52 times a second enabling it to remain motionless in the air.

...Cont. p32

Thought for the Month

WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD

"I see trees of green..... red roses too
I see them bloomfor me and for you.
And I think to myself - what a wonderful world"

So sang 'Satchmo' back in the 60's. The sheer beauty of the natural world has, of course, long been the subject of much man-made beauty. In sculpture, poetry, photography and art man has ever striven to capture the splendour of nature's breath-taking grandeur and incredible design.

Can anyone not stand transfixed by the burnished bronze of an evening sunset paling to amber gold on the horizon with blue-black clouds forming a lattice of arching rafters overhead? Or who can fail to gaze in wonder at the magnificence of a mighty waterfall cascading down hundreds of feet to shatter on jagged rocks below creating a miniature rainbow in its misty spray? And towering mountains appear to have a magical majesty all their own throwing down a gauntlet to those brave enough to scale their vertiginous heights. They stand like sentinel custodians of the eternal mysteries of life. Little wonder that the Ancient Greeks considered them to be the dwelling place of their gods..

Being an island nation the sea seems, to us, to possess a magnetic attraction that few can resist- its immense power and timeless tides, its sandy beaches and rocky coves. Each flow of the tide crashes in on the sand to race up the beach with surprising speed- only to slide back silently to repeat its endless assault on the shore. And the seaside is still a favourite place to spend holidays with the children where they can paddle and swim and build sand castles and explore rocky pools and look for Long John Silver's stolen treasure in hidden caves.

Ampfield Neighbours

In the May edition of the Ampfield Messenger, there was an article talking about setting up a self-help group in Ampfield with a view to providing assistance to parishioners during the coronavirus pandemic. Since its inception this idea has taken shape and, by the time you read this, it is hoped it will be up and running.

The group, Ampfield Neighbours, comprises a number of volunteers who live in and around the centre of the village. Its purpose is to help those people who are obliged to self-isolate or who need to be shielded, in other words those who should not leave their homes during the pandemic. Its volunteers will pick up and deliver prescriptions from local pharmacies and also pick up and deliver food shopping.

It has been set up under the auspices of Unity for the Community (previously known as Test Valley Council for Voluntary Service). On its website, Test Valley Borough Council provides information on the lead coronavirus support groups for each parish in the borough: <http://www.unityonline.org.uk/coronavirus-support-groups/> .

The process is simple: if a parishioner needs support, they should contact Unity (Unityc-19@unityonline.org.uk or tel: 03304004116). Unity will then contact Ampfield Neighbours and a local volunteer will pick up whatever is required and deliver it to the parishioner's door.

It is hard to overstate the generous help we have received from a wide range of organisations e.g. Test Valley Borough Council, Unity for the Community and also existing community groups in neighbouring parishes. We must also hugely grateful for the great support and enthusiasm we have received from our local volunteers. We hope, of course, that we will never be needed but we are there, if we are!

Ampfield Neighbours

The Friends of Chapel Wood (and similar) June 2020.

When Chris asked if we could write something on Chapel Wood this month there was an awful lot of head scratching because, when push comes to shove, there is not a lot you can do in a woodland if you are trying to remain in relative isolation. But, on further reflection, perhaps that is not quite right!

For a start, the wood is open and it is springtime. Over the years we have taken many photos of the wood. These provide us with a good record of the changes that have occurred, and this should not grind to a halt just because some pesky ~~varmint~~ virus has decided to poke its head out of its hole. So, towards the end of May, armed with camera in one hand and faithful (journalist's licence – all things are relative) hound wearing favourite lead in the other, off we went in the morning sunshine. Sometimes, wandering around taking photos of nature in our lovely surroundings is just about as good as it gets as, hopefully, you will see.

The other good thing about having dog attached is that it does provide some excellent exercise opportunities. Forget the TV keep-fitters, when a three-year-old, healthy springer spaniel suddenly decides to chase a squirrel that is twenty yards away



straight up a tree, and you are firmly attached to the other end of his lead, you will know all about it!

The Ampfield Market - the beginning

In September 2019 we began our twentieth year since the Market was set up in September 2000. Little did I imagine that this year, full of the promise of celebration would find us all in 'lock down' in our own homes for so long.

Way back on September 2nd 2000, when my late husband Martin and I started the Ampfield Market, the village hall was a very different place. In April 1999 volunteers had carried out much needed work on the small cramped kitchen off the main hall to provide new units and worktops, a sink for washing up and a separate hand washing sink, and vital ventilation to remedy the damp mouldy walls. Twelve people, including the Ampfield W.I. rented tables for that first event. Greenacre Organics provided organic fruit, vegetables and eggs. There were tables selling cakes, collectables, plants, flowers, toys, books, crafts, aromatherapy and jewellery. The Romsey Organic Group, later renamed the Romsey Organic Gardeners, came along to promote its regular events.

The Market was set up primarily to bring together all the various village groups - the school, the pre school, the W.I., the church etc., on a regular basis. From that very small beginning, word spread and the Market's popularity grew steadily. Now, we regularly fill 18 - 20 tables and we always have a healthy and diverse waiting list. We are proud to have raised over £25,500 for hall funds, thanks the Market team who have always generously volunteered their time and services free. These proceeds have helped us to improve and extend the hall over the last 20 years to provide a top quality community hub for everyone to share and enjoy for many years to come.

Have no fear - we will return as soon as we can, once this dreadful health crisis is over ! I look forward to welcoming you all back to the Market, when, hopefully we will be able to resume our celebrations together.

Take care and stay safe. **Julie**

Enjoying a socially distanced VE Day Street Party!

I am delighted to say that in our little Close, we find any excuse to have a street party - royal weddings, jubilees, The Great British Lunch, all have been marked with bunting, gazebos and cream teas. This year the Government moved the May Day bank holiday, from the usual first Monday in May, to the first Friday, to coincide with the 75th Anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day. It should have been the perfect way for all generations to get together and salute the huge sacrifice that so many made, so that we could be free to celebrate that historical day, decades later. But, then coronavirus struck and we were all told to "Stay home and stay safe." Well not to be daunted we decided this was too important a milestone to be missed. With the help of our Ashdown Way WhatsApp group we shared ideas and quickly a plan came together. On the day (8th May) God worked his magic and the weather was just glorious. My neighbour and I managed to socially distance and tie up bunting across the street and others hung Union flags from

bedroom windows. Of course there were no gazebos or trestle tables, but instead everyone brought out their picnic chairs and tables, along with their sandwiches and cream teas, and sat in their own front gardens. We discovered that three of our neighbours were very talented musicians - a keyboard player, a drummer and a singer/guitarist; they all set up outside their own houses and played songs both old and young, that we were able to sing along to - it was just a terrific celebration! So, in the end, we didn't let Dame Vera and her "boys" down and ensured that we did "meet again."

Jo, Romsey



Another essential component of our regular working parties is the mid-morning tea break, ideally accompanied by some small tasty morsel. We get constant requests to share some of the recipes [ed.'s note: this does not necessarily imply requests from a

wide range of people. It might also suggest lots of requests from one person -perhaps trying to coax an additional article into the Messenger!]. When the Friends' victualling officer was asked for instructions to produce chocolate brownies, the response was unequivocal - "Get some high cocoa chocolate, spice, eggs, butter, flour and sugar plus nuts and chocolate bits. Mix it up, stick it on a tray and into the oven. Oh, and hope for the best!" You may feel that these instructions offer an excess of unnecessary detail; however, they do, in fact, work perfectly. Next time, it may be worth experimenting with the addition of a few chilli flakes.

How soon it will be before the Friends get back together again is a difficult question to answer. As the country opens up again, we will be watching events with great interest. Social distancing is not out of the question. Indeed, if we are clearing undergrowth with scythes and slashers it can be positively beneficial. It would be good to think September might see some limited form of working party and hopefully before. In the meantime, stay safe over the summer. Keep the greenhouse watered. We'll need the chillies for the brownies!

The Friends of Chapel Wood
Graham



Dogs of Ampfield

Please continue to tell us about your dogs. Email a photo and a few words the editors.

Daisy and Wilbur

Daisy is 12 and Wilbur 10, both Staffordshire Bull Terriers. Daisy is very sweet but stubborn, a bit of a princess and only does what she wants, Wilbur on the other hand is very naughty and always hungry, both are extremely loving and loyal dogs and we wouldn't be without them.



Simon and Karen

Massy



Massy (KC name Moors Gwenevack) is named after a favourite place of ours in Northern Ontario, Canada. She will be 11 years old in September but still thinks she's about 2. Like all labs she loves stealing food (mainly the naughty stuff) sniffing out squirrels and sending up pheasants. His father and grandfather were British Gun Dog champions but our Massy hasn't worked a day in her life!

Charlie

picture of the King walking to his fate hangs prominently in the lounge. A priest hole bares testament to this turbulent period can be seen halfway up one of the chimneys. Oliver Cromwell's son who took over as lord protector of England, Scotland, Wales & Ireland in 1658 lived 5 miles away from the pub, the village must have been very concerned. I am sure the landlords were asked "will you survive?"

In 1666 the great Plague ravaged through London, but quickly spread to other major cities including Southampton & Winchester. Throughout the country 100,000 died, I am sure the landlords were asked, "will you survive?"

In 1673 the first stagecoach made the journey from London to Exeter taking 8 days, they were called stagecoaches because they made the journey in stages and had to stop at coaching inns along the route for sustenance for both the horses and passengers. The White Horse was one such inn. The stables stood either side of the pub and formed the break point for the stage between Winchester & Romsey. With the advent of the railways in the early

1800's the coaching inns lost these profitable guests. I am sure the landlords were asked "will you survive?"

John

P.S. Please see our website for our 'at the hatch' takeaway service, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday's.

Two women are engaged in a heated argument across a street, each shouting at the other from her house.

A professor of logic passes by and comments:

'Those two will never agree. They are arguing from different premises.'

Roger

Surviving Coronavirus The White Horse Ampfield

Will you survive?

This simple question is put to us every day by kind & well-meaning customers, friends, family & staff. The answer of course is we will try everything we know to survive. We will beg from the banks, borrow from our pensions, beguile the brewers and redecorate the Gentlemen's toilets! We will paint the bars, power wash the garden furniture, clean the beer lines, scrub the carpets, scour the kitchen, find the money to pay the bills, and wait for the first pint to be pulled and the first pie to be baked, whenever that might be.

I would like you to imagine that it is Wednesday 5th August 1620. The landlord of the White Horse was wiping down his bar awaiting the evening rush. The door opens and in falls a giant of a man, ragged with sweat & covered in rime. "Hard day?" the landlord enquires. "Been working in the city all day, down at the docks. They called for more men as they had two ships to load and were paying

good wages. Bloody long ride but it was worth it, hope you don't mind I've tied the horse up outside and I need a beer."

The landlord slowly poured a pint of flat, cloudy ale from a barrel on the bar.

"Big ships were they?" he asked. "No, quite small, they were called the Mayflower & the Speedwell, sailing with a bunch of Pilgrims, but they had a load of luggage, you know what it is with tourists. They were off to Plymouth and then to the New World to find a better life."

OK, so its unlikely, but possible as the pub dates from the early 1600's and is only a few miles from Southampton docks as the crow flies. The landlords have come and gone as have the horses, but the pub has survived all that has been thrown at it over the last 400 years.

In 1649, King Charles 1st was executed in London. Before he was captured, he travelled from Oxford to Southampton water to flee to the Isle of Wight. Did he pass by the White Horse? Certainly, his seal is on the original fireback in the enormous Inglenook fireplace in the public bar, and a print of the famous

Cold cucumber soup

This is a very popular dish in Latvia during the summer.

1 Cucumber
2 cloves of garlic
chopped dill
Large tub plain yoghurt
A few tablespoons of sour cream



Peel and remove seeds from a cucumber. The ridge cucumbers are best as they have more flavour. Grate the cucumber into a bowl. Add garlic lots of chopped dill salt pepper grated lemon and stir in large tub of plain yoghurt. Finally, stir in a few tablespoons of soured cream. Leave covered in the fridge for several hours before eating.

Agne



Baptism in the time of Covid—from Facebook

England's Thousand Best Churches

Simon Jenkins

Some Church Highlights

This book is always in our car on a day trip or holiday. It is divided into Counties and each of the churches listed is graded between one and five stars. The book is an indispensable part of our lives. It has taken us to places far off the beaten track, mainly to villages which we would never have visited. The routine has given us an opportunity to pray, reflect, appreciate the splendours of church architecture, stained glass windows and ancient, and sometimes modern, artefacts. Visiting their graveyards has also been an educational experience, though there are many churches that are so remote they don't contain any burial grounds at all.

We have remembered some churches for their settings. The tiny church at Gunwalloe in Cornwall is virtually located on the beach. It started life as a hermit's cell. In North Yorkshire, Whitby's main church is situated on a clifftop. Jenkins describes the walk to it as the "most exhilarating to any". Few would argue. It is a treasure trove inside: an extraordinary triple decker pulpit, box pews, and galleries. Nearby is the ruin of Whitby Abbey, where a landmark Synod, to determine the future of the church in England, was held in 664AD.

One of the most timeless locations is that of the oft – photographed St. Thomas a Beckett at Fairfield on Romney Marsh in Kent. Another small church, it is isolated, surrounded by sheep. The key is obtained from a letterbox on a wall some way from the church. Until the 20th century, access could only be gained by boat. Like Whitby, though on a much, much smaller scale, there are box pews and a three decker pulpit. In Norfolk, the great church at Salle (pronounced, perhaps appropriately, Saul) dwarfs the community it serves. The interior is immense, exemplified by the font cover having to be operated by chain and pulley. The font itself, bosses, misericords and choir stalls are works of art, and fit the dimensions

companions and he helps them to reflect on what they have experienced over the last few days in Jerusalem, his death and he women witnessing an empty tomb.

During the time of lock down we have been called to listen to many people over the telephone and via the internet and in particular the bereaved. Sadly we have been unable to meet with families in person before funerals have been conducted, but have listened to their stories and attempted to travel with them on the path of grief.

The pandemic has certainly given the church and its people a great deal to think about over the months. It has challenged the way we see and everyone else sees the church. We have had to discover through prayer and and reflection, different ways of hearing God's voice. Hopefully as ministers we have become more outward looking in the way we have spread the word of God in our communities.

Now is the time to perhaps work out our own route map for the future of the church and all God's people, without any restrictions.

Sally Kerson
Licensed Lay Reader

Free from the Library

Did you know you if are a member of Hampshire County Council library you can get audio books, and eBooks, free? You just need to download the Borrow Box app (a green background with white writing - Borrow Box) onto your phone; put in your membership number and bingo - start selecting your books. If the book you want is on loan, still click on it and you can reserve it; you can also renew books, just like at the library. It's a great way to pass the time when waiting in all those queues, we find ourselves in these days! If you are not a member of the library, you can join on-line today.

Jo

Reflection on the ministry of an LLM during the time of the Pandemic

The Prime Minister has set out his road map for ending the lockdown in the UK and people are looking forward to more restrictions being lifted as the weeks go by. The church also waits for the time when she can fling open her doors to everyone.

Meanwhile most of us have had to learn, very quickly, how to be a Christian presence on line. Sunday mornings are now spent at home taking part in services or pre-recording sections, working together to keep everything interesting, informative and engaging to a congregation that we cannot see.

In some ways it feels that the church is on its own journey with the scenery completely changed. However, there are times when it is difficult reading the map in front of us and we wonder if we will ever reach our destination through a crisis that grips the world.

One of the post resurrection readings was from Luke Chapter 24v 13-35 The Road to Emmaus is when two companions are walking together, and they are joined by Jesus, but they do not recognise him until they share a meal together. Both these activities of walking and sharing meals with friends have been denied to us for over two months, so this truly is a story of deep meaning, reminding us in particular of the breaking of the bread and sharing together Holy Communion in our churches.

The fact that these two companions on the road to Emmaus did not recognise Jesus only highlights the fact that we often do not recognise who is walking beside us on our journey of life. But one of the most important parts of this story is the fact that Jesus listened to those on that road.

There can often be the temptation when people are sad or low, to try and cheer them up without giving them space or time to talk first. But Jesus listens, he values the experience of these two

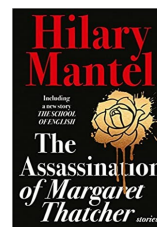
of the building. Two Italianate churches, one at Wilton, near Salisbury, and the other at Witley in Worcestershire provided surprises. The latter's interior is simply jaw-dropping. Rome transferred to the English countryside.

These are just a selection of those we have visited. There are some near to Ampfield which are also rewarding and which we shall be revisiting in the near future, now that we are allowed to leave home. All are remote, where it would be surprising if "social distancing" (should it be unsocial?), enters the equation. With the blessing of Chris and Rob, I hope to describe these in a future edition. Finally, mention must be made of St. Mark's. The number and quality of the stained glass windows is exceeded by very few village churches we have visited.

Alan

The Assassination of Margaret Thatcher *Hilary Mantel*

Girding up my loins to read Hilary Mantel's 883 page door step 'The Mirror and the Light', I thought as an amuse bouche her short stories, a mere 242 pages, 'The Assassination of Margaret Thatcher' would set me up nicely.



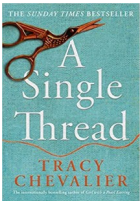
I can't say the collection of 11 stories amused me in a laugh out loud fashion for they are all slightly eerie yet compelling and which left me thinking about them for some time afterwards. They explore dark issues such as infidelity, mental illness, anorexia and death. In the titular story an assassin gains entry into a woman's flat to use it as a vantage point to assassinate Margaret Thatcher and helps him devise a way to escape although believing violence achieves nothing. At the time 'The Daily Telegraph' refused to print the story fearing consequences from its readership. It's curious to read it now knowing this and with the benefit of hindsight and is worth the cost of the book alone.

Cont. from p.13

The use of the first person and the narrative voice often made me wonder if the stories reflected aspects of the authors own life, it also ensured I had her image in my mind whilst reading them. This association was somewhat off putting but in some illuminating particularly in 'How shall I Know You' which describes a novelist/ biographer giving a talk to a local book group. It'll make you a little more curious and attentive when you next attend a 'meet the author' group at the Winchester Discovery Centre. I'll try out for myself one of the ways mentioned for dealing with questions - the first to spot me doing so will get a prize! A well crafted and interesting collection worth the read - my bouche was well amused, or rather satisfait.

Pongo

A Single Thread *Tracy Chevalier*



This is the story of a fictional girl called Violet Speedwell, which begins in 1932, just as Violet moves to Winchester from Southampton to try to improve her life. She lost her fiancé and a brother in the First World War and her father died the year before, leaving her alone with her suffocating mother.

Her life is very hard living in a boarding house, and she has little money despite having a job as a typist in an Insurance Company. She finds solace inside the Cathedral and is transfixed watching the broderers at work embroidering the kneelers. She immediately wishes to join them.

She describes the girls she works with, and the broderers and Louisa Pesel's designs for the kneelers. (Louisa Pesel did exist and some of those kneelers can still be seen in the Cathedral). It is easy to picture where Violet walks in Winchester, and the villages outside the city in the Test Valley. The story is fascinating as she settles into life in Winchester, tries bellringing, and falls in love. It also provides an insight into the difficulties faced by single, independently minded, women between the Wars.



WATER-PARTING COMES WITH ITS CHALLENGES.

Nigel Babb 0771 466 9901

**A scientist takes it upon herself to train a flea.
She puts the flea on a table and says "jump".
The flea jumps.
She then cuts its legs off, puts it back on the table,
and again says "jump".
This time the flea stays .
"Aha,"concludes the scientist, "when you cut the
legs off a flea, it goes deaf."**

Coping Strategies in Lockdown for Mums-To-Be

Use social media

I was reluctant to post photos of my baby bump, but in doing so, I had a large handful of women reach out to me who were also pregnant. While I don't have an NCT group, I've created my own network of mums online.

Ask for help!

I've had friends send me their baby shopping lists of vital items, second hand newborn clothes sent in the post and offers to loan items I cannot go out and buy. In the absence of NCT I've had long chats with new mum friends about their experiences and advice. This has been a lifeline for me.

Embrace Zoom

I've done pregnancy yoga, pre-natal Pilates and one-to-one barre classes. If keeping fit is important to you, there is a way and again, a connections to be made. I now have a Greek mum friend, we do Pilates every Monday morning together online.

Realise your strength

To all the mums-to-be in lockdown, you are already doing the hard part... you're growing a baby! Be kind to yourself, allow yourself the tears, but know they'll pass and that you *have* got this. You never know how strong you are until you have to be.

Hannah Macey

I loved the book and now want to visit and explore the places Violet walked and cycled to, in Winchester and further afield. I also can't wait to visit the Cathedral again, with my binoculars to check one particular unusual boss, to find some of the kneelers, to sit in the Fishermen's Chapel, and to search for the bell-ringers' graffiti. Outside and opposite the door of the Cathedral I will read again the wording on the grave of Thomas Thetcher, a Grenadier, who died in 1764, and its connection with Alcoholics Anonymous. Roll on relaxation of lockdown!

Jennie

Book Club Corner Ampfield Book Club



Our group started about 2 years ago comprising of 5 closely situated neighbours. We meet once a month, taking it in turns to host the evening. There is much chatting, drinking of wine (those who partake!) eating of cheese (those who partake!) and (eventually) discussing our chosen book.

Last month our book of choice was 'Once upon a time in the East' by Xiaolu Guo. Guo is a Chinese born British novelist and the book describes, in brutal honesty, her life story from adoption at birth through to her career as a writer and film maker, now resident in the UK.

We gave the book mixed reviews; Very straight talking, someone suggesting that perhaps there were slight egotistical undertones throughout. It was however a very interesting, sometimes disturbing, insight into the lives of deprived families living under communist rule. In view of our current situation something a little more upbeat this month was needed: '***Down Under, Travels in a Sunburned Country***' by **Bill Bryson**.

Charlie



Children's Emergencies and quiet hospital corridors at Southampton General

Healthcare workers found out about the COVID pandemic about the same time as everyone else. Clear message – come to work and we will figure out how we can do it! Some days – much easier than being in lockdown at home I suspect.

We had about 2 weeks of uncertainty, trying to find the facts and learning to ignore the crazy amount of social media. I have been very proud to watch our hospital go into action.

Everyone has seen the frontline workers and the care they have been delivering for those struck down by the virus, but behind that the normal hospital wheels had to learn to turn again and safely. Safely enough for patients to trust us to come back in. Also urgently for those who needed us and can't wait for a pandemic to pass.

However the bravery and sheer number of hours put

in by our frontline staff totally deserve the Thursday clap!!

The biggest expansion was in the computer department and I.T. Before COVID our hospital wifi could hardly handle an email and now it is supporting hundreds of us via laptops all over the building. The home log in system was built in under a week and now all staff have home computer and telephone access to treat out patients. As doctors, we are learning with our patients how to do good telephone consultations and video link appointments. Us learning new technology, and families becoming filming experts. It is really changing what we do. I regularly now pop up in the family living room to discuss their child's needs. This is keeping the very vulnerable children with disabilities I treat safe. It is also showing us how well it works for many things and hopefully we will continue this well past COVID.

Some patient care couldn't stop, cancer and cardiac cases can't just wait. So the private hospital Spire Southampton has been transformed into those units. Obviously this has

Most now know I'm pregnant and always ask after the bump! The local Hursley butcher started delivering, so once a week we have fresh meat and produce dropped off - the vegetables are larger and tastier than I've had in years and I'm convinced my mother in law's healing and nutritious cooking is largely responsible for the growth of our big and healthy baby! The weekly Waitrose delivery is a poignant reminder of the crisis, as we wash down every item with bleach water before storing away.

I haven't seen my family since early March and that it is incredibly hard, however before lockdown my husband and I only spent time together in the evenings and weekends after long hours at work. Now we have lunch together every day — he's so much closer to this pregnancy than he ever would have been and I take great comfort from that.

My antenatal care has been moved to the Royal Hampshire County Hospital in Winchester, where I've been continually moved by the compassion from the midwives, taking me in

mid-pandemic and giving me a semblance of normality and support from the off. During appointments both the midwife and I are masked, yet there is a deeper sense of connection between the two of us than there would have been 'before'. We are all in this together and if you are lucky enough to be able to look to the positives of this experience, you'll find them. Pregnant or not.

I first met my midwife in early March, I was tired, anxious (nauseous!) and felt hopeless. Six weeks later I walked in to my 24 week check-up, she looked up and said *"Wow. Don't you look well, you're like a different person, my gosh!"* They say it takes a village to raise a baby, in this instance, it's taken the village of Ampfield to raise me up and get me through this pregnancy, and I'll be forever grateful.

Hannah M.

See next page for Hannah's tips on surviving pregnancy in lockdown.

Being Pregnant during Lockdown

How is this happening? I'm pregnant, in a global pandemic and I don't know when I'll see my family again." I wept these words to my husband from our London apartment as Prof. Chris Whitty announced in early March that pregnant women were to isolate for the next three months. I was 16 weeks into my pregnancy and it felt like an apocalyptic movie was unfolding, a growing sense of unease had been building in the capital, hand sanitisers sold out long ago, supermarket shelves were looking bare and strangers shot you worried looks if you so much as cleared your throat.

It quickly became clear that this, my first pregnancy, was not going to be as I had envisioned. I wouldn't be able to spend time with my close friends, attend pregnancy yoga classes, there'd be no NCT groups or baby showers and the majority antenatal appointments would be held over the phone. In the space of a week I felt like I'd lost so much, as did we all.

My husband and I left London for Hampshire a week before the lockdown was announced to stay with his parents who kindly took us in. In a whirlwind we fled the city for the picturesque village of Ampfield, a safe-haven on Knapp Lane where I could isolate and keep our baby safe from the unknown virus.

What unfolded in the next few months surprised me in every way, a 'lockdown pregnancy' brings lows but more highs than I thought possible. I arrived stressed and full of anxiety, but living in Ampfield has slowly but surely put me back together again. While I am not having pregnancy I had planned, I have gained so much, including a sense of community, safety and wellbeing. For months we haven't left the house — but we are surviving, if not thriving.

The Hampshire air is sweeter than I can remember, every day we walk the family's rambunctious golden retriever through the forestry footpaths and Chapel Wood, on occasion bumping into friendly locals for a chat from a safe distance.

there has ceased but it means hundreds of patients treated in a COVID free environment.

The information changes every day and so do we but I think the hospital is running well at the moment. We take information from Italy, Spain and US and learn from their successes and work not to repeat mistakes. Italy's success at three point checks has been rolled out here. A telephone health check twice and a COVID test before admission to our 'cold areas'. This means our urgent care and some elective clinics and surgery are now open and safe to attend. Washing hands of course!

Obviously fashion of masks is ever growing with lots more colours appearing daily. Remember a masks protects others from you rather than vice versa – so if you are in hospital everyone you see should be in one that comes within 2 metres. Good for safety but challenging for communication, and the kids we treat think we look daft! A huge thanks to

some local sewing groups that have made so many.

With all the kids off school, our department has been busier than usual with various antics on trampolines, scooters etc etc. Luckily not as bad as the normal summer holidays – but for all of us, a little extra care to avoid to trip to Accident and Emergency is a good thing.

So what now? Well currently we need to learn to live with this thing; 2 metre greetings will become the norm for us all, technology will be our friend embrace it (even if it breaks a few times before you succeed), soap and water (I am still amazed such a scary threat can be neutralised by just that), and a little more living in the moment, at home and realising how lucky we are to be here in Ampfield.

Caroline

Caroline is a paediatric orthopaedic surgeon

Ampfield CofE Primary School

Following the Government's decision to close schools from 20 March, Ampfield School has been fully closed to staff and children. Children of Key Workers and vulnerable children have been able to access emergency childcare provision at John Keble School, however, and staff from both schools have been working together to enable this. Currently there are about 15 children attending each day and the children have been enjoying lots of outside activities in the lovely weather as well as learning activities inside.

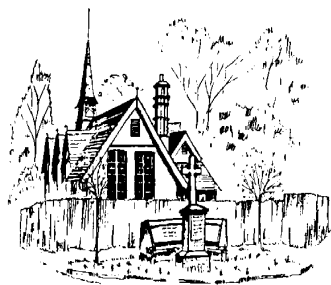
For those families not eligible for emergency childcare, they have been supporting their children at home with their education. The federation launched Google Classroom after Easter and this enables teachers to upload work for children to access online at home. Teachers can comment and make suggestions and children can interact with their classmates through messages to the whole group. Currently, the federation's Executive Leadership Team is planning to welcome more

children back to school at some point on, or after, 1 June. Children in Year R (Reception), Year 1 and Year 6 will be given the opportunity to come back to school in small groups and, at this point, Ampfield School will re-open. It will be a joy to have children back in the building again!

Our teachers and support staff have all been wonderful and have been committed to supporting their children and families through this challenging time. We all want the children back in school and we plan to do so, when required, in a sensible and considered way.

Marcus Roe

Executive Headteacher
Federation of Ampfield & John Keble CofE Primary Schools



From our Spanish Correspondent

Well here we are after what seems like a never-ending period of lockdown, we have now entered lphase 1. It has coincided with fabulous blue sky and warm weather – rebirth. The shops here are slowly reopening again although there are rules of entry. 2 people at a time maximum – face masks obligatory although one can tell the English – they are the ones without. We thought we may go to our favourite restaurant in Canillas del Albaida – it's run by 'Ramon', the only Spaniard I know with a self-deprecating feel for comic irony. His place is large and open, big enough for the 50% capacity rule observing social distancing. Again, one can tell the English – no masks and 4 tables pushed together.

Overhead is the ultimate freedom, the boys from the local garage are swooping and wheeling on their microlights. International champions, local heroes, no worries up there with 2 metre distancing. Schools here not open until September but lots of work being done online. A&E open in the village 24 hours but with a skeleton staff. They had one of

only 2 Covid 19 casualties – Dr. Oscar. Although he is absolutely fine now. It seems there is quite a disparity between north and south Spain. Down here in Axarquia the infection and death rate is minimal, but further north e.g. Granada, Madrid, Barcelona etc. accounts for most of this. Thankfully under 50 deaths yesterday overall. Cities, especially with large populations and cruise liners docking, seem to be the worst hit.

We feel safe here with great expanses of forest and lonely mountain walks. Now that summer is here, we also feel we are lucky – I hope you stay lucky also.

Gerard

