

GRASS

THE NEWSLETTER AT THE ROOTS OF THE GRAND UNION BENEFICE OF BLISWORTH AND STOKE BRUERNE/ SHUTLANGER, WITH GRAFTON REGIS, ALDERTON AND MILTON MALSOR

Due to the current emergency, this is once again a very curtailed version of GRASS; we are not printing out any hard copies due to the logistical problems of delivering them, but will send round to our emailing list. We have asked a representative from each village to circulate the fact that if anybody would like to be added to the emailing list, they should email: linda@dards.net and we will add you to the list. Alternatively, you can view this edition, together with all the old editions over the years on www.grassnews.co.uk They make interesting reading. If there is anybody near you who is unable to receive GRASS by any of these methods, could you please print out a copy and hand it to them? We hope to be back to full production before too long. In the meantime, our good wishes go out to all our readers. Keep your distance and keep safe. Paul, Joy and Linda

Rector's Letter

Like many people I have spoken to over the last month on the telephone, I have spent some time in the garden, weeding, digging and planting. At the moment, Monique and I have been preparing a piece of land to seed to lawn. It's been very hard work. Some of the soil was dry and hard, while other parts were clay. Often, as I worked, my mind floated back to 26 February, when we gathered at the start of Lent, a time of being with Christ in the desert, a time of fasting and prayer. Even though we have celebrated Easter since then, there is a part of me that still feels isolated, and despite being in the garden with the beautiful weather we are enjoying, I feel that I am still in the desert.

When our lives are turned upside down, when we need to make sense of what is going on around us as Christians, we can turn to Scripture and prayer to look for answers to our deep questions. However, when you read Holy Scripture over this next month, don't begin with the mindset of looking for the answers to your questions. Instead, read Scripture by listening with your heart for the questions that it asks of you, or of us. When you pray, try not to tell God everything you want Him to hear, but instead listen to what God has to say to you, or to us. If we are quiet and still within ourselves, we can all hear the voice of the Divine within. But that voice can too easily be drowned out by our own thoughts or our own inner voices. We can all too easily be convinced that these voices come from God's self but in reality are just our own distractions that display our mindset that we use to justify our behaviour.

When I observe my garden each time I go out there, I can see new growth, fresh colours, flowers breaking through the surface of the soil; views that I once enjoyed through the winter are now replaced with trees in blossom. The landscape around us continues to change; it is beautiful, exhilarating and exciting. The landscape within our lives that is always changing and what we consider to be normal has stopped; we are at a standstill and it can feel like things have simply been taken away from us. I know that dealing with the change in my garden requires hard and dedicated work on my part to keep up with all that needs to be attended to. The same is true in life more generally. I could make the decision just to sit back, turn on the TV and watch change take place in front of me; or I can work to make sure that the new life in front of me has the best chance to blossom. I'm the first one to hold my hands up and say that I am no gardener, even though I enjoy being out there. I don't know a weed from a plant, as Monique will attest to as she saw me digging up a plant and throwing it in the bin!

Even though the current circumstances can make us feel as if we do not know how to live in today's world, every part of our life needs work if we want the landscape around us to change and to be beautiful and enjoyable for ourselves and for others. It means that we must change continually and be open to new ideas. Looking at Scripture, one of the most constant themes is change. Nothing stays the same from the garden in Genesis, through the garden at the Resurrection, and on into the life of the young Church. It was a continuous flow of change. At no point was this easy for anyone. For the young Church, the change that was required of them in following the resurrected Christ was to leave everything that they held dear behind them and step out in faith. The world we live in is always changing and evolving; it was then and is now, but perhaps not as quickly or as noticeably as we are experiencing at this present moment in time. The Church will continue to change as it has done ever since its conception and this is evident particularly in the way that we are ministering at the moment.



I feel that part of the task for us, and especially for me as the Church leader, is to listen to the questions God is asking and where God is leading us. What kind of Church does God want for our future? We must bear in mind that the Church is Christ's body. God the creator breathed into being a beautiful world, and I am sure that beauty is what God has in mind for the Church. We should take this time in the desert to stop and just be with the Creator. We see in Scripture time and time again that when God's people stop struggling against the Lord and let God lead, they are blessed in many ways; it always turns out for the best for them. We too need to trust the Divine in the current changes.

We are still meeting twice a week for worship, worship that may be very different from that which we are used to, but the main thing is that we are together as a family of God, journeying, supporting each other, and growing together in the way that the gardener intends us to grow.

If you would like to join in with the Christian community on this journey through the wilderness then please let me know by writing to: grandunionbenefice@gmail.com. We meet as a Benefice using Zoom at 9,30 a m on Wednesdays and Sundays; you can use your computer or landline phone to join in.

If you have any pastoral matters that you would like to talk over, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

You are all continually in my prayers and thoughts at this time. Stay safe and listen to the advice that we are being given by the government; it is there for our protection.

Peace and light. Richard

Thursday Afternoon is 'Story Time.'

Every Thursday afternoon, while our children are at home, Peter Heffron is telling a short story for all and publishing it on Facebook. They are posted publicly so everyone can see them. We've had The Road to Emmaus after Easter, and last week about one of our school values being perseverance and how we never give up. Rev 2:19: "I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first." This week we will concentrate on another value. Enjoy and stay safe.

Peter Heffron, mobile: 07976 431691, tel: 01604 858021.

For Those Without the Internet!

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, has launched a free national phoneline as a simple new way to bring worship and prayer into people's homes while church buildings are closed because of the coronavirus.

Daily Hope, launched on 26 April, offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line. The line – which is available 24 hours a day on 0800 804 8044 – has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind.

Streetchurch

We have received the following note from Streetchurch and have been asked to circulate it:

'Praying for health, safety and peace for everyone at this time. We just wanted to update you on some developments and to give you opportunities to support the homeless community at this time.

You may be aware that there has been a recent initiative to get every homeless person into accommodation so that they can stay safe, self-isolate and protect themselves and others. There are two hotels where people are being housed; three meals a day are being provided, and transported to the hotels. James (our chair) has been in contact with the Hope Centre who is working with the borough in strategically placing people and managing this initiative.

Opportunities to help are as follows:

- People to deliver food from the kitchens when it is cooked to the hotels (they said van drivers, but I would not rule out car drivers)
- Food donations, toiletries can be donated to foodbanks
- Jigsaws and games donated (and delivered) to Oasis House to occupy folk at the hotels during this time.

If you feel you can help in any way, or need more information, please contact Hope Centre directly - Lee Coyle, Head of Service Delivery, Northampton Hope Centre, Oasis House, Campbell Street, NN1 3DS, telephone 01604 214300, mobile 07910 305346.'

Useful Telephone Numbers for the United Benefice of Blisworth and Stoke Bruerne with Grafton Regis, Alderton and Milton Malsor

Rector: Canon Rev'd Richard Stainer, The Rectory, 37 High Street, Blisworth NN7 3B, tel 01604 857619

Churchwardens of Blisworth: Mrs Fiona McKenzie, tel 01604 859541 and Mrs Angela Cheesbrough, tel 01604 858059.

Churchwardens of Stoke Bruerne: Mrs Christine Frost, tel 01604 862561.

Churchwardens of Grafton Regis: Mrs Jean Glanville, tel 01908 543463 and Lord Charles Fitzroy, tel 01908 542908

Churchwarden of Alderton: Mrs Amanda Selvey, tel 01327 811380.

Churchwardens of Milton Malsor: Mrs Jane Treharne, tel 01604 858323 and Mrs Sue Bell, tel 01327 351043

VILLAGE NEWS



STOKE BRUERNE

This new hanging, which is nearing completion, was created for our church at Stoke Bruerne. It was designed and made by some of our church sewing group, Carol Elliott, Marie Cooper, Aly Grace, Grete Ricketts, Jackie Evans and Maureen Smith.

After consulting with our Rector, Richard, we decided on a simple design for Easter Day, the joyous day of the Resurrection using a plain golden cross to symbolise faith, with rays representing the majesty of the risen Christ. Lilies are regarded as a flower of elegance, beauty, spirituality and hope and the red lilies represent new birth. A simple design yet some careful and intricate machine sewing together with hand stitched gold work, beading, embroidery and applique.

Jackie Evans

I would like to say a big thank you to everyone who worked on this wonderful Easter wall hanging, I look forward to dedicating it when we are next in St Mary the Virgin Church.

Richard Stainer



ALDERTON

Churchyard Rota 19 April – 2 May
3-16 May
17 – 30 May
31 May – 13 June

Tom and Julie
Richard and Lulu
Johnathan Currie
Steve and Alessandra



MILTON MALSOR

A fruit and vegetable box scheme has been set up here in Milton Malsor by Jane Trehane's daughter and son in law, with all the fresh produce which they collect on a Tuesday and usually deliver out on Wednesdays, but only here in Milton unless people wish to collect. They each contain £10 or £20 worth of goods. Please telephone Katy on 07828 283986.

GENERAL NEWS

OUR LOCAL PUBS HAVE BECOME SHOPS

The White Hart, Grafton Regis

Being on lockdown and living in what's usually a very busy pub/restaurant came as a bit of a shock; we cleared out the fridges and freezers and shut most things down. I had quite a stock of cheeses, milk and butter etc, so I decided to open a small pop up shop to provide essential items for villagers and locals. My thoughts were that if I was able to provide just the one item someone wants and prevent them having to go out to get it, putting themselves at risk, then I have achieved some good. It has rather escalated!

I open the shop from our garage/store room at 12.00 noon until 2.00 p m every day; we operate a rather nice social distancing, where one person comes forward and makes their purchases whilst the rest mill about at a distance, chatting. I am not a busy shop and I am only going to the cash and carry once a week to see what goodies I can find, and also buy things people have requested. Stock is quite low at the wholesalers but I have the following:

Milk, butter, eggs, breads, rolls, cheeses, bacon, black pudding, melon wedges, grapes, apples, bananas, potatoes, lettuce, tomatoes, baby tomatoes, cucumber, sausages, burgers, a few ready meals, a huge variety of chocolates, tuna, beans, shower gel, crisps, biscuits and some desserts. I usually do some hot sausage rolls ready for 12.00 noon, or bacon rolls.

We are now open for a pop-up fish and chip shop, open from 5.00 p m until about 7.30 p m every Friday,

It's a limited menu and we require a pre-order and ideally a pre-payment; there are separate time slots so no one is waiting. Tel 01908 542123.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the little shop; we are doing our part to assist in keeping everyone safe. So if there is even just the one item that you need feel free to pop to The White Hart in Grafton Regis. Stay Safe everyone.

Alan Bonar-Drake

Take Away Menu:

Fish, chips, garden peas or mushy peas and tartare sauce - £9.00

Steak and ale pie, with chips and garden peas - £9.00

Spicy bean burger with chips - £9.00

Caramel apple pie, served cold with whipped cream - £2.50

Homemade chocolate cheesecake - £2.50



The Boat Inn, Stoke Bruerne

We opened our grocery shop at The Boat Inn in 1960, mainly for the benefit of 'new tourists' using the canal system for relaxation and holidays. This is still up and running and due to the Coronavirus situation, we have greatly extended our product list as attached by a link to our website which is updated each day: http://www.boatinn.co.uk/pdf/groceries_price_list.pdf.

As well as general fruit, vegetables, dairy, dried goods, meat, fish, wines, spirits, tobacco etc, we also have a selection of homemade ready meals, pizzas and cakes to enjoy at home.

We take telephone orders between 9.00 a m and 6.00 p m for collection or delivery to local villages, Towcester, Grange Park and Hunsbury either the same day (between 10.00 a m and 2.00 p m) or the next day. Please ask for any item that is not shown on the product list and we will do our best to obtain it. We are open seven days a week.

Andrew Woodward FIH. Director, The Boat Inn, Stoke Bruerne, Towcester, Northamptonshire, NN12 7SB.

Tel: 01604 862428. Email: enquiries@boatinn.co.uk, web: www.boatinn.co.uk



The Plough is working with Whittlebury Bakers and has supplies of fresh bread, rolls etc.

THE PLOUGH *Community store*

Shutlanger's safe, secure and friendly Shop & Takeaway

FRESH MEAT, FRUIT & VEGETABLES, PASTA, EGGS,
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CLEANING PRODUCTS, TOILET PAPER & CONFECTIONERY

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or pre book a 10 or 20 minute shopping session.
JUST CALL 01604 864644

To be safe, up to 2 customers are allowed in the shop at a time.
If we are full, there is a sheltered garden to wait in.
Please use the hand sanitisers provided.

OPENING HOURS:
Shopping: TUES - SAT 10.30 - 6.30. SUN Noon - 4.
Takeaway: WED - SAT 5-9pm. SUN Noon - 4.

5 STAR HYGIENE RATING
www.theploughshutlanger.co.uk



Food Suppliers

Hartwell & Towbury (formerly Elliots) Butchers

Call 01327 350454. Opening hours: 7.30 a m – 2.00 p m Tuesday to Saturday.

Delivery service offered (£30 minimum spend) for elderly/self-isolating customers.

Deli also open – will combine deli goods with butchery goods for delivery if required.

Moorgate Farm, Potterspury

Call 07922 134 915 / 01908 543008 for details

Regular box including delivery £15.50 (10 vegetables) and small box including delivery £10.50 (6 vegetables)

- Will change regularly with the seasonal growing period.
- A weekly recipe sheet will be included in the box.
- Order by noon on a Monday - delivery Wednesday, Thursday, Friday or Saturday, depending on location.

Alf's Fruit and Veg Stall, Towbury Court Alley, Towcester

During the lockdown period, this is open Thursday, Friday and Saturday 10.00 a m – 2.00 p m for seasonal fresh fruit and vegetables. Sacks of potatoes are available at a cost of £13.99 for 25 kg – can deliver the potatoes.

Tel Alf on 078 949 90613

Pharmacies

Lloyds (High Street)

Monday 10:00 - 16:30
Tuesday 10:00 - 16:30
Wednesday 10:00 - 16:30
Thursday 10:00 - 16:30
Friday 10:00 - 16:30
Saturday 10:00 - 16:30
Sunday Closed

Lloyds (Brooke Health Centre)

09:00 - 19:00
09:00 - 19:00
09:00 - 19:00
09:00 - 17:30
09:00 - 17:30
10:00 - 12:00
Closed

Paulerspury Surgery

08:00 - 12:00 & 15:00 - 18:30
08:00 - 12:00 & 15:00 - 18:30
08:00 - 12:00
08:00 - 12:00 & 15:00 - 18:30
08:00 - 12:00 & 15:00 - 18:30
Closed
Closed

Public Services

Northamptonshire County Council dedicated coronavirus helpline - 0300 126 1000 (option 5)

NHS helpline - 111

Police helpline - 101

Emergency - 999

South Northants Council - 01327 322322

Andrea Leadsom MP – 01327 353124/andrea.leadsom.mp@parliament.uk

PLEASE BE AWARE OF CORONAVIRUS SCAMS – if in doubt seek help from family & friends

Notes from a Local Farmer

As I write this, the world is in turmoil but here on the farm, life goes on as normal.

Lambing has been finished for about a month now and the lambs are looking really well; the weather has been very kind to them. The absence of rain to date has restricted grass growth so some now would be very welcome. Prices in the market have been very volatile, with big drops in value as kebab shops are closed and the general public unable to afford lamb.

On the arable side, drilling has progressed well due to no interruption of wet weather but early crops are struggling to germinate as constant wind and hot weather have sucked the moisture out of the ground. The last crop to be drilled is maize, best planted in early May, to be used in a digester plant locally.

It has been a struggle to source diesel for our tractors, delivery being quoted as two weeks in some cases. Our vets have not been able to acquire some drugs for our sheep, namely penicillin, which is concerning.

On the whole, things are progressing well. It does bring to the forefront the importance of a regular supply of food in these difficult times.

Speak to you again next month.

Robert Davy

How to Contact the Police

999 – for a crime or incident in progress

101 – you will be asked with which police station you would like to be connected

03000 111 222 – direct dial Northamptonshire police

Email for Towcester: SCT-SouthNorthantsTowcester@northants.pnn.police.uk

Your local officers are as follows:

Alderton: PCSO 7018, Peter Firth, tel 101 ext 343971

Stoke Bruerne: PCSO 7018, Peter Firth, tel 101 ext 343971

Shutlanger: PCSO 7018, Peter Firth, tel 101 ext 343971

Grafton Regis: PCSO 7018, Peter Firth, tel 101 ext 343971

For more local SCT information, visit the local policing pages www.northants.police.uk.

Blisworth: PCSO 7012 Tara Cooksammy

Milton Malsor: PCSO 7012 Tara Cooksammy



Fitness Classes in Paulerspury Village Hall

Due to Coronavirus there will be only be online classes via Zoom until further notice.

Due to the current situation when we find ourselves locked in, Inhale pilates classes are running twice weekly online.

At a time when many are at home, often alone and not being able to get out to socialise as normal, it is important to try and keep some sense of a routine. This is especially important for both our mental health and wellbeing and provides a little bit of structure to the daily routine and also lovely to see some friendly faces when you join each class.

If you would like to find out more or join in, please feel free to get in touch with Elizabeth on 07547 618987 to find out more.

Yoga classes taught by Iris Parish are running on Tuesday's from 10.00 a m to 11.30 a m, suitable for all; if you would like to join us, unlike the classes in the village hall where space is at a premium, there is no limit to the numbers who can attend our friendly class, so for information on how to join us please contact Sue on: 01327 811596 or email: fitnessgroup@paulerspuryparish.org.uk

Theatre Group

At the time of composing this article, Milton Keynes Theatre has closed, but in the hope that that it will be re-opening at a later date, the reservations for shows will remain. For those who have purchased tickets for cancelled shows I will be trying to get refunds or new dates. Please see: <http://paulerspuryparish.org.uk/local-groups/theatre-group/then> click the link new shows. Contact Sue, via the web site or phone, 01327 811596 to reserve seats.

A Recipe from Jane Trehane

This is Jane's recipe for chocolate fudge cake, which she makes for the Milton Malsor coffee mornings:

This bakes at 180°C for about 25 minutes; do not open the door too soon or move it in the oven as it will collapse.

Oil & base line 2 x 8" tins

Ingredients: 1/4 pint milk, 1/4 pint cooking oil, 2 large eggs, 5 oz caster sugar, 6 1/2 oz self raising flour - normal or gluten free, 1oz.cocoa powder, 1teaspoon baking powder, 1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda & 2 tablespoons golden syrup.

Put everything in a bowl and mix well, then beat for 1 minute.

Pour into prepared tins and bake. Leave to cool for 5 minutes and then turn out to cool on cooling trays. When cold, make icing by melting 2 oz butter or vegan spread, add one tablespoon of milk (cow's or alternative), add 8 oz sieved icing sugar & 1 oz cocoa powder and mix well. If too stiff, add more milk. If it's too slack, add more icing sugar. Share between the top and centre of the cakes.

For a treat, warm a slice for 10 seconds in the microwave and serve with cream or ice-cream - we all need a treat at the moment!
This cakes stores well as has the oil and not fat in it.

Another tipWhen preparing a meal, cook enough vegetables and enjoy as bubble & squeak next day. This saves time & money at any time of the year.

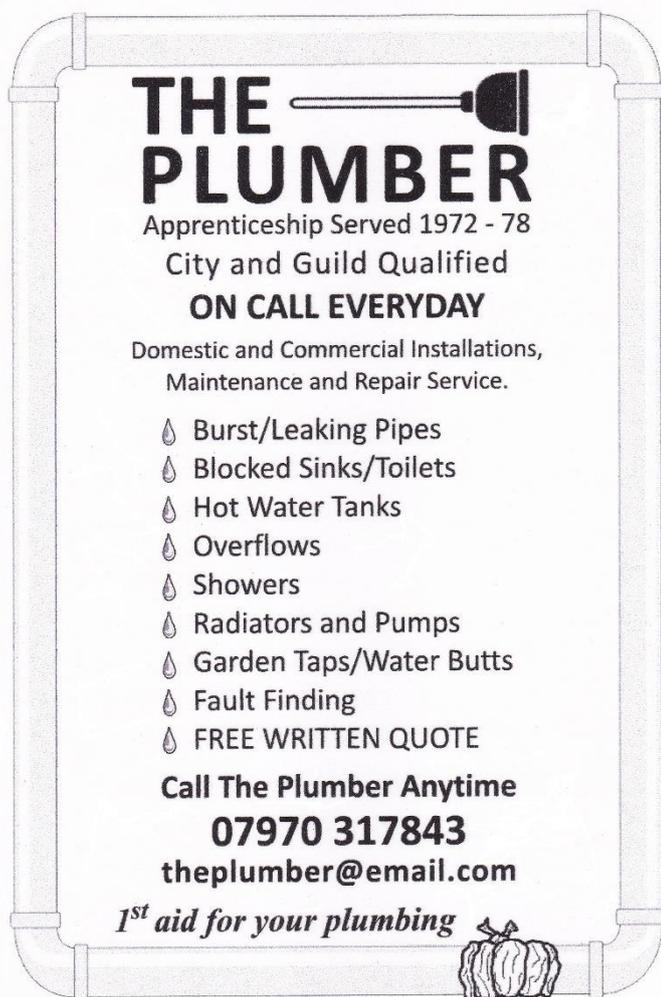
A Poem for our Time, by Kitty O'Meara

And the people stayed home. And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still. And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently.

And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully, as they had been healed.

It's obvious why this meditative poem has resonated so deeply with people: It inserts the idea of individual agency back into something out of our control, and imagines that the time after this will not only exist—it'll be better than before.



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PDC, Moorend, Spring Lane
Alderton, NN12 7LW
www.dards.co.uk

COVID-19 (CORONA VIRUS) – LOCAL SUPPORT IF YOU NEED IT

Dear Neighbour,

The David Blagrove Community Trust (DBCT) serves the village of Stoke Bruerne and is offering to coordinate help to those who are following the latest Government guidelines in self isolating.

Whilst you may be self-sufficient or have support from family and friends the DBCT can provide an extra level of help with the following;

- Collection of prescriptions
- Shopping
- Urgent errands

Whilst we will observe the Government guidelines ourselves we just want to be able to help the residents in our village, if we can.

We have a dedicated mobile phone number and will happily add you to our DBCT WhatsApp group or you can email us for email updates.

If you supply your mobile phone and / or your email address then you are giving us permission to include you in any important updates or offers of help. Your data will NOT be used for any other purpose.

You can text your number, name and address to **07951958076**.

Or email your number, name and address to **admin@dbct.org.uk**

Regards

The team at DBCT

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Email: bobtreesurgeon@hotmail.co.uk



SNIPPETS:

If someone stays by your side in the worst times, they're the ones who deserve to be with you through your best times.

There are big ships and there are little ships, but the best ships are friendships.

If you see someone falling behind, walk beside them. If you see someone being ignored, find a way to include them.

Always remind people of their worth. One small act could mean the world to them.

THE CLOSING DATE FOR THE NEXT EDITION OF GRASS is 17 May 2020

If you can get any copy to us earlier than that it would be very much appreciated

Please send any copy to: Linda Dards, Moorend, Spring Lane, Alderton NN12 7LW tel 01327 811265, e-mail: linda@dards.net. **Could you please include your name & phone number with entries in case we have any problems.** If you would like to add photographs or drawings to your text these are welcome and can be supplied via email or as photos, and returned after scanning. Contributions by email are most welcome, we can accept most formats; please request a response from us on receipt – so you are sure that we have your submission. Word (any version) is preferred.