

# PARISH MAGAZINE - MAY 2020

Sharing  God's Love  
**ST JAMES' CHURCH, CHRISTLETON**

Serving the communities of:  
Christleton, Cotton Abbots,  
Cotton Edmunds, Littleton  
and Rowton.

**Free on-line  
Edition**



At a time of great concern,  
sadness & stress there are  
nevertheless some  
Coronavirus Positives:

**Less Noise,  
clearer bird song**

**Less travel,  
less air pollution**

**Less Crime**

**People caring for each other**

**NHS**

**Front Line Workers**

**Learning Skype, Zoom, Jitsi Meet, etc**

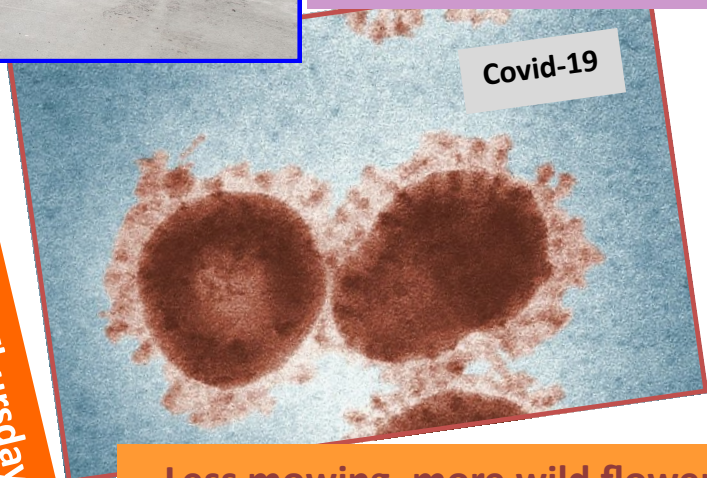
**Buying less non-essentials**

**Rediscovering hobbies/interests**

**Improving wildlife habitat  
(especially in churchyard)**

**Ducks at The Pit with  
better diet (less bread)**

**Clapping on Thursdays**



**Less mowing, more wild flowers**



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The Magazine subscription is currently £6 per year and normally runs from April to March, but during this Covid-19 crisis magazines will be free via the website and will not be printed or delivered to homes. Any subscriptions paid will be carried forward until normality is restored.

Please tell others how to find the on-line magazine. Do print it out yourself if that is helpful.

Thank you for reading our magazine. We hope you enjoy it. Feedback is always welcome so please let the editor know what you think about the magazine. Contributions are welcome and more details about this are available from the editor.

The church website not only carries the current issue but also back copies of this magazine and much more information and news about what is happening at St James' Church in these difficult times.

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## SEPARATED, BUT TOGETHER:

I wonder.

How do you feel living in lock-down?

I imagine, indeed I know from speaking with a number of you,

there are a variety of responses to this question. I have felt fear, anxiety, and hope at various times. I have also taught myself, in my weeks holiday after Easter Sunday, how to write programs in Java – not sure when, or if, this will ever be of use.

Thinking about how we are feeling then, let me begin by saying:

If you would like to be in regular contact with someone by phone or email – simply for some conversation, or have some things you need some help with, e.g., shopping, collecting prescriptions, and alike please do be in touch with us. We have set up a pastoral care network for this very purpose. You can either phone Marjorie on 07487642912, email Marjorie on [office@stjameschristleton.org.uk](mailto:office@stjameschristleton.org.uk) or register with us via our website, visit <https://tinyurl.com/tqyqgp3> Similarly, if you feel able to offer telephone, email, or other support please do be in touch on the number and email above or visit <https://tinyurl.com/yan5vrr2>

These are challenging times, especially – as is so often the case – for those on the margins of our society, which, in the main, does not apply to most of us living in one of the beautiful villages of our parish or of those nearby.

Challenging times, as they are, they are not without hope and new creation, as Revd Dr Lesley Cooke's article, originally written for the staff and students of Chester University and kindly reproduced in this magazine below, wonderfully reminds us.

They are also challenging times not without worship; the core, energy, and direction for our being and lives. The energy that gave birth to the pastoral care network established on 17 March, before our church, with others, was closed as a result of the Coronavirus. The energy that will sustain us in our separation, but keep us together whoever we might be.

How we do this, worship, when we can't physically be together is not without its own particular challenges. The last few weeks have seen some wonderful examples

of how we might do this, with an especial focus on live streaming services or in many cases streaming a pre-recorded service at a given time.

I must confess my limited experiences with such live services, two so far, has left me cold. Not because they have not been well put together, they have. But because I have felt the worship has been "done to me" and I am simply a consumer of it or even a voyeur of it? Or maybe because they were from communities that I am not rooted among? I am a Benedictine oblate after all.

It makes me question whether this is how a lot of people felt in our churches on a Sunday morning, and whether this is a contributory factor to the decline of some churches and growth of others. The latter being those who make efforts to make worship more inclusive.

It is this discomfort with worship now, a wonderful journey of discovery for me and for you, which is undoubtedly part of the reason why our current primary lock-down worship is emerging as it is. We are using the Jitsi Meet video conferencing software to facilitate truly live and at times messy participatory worship.

Every week day we meet at 9am to pray the daily office of Morning Prayer. Every Sunday we meet at 10am for a simple act of worship and time of fellowship; apparently, it was a great success the week after Easter when I wasn't there (no correlation I hope), with participants ranging in ages from 11 to 90 years of age.

It really is quite simple to join in with, and elsewhere in this magazine I have provided some brief instructions for you should you wish to give it a go. I hope many of you will. So many, that the software won't cope with us all and another solution will have to be found.

For, I suspect, it will be our worship that will give life to our being "separated, but together" in the months ahead.

With my love and prayers,

*Stefan*

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***Lesley's article follows on the next page and that is followed by Stefan's guide to using Jitsi Meet.***



## **FOLLOWING YEARS OF AUSTERITY,**

**a horrendous epidemic swept through the City killing thousands of the weakened population. There was no medicine to fight it, and no defence against it.**

The City was Chester in 1647, soon after the end of the Civil War. When the Plague arose, one family believed they could stay alive if they and their servants isolated themselves in their house until it was over. They were right. Thousands died but they survived. They showed their thanks to God by inscribing it right across the front of their house: **God's Providence is Mine Inheritance.** Today, we face exactly the same situation. We don't have the medication to fight the coronavirus sweeping throughout the world. The key preventative weapon that we do have is isolation.

Even a few months ago, if anyone had told me I'd be in lockdown on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2020, I'd have called them out for making a poor April Fool's joke. But I never dreamt that in the early evening of Saturday March 14<sup>th</sup>, I'd be put into full isolation, unable to leave the house. (And I never thought that my last bit of freedom would be spent in Waitrose café drinking coffee with Peter and Vicki). At the time I thought my Consultant was being over careful but I obeyed.

The next day as I cancelled all my commitments to Church, School, University and Hospital chaplaincies, and tried to sort out what to do with my dog, I was repeatedly swept by a feeling of dislocation and loss. That's gone, but I've had to face the reality of my extreme vulnerability to this particular virus, and the potential outcome for me. The sense of the surreal kept recurring during the first week, and still does from time to time, but I'm forever grateful that this all happened in Lent. I was already following an increased schedule of prayer, reading and reflection. To be honest, at first, it was the only thing that gave me a grip on what was happening. But by the time the rest of you joined me in isolation, I'd already got to the stage of rather enjoying this amazing opportunity to read and reflect, to slow down, and to listen to the birds!

I know that it's not like this for everyone, and the *potential for isolation leading to worsening mental health problems is therefore very high. We're facing an unseen and insidious enemy. The changes in everyday life are a challenge for us all, especially for families with young children, but some people will struggle more than others in dealing with the anxieties and the uncertainties. But, as people of faith, we are reassured: **God said: I will in no way leave you, neither will I in any way forsake you. Therefore we can say:***

***The Lord is my helper. I will not fear.***

*The key thing is to reduce uncertainties. Despite the daily reports of illness and death, we need to focus on thriving in this new world. All the experience of people in the past tells us that we need to impose order on our current lives, a sense of control that will keep us well. God, via Moses, gave the Israelites in Egypt strict instructions about food, clothing and preparation, and to remain safe indoors overnight whilst death scythed throughout Egypt. Everyone around them died, they survived. We also need to create a daily pattern which gives us a focus and which helps us to thrive rather than just survive.*

*The most powerful aspect of our wellbeing is the knowledge that we know we are never alone. Christ told the disciples **I am not alone because the Father is with me** and he told them repeatedly that just as we are with him, so too are we with God. This knowledge gives us the confidence not only to use our time creatively and spiritually for ourselves but also to help others in whatever way we can.*

*This past week, we've seen an enormous outpouring of care as people ensure that others don't feel abandoned. The NHS volunteer force is massively oversubscribed. Everywhere, the church is reaching out through media, not just to the faithful but also to many others: Do you, like me, get the feeling that, in the population, there's a growing recognition that there's a greater good in society than just oneself?*

*As Christians, we all have the strongest companion. Whether introvert or extravert; happy to be in solitude, or slowly becoming stir crazy; living alone or coping with a bunch of demanding children, silent teenagers, or elderly parents and grandparents; worrying about the future or excited about our new world; or even facing the sad loss of friends or family, for us **God alone is our rock and salvation.***

Like that family in Chester 450 years ago, we're in isolation not only facing tough challenges but also the exciting potential for good to come out of this time. As Joshua said: **Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for your God is with you wherever you go.**

**God's Providence is indeed Our Inheritance. Amen.**

*(Lesley Cook - written for staff & students at Chester University)*

## **A BRIEF GUIDE TO USING 'JITSI MEET'** **VIDEO CONFERENCING SOFTWARE**

### **Jitsi Meet**

This is the software we have been using to pray and meet together either by group phone or video chat. It is available for both Android and Apple smart phones, iPads and their equivalents. And can also be used on any computer. Once you get used to it, it seems to work well. And has been used for meetings, prayers, and social time together.

Some brief, non exhaustive notes, follow. They could be read in conjunction with the more detailed user guide which can be found [here](#) for 8x8 Video Meetings which use the same underlying software (hence although some details differ, many do not).

**To create a meeting** (on my android phone and **before** other people join)

- I open the app.
- I type in a room name where it says Enter room name, e.g., stjamesmp (the name of the room we use for morning prayer).
- The meeting is open.
- I then go into the options, for me, 3 vertical dots at the bottom right of my screen.
- I select More Options.
- I select Add meeting Password.
- I enter \*\*\*\*\* (the password used for morning prayer or Sunday Worship, see our website for it or contact [office@stjameschristleton.org.uk](mailto:office@stjameschristleton.org.uk)).
- Then, other people can join the meeting.

**To join a meeting**

- I open the app.
- I type in a room name where it says Enter room name
- I enter the password, if one is set.
- Then, I am in the meeting with others.

**Understanding the Main Meeting Room Buttons**

- For me, there are 3 key circular icons at the bottom of my phone screen.
- A red one with a phone inside. If I press this I leave the meeting.
- To the left of the red icon, there is a white circular icon with a microphone in. If I press this once, it darkens and my microphone is muted – I can scream and shout without being heard.

- To the right of the red icon, there is a white circular icon with a video in. If I press this once, it darkens and my video is muted – I can stand up!
- The use of these icons allows you to have a group phone chat only or a full video conference.

**Tips for running a meeting**

- Only open one “line” in a house at a time? This seemed to help. So, if there are two of you in the meeting in the same house, use a single “line”/ video/call; don’t run the software twice; for reasons of feedback?
- Always try to have only one person speaking at a time (we have now adapted our prayer time to take account of this). You can either put your hand in the air to speak if this can be seen or in the extra options select raise your hand. This puts a raised hand in your video feed for others to see. For me, on the phone, this is accessed by pressing the 3 vertical dots, noted above, and then select raise your hand.
- Mute your microphone when you are not talking, press on and off the white circular microphone icon.

*Stefan*

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### **TREASURER IN LOCKDOWN:**

Well, we always like a new challenge don't we? It is a long time since I have seen my garden look so tidy, no doubt in common with everyone else! So, the church services are no longer in the church with the fellowship of the congregation.



This has many complications, and clever people can look at the website and join services on line but, from the treasurer's point of view, there are at present no cash collections, no contactless payments, no blue envelopes to empty and count, no yellow gift aid envelopes to empty and count, in fact no cash to deposit at all. This in a way is fortunate as I am not allowed to go to the post office to do so! You can imagine, this means an average loss of £400 to £500 income per week. Quite a rest for the treasurer.

As for cheque deposits, I have had some cheques but likewise am unable to go to the post office. After some

weeks, I have extracted an address from the bank to send them for deposit so hopefully that will work. Regarding income, the very best of all are the standing orders which continue to come in reliably – what a blessing! I am immensely grateful to those who have changed temporarily (or permanently) from cash to standing order or bank transfer which has helped a lot.

Such has been the response up to the end of March that we are still in a stable position, so very many thanks for that.

What about our expenses? Well, the utilities hopefully will be reduced, we wait to see the effect. Of course the Parish hall is also mothballed so no income from that!

The diocese requests we continue to pay the parish share. Just as the business and work of the church continues, in particular the pastoral care, so does that of the diocese. We continue to have the support of a full time member of the clergy, which you may remember accounts for a considerable part of the parish share.

We plan to collect our gift aid money from HMRC for the first 3 months of the year, hopefully in May, to facilitate cash flow.

As I try to predict the future income and expenditure, I fear we may be running at a monthly deficit of nearly £6,000 by the time we reach the beginning of June, by which time we will need to make difficult decisions. My request is simple – if you have not altered your standing order and were wondering about increasing it – please do so!

If you support the church through the envelope scheme and have not sent a cheque or bank transfer or begun a standing order – might you consider doing so? Likewise of course if you normally offer a cash collection. Do not hesitate to contact me on 01244 409414 (surprisingly and unusually I tend to be in!) or by email [elizabeth.mcclure070@gmail.com](mailto:elizabeth.mcclure070@gmail.com). If you contact me I can give you our bank account details.

Happy gardening!  
*Liz McClure*

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## MY MIRACLE MOMENT:

My miracle moment occurred during a traditional Anglican service when Romans Chapter 7 v.15 -25 was read and hearing these verses changed my life.

This is my story. I was in my mid twenties and was invited by a friend to a service at her church. I didn't want to go, not being a 'religious' type but couldn't think of an excuse in time. At the time I was a student nurse in my second year of training and I was struggling. I was very keen to nurse but I was just not living up to my own expectations. I had hoped to model myself on Florence Nightingale but in all honesty felt I was acting more like Attila the Hun. I was short tempered, intolerant and bossy, not the sort of nurse I wanted to be and I was wondering if I should carry on training.

I was pondering on this during the service which seemed to have little relevance and then suddenly I was completely taken aback. The reading was from Chapter 7 of Romans and v.15 to 19 were so relevant to me, they just explained what was going on in my life and I was sure they were written by someone who knew me personally and had seen me in action. This was me, trying so hard yet not succeeding. I looked round to see if I could identify anyone who knew me in the congregation but there was no one so I hissed to my friend 'who wrote that?' When she said St. Paul I was a little taken aback because even I with my limited theological knowledge realised he must be dead, but the intensity of the experience validated it - someone here knew ME. They knew I wanted to be good and do good and explained why I was failing.

At the end of the service the Vicar invited anyone who wanted to know more about the Christian life to come and see him. I was one of the twelve who went forward.

After this my life changed. I came to know the one who knew me. I encountered my Saviour, the one who knows me and loves me just the same. His name is Jesus and we have walked together for over 50 years, and as He has taught me of His love I trust that I have been able to show it to others.

*Margaret Bass*

## HELLO,

My name is Sarah Batchelor. Pictured with my guinea pigs.



Some of you may have seen me at the beginning of March as I started a placement at St James. (Usually wearing a Chester FC scarf, well someone has to!)

I came to St James because I am exploring ordained ministry within the Church of England and it's great to have experience of different church traditions. I haven't always wanted to be ordained, I haven't always been a Christian... but somehow God has carried me along, with a mixture of joy and trepidation, to where I am today.

Twenty years ago, Dan asked me to marry him. I said 'yes' and wanted to get married in a church, but as someone who wasn't a Christian, it didn't feel right! I decided to do some research and am so glad I did. I began asking friends and colleagues about their faith and they told me about Jesus and invited me to church. St Lawrence's in Biddulph was the place I started my journey with other Christians. As soon as I entered the building, I was overwhelmed by a sense of peace and welcome. I signed up to an exploring faith course straight away because I wanted to learn more about Jesus.

Since then, I have felt God's presence with me as I have gone through the ups and downs of life. There have been times of great joy and sadness. Times when I have been in the wilderness and times when I felt God right alongside me giving me a big hug. Travelling and working in Australia, moving to Liverpool and then Chester, the loss of my dad and the birth of three boys.

I was on maternity leave with my eldest son when the idea of ministry in the Church of England was mentioned to me by my vicar in Liverpool. I thought I had misheard him. I had a good job as a vet at the university and a much-awaited new baby. The time was definitely not right, but the idea remained.

Fast forward several years, and a change in circumstances gave me the opportunity to think about the future. As a family, we have attended St Michael's church in Newton since moving to Chester and I gradually became more involved in the life of the church, especially once the children started school. The idea of serving God in a distinctive role in the church was something that appealed to me, so I attended a 'Called to Serve' event run by the diocese, then completed the Foundations for Ministry course last year. I started the discernment process for ordained ministry, which meant several interviews and lots of paperwork to complete. Now I await interviews with the Bishops Advisory Panel in June to decide if I can train.

Due to COVID19, things have changed, and the interviews will now take place online.

I came to St James not understanding why it was necessary to leave my church for lent, but now I know. The formal liturgy and beautiful sung worship enabled me to connect with God on another level. Taking part in the Wednesday Eucharist and Morning Prayer has been something new and special. The building and church grounds are stunning; I am aware of God's presence and the faithfulness of the people over the centuries right to the present day. However, I think there is more to it. When I arrived, I experienced a generous and welcoming community, rooted in prayer; and that has continued despite us not being able to meet in person.

I am reminded of Luke chapter 9, just before Jesus feeds the five thousand. Jesus welcomed the crowds and healed those who needed healing. I think this is the example you follow, welcoming and providing exactly what people need. God is doing amazing things through you during these challenging times, and I see St James is a community of hope, comfort and love to all. I hope to be able to return and complete my placement one day soon. Thank You!

*Sarah Batchelor*

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## COURTESY OF PAM AYRES:

I'm normally a social girl  
I love to meet my mates  
But lately with the virus here  
We can't go out the gates.

You see, we are the 'oldies' now  
We need to stay inside  
If they haven't seen us for a while  
They'll think we've upped and died.

They'll never know the things we did  
Before we got this old  
There wasn't any Facebook  
So not everything was told.

We may seem sweet old ladies  
Who would never be uncouth  
But we grew up in the 60s -  
If you only knew the truth!

There was sex and drugs and rock 'n roll  
The pill and miniskirts  
We smoked, we drank, we partied  
And were quite outrageous flirts.

Then we settled down, got married  
And turned into someone's mum,  
Somebody's wife, then nana,  
Who on earth did we become?

We didn't mind the change of pace  
Because our lives were full  
But to bury us before we're dead  
Is like a red rag to a bull!

So here you find me stuck inside  
For 4 weeks, maybe more  
I finally found myself again  
Then I had to close the door!

It didn't really bother me  
I'd while away the hour  
I'd bake for all the family  
But I've got no flaming flour!

Now Netflix is just wonderful  
I like a gutsy thriller  
I'm swooning over Idris  
Or some random sexy killer.

At least I've got a stash of booze  
For when I'm being idle  
There's wine and whisky, even gin  
If I'm feeling suicidal!

So let's all drink to lockdown  
To recovery and health  
And hope this awful virus  
Doesn't decimate our wealth.

We'll all get through the crisis  
And be back to join our mates  
Just hoping I'm not far too wide ...  
.... to fit through the flaming gates!

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## FATE:

Do you believe in fate, although some might call it  
God's Will? I am beginning to wonder.

I grew up in Little Sutton then a self contained village,  
and I went to the village school as did my father. At  
the age of 9 my life changed, war was declared. Shortly  
afterwards two girls joined our class, they were from  
Battersea in London and lived close to Clapham  
Junction. They had been evacuated to live with an  
Aunt of one of them who lived in Great Sutton, the girl  
was Jean Carr, her friend Pat Gibbs. I was strangely  
attracted to Jean I don't know why, although she  
ignored me. Much later my Mother can remember me  
coming home and talking about her.

At the age of 11, scholarship papers were sent from  
London and I can remember her being taken out of  
class by the headmaster to sit them. She passed and  
returned to a London grammar school which had been  
evacuated to a big house in Surrey, again she was  
evacuated this time to strangers. At the age of 14 she  
was staying at home during the school holidays when a  
flying bomb fell on the house, killing her Father. Jean  
and her Mother were trapped in the Anderson  
Shelter. A few weeks later Jean and her mother,  
sister, baby and brother-in-law came to live to live in  
Childer Thornton (Ellesmere Port), later moving to  
Whitby in Yorkshire, close by her grandmother, and  
where her mother grew up.

When I was 21 I was conscripted into the Army. On my  
first leave, at Christmas, I felt the need for female  
company. I had found out where Jean lived and one  
afternoon knocked on her door and asked her to come  
out with me. I was a stranger to her and she didn't  
know my name, but she came. She later told me as we  
walked away from the house she knew we going to be  
together. I didn't propose we just knew we would be  
married, although we did buy a ring which Jean chose  
and I paid for.

We were married 4 years later after I had left the  
Army. That was 64 years ago. We are always together  
and have never fallen out. I now find it all very strange,  
I repeat, was it fate?

*Ben Williams*



## THE CHINESE MONEY PLANT

My mum gave me a Chinese money plant a few months ago.

It is the offspring of a plant given to her by my sister-in-law. I love this plant. The leaves are shaped like coins (hence the name!) and so perfectly formed, with beautiful delicate veins radiating out from a yellow dot near the top of the leaf, where the stem attaches at the back. In the light, they appear translucent, veins and connections can be seen radiating out to the very edges of the leaves.

I have been meaning to repot it for a while, but the busyness of life meant it was another job for tomorrow. Today I decided to draw it; a recording of what I think it looks like in case something happens to it during the repotting process!

What I discovered in the process of drawing was a calmness I haven't felt for a few weeks now. I lost track of time as I observed the detail in the leaves and tried to replicate it on the paper. I paid attention to the form and composition, and the subtle shades of colour that blended to make a whole. It felt like I was properly looking at that plant for the first time.

As the pencils moved on the paper, my mind was free to explore my thoughts and feelings. I thought I would share them with you:

The last few weeks have left me feeling guilty. Guilty because I am not a key worker. Guilty because I am not doing any more. I am home-schooling the boys and every evening I feel exhausted and unable to offer any extra. I am thankful for a safe home and garden. There is food in the cupboard and the family is well.

In church, there are usually so many things asked of us.



These things we can no longer do. So, I have decided that I can do what I am doing now and focus on how I can do these things in a more loving way.

Staying at home is the right thing to do, however contrary it seems. As I sit here, I feel powerless and paralysed, but then I think of the small things; like helping my boys learn something new, keeping in touch with others, being able to pray for key workers, leaders, friends and family any time of day and night, and I know that God knows.

As I draw the detail in the leaves of this beautiful plant, I think of the words of Jesus in John's gospel:

*I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. John 15:5.*

Anxiety is a big issue in our society and even more so now, as we worry about the health of our loved ones, lack of income, loss of employment and an inability to provide. The future is uncertain, and we have lost a physical connection with others that can adversely affect our mental health.

I haven't got any answers as I sit with my pencils, trying to recreate on paper, the beauty of God's original handiwork. Only, that as I draw, I feel a sense of wonder in the intricate nature of what lies in front of me. I am lost in God's grace and peace. In this little plant, there is a connection between every cell, every vein, every stem, right down to the root, deep in the soil. Perhaps God is telling us that our connection to Jesus is like that; it can never be severed. We can lose so much, but we will never stop being his. We may feel inadequate, but we are meant to live on his resources, not our own. We are eternally loved children of God. "...apart from me you can do nothing."

*Sarah Batchelor*



## TURKEY TO TROUBLE / LUXURY TO LOCKDOWN!

Just an excuse to show you a few holiday snaps – wasn't I lucky to fit it in beforehand?

After working my socks off getting myself recuperated and strong enough after my hip replacement, no-one could persuade me not to go to Turkey on my golfing holiday – wowee the children did try!

A wonder 5 star hotel with lots of handwashing signs and a plethora of sanitiser. But the bluest of blue seas, snow capped Taurus mountain range, a coastal river for the Russians to practice canoeing for the Olympics flanked by palm trees and fairway after fairway of championship courses amongst umbrella pines. We even played one of them in the evening sunshine and then in the pitch dark with floodlights, the Carya which hosted the Turkish Open.

It was peaceful, beautiful and blissfully quiet and happy. We would often hear the call to prayer in the mosque drifting on the wind. Many of the fairways were surrounded by spring flowers, anemones, scarlet pimpernel, yellow pimpernel, frogs croaking in the ponds and ditches we were trying so hard to avoid, and tortoises wandering across the greens.

There did appear to be a bit of concern on the world news programme.....

- Part way through the week the gym shut.
- The next day the games room and bowling alley shut.
- The day after the sauna and indoor pool shut.

I think we were the last to play on the Gloria Verde course our last morning – the whole resort was closing around us.

The airport was an unhappy place – everyone was about to lose their jobs and the mood was uncomfortable. After a long wait, we took off and flew to Manchester, picking up our prearranged taxi.

I had a bizarre welcome from my son, keeping a safe distance and insisting I stripped off in the kitchen and went into the shower! He even refused to touch my luggage. I wasn't used to this sort of treatment after being so pampered for a week with porters and the like, the men fighting as to which of them would carry my bag!

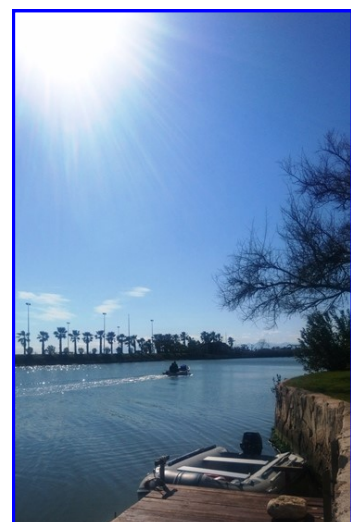
Talk about coming down to earth with a bump – I reached to shut the front door and fell over my golfbag, landing heavily on both knees. I had after all been up for 24 hours.

The next 2 days I sat stunned in front of the telly trying to re-orientate myself – it wasn't easy but I was safely home and I *think* the family were pleased! Three weeks later I am at last able to kneel on my thickly padded gardening stool.

*Liz McClure*



Tortoise Crossing





## WORSHIP AND DISCIPLESHIP DURING THE PANDEMIC

As you are reading this magazine you, or a member of your family, have clearly managed to access our website. This article seeks to guide you to other resources on the website which you may not yet have discovered and which will, I am sure, help you during these strange times.

**Daily Prayer & Sunday Worship:** On the 'Home' page you will see a blue box (Daily Prayer) and a red box (Sunday Worship)

**Daily Prayer:** by clicking on this box you will be taken to the Church of England webpage of prayers for the day. You can use this resource on your own, with the family or join us at 9am via Jitsi Meet (see Stefan's instructions) every Monday to Friday.

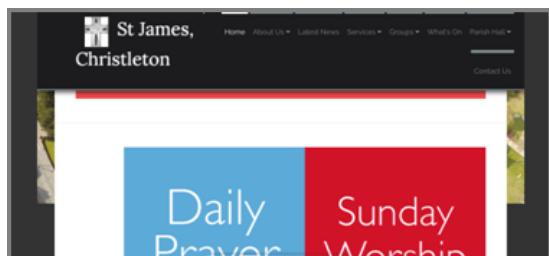
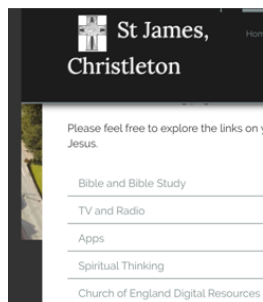
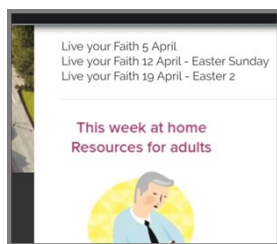
**Sunday Worship:** by clicking on this box you will be taken to a page which outlines the various resources available. This will include a simple liturgy which again can be used on your own or when you join in our act of Worship each Sunday at 10am via Jitsi Meet. There are also links to resources from the Church of England and television and radio. In addition, the parish subscribes to a worship resource called *Roots for Churches Ltd*. There are resources for adults and also for families. Please note that these can be printed out and so if you know anyone who does not have access to a computer, you could print off a 'Live your Faith' session week by week and post it to them. This will include notes on the set bible readings, prayers and questions for reflection. Colouring sheets and puzzles for children can be downloaded.

**Discipleship:** Back on the Home page, go to the 'drop-down' menu and select 'services'. At the bottom of the drop-down list you will see 'Discipleship Resources'. If you click on this you will find a range of resources to help with spiritual development from bible study to prayer apps and spiritual thinking websites.

I appreciate all this might seem daunting but if you simply go on the website and explore, you'll be amazed what you will find. If you would like me to talk you through it as you explore, email [churchwardens@stjameschristleton.org.uk](mailto:churchwardens@stjameschristleton.org.uk) with your name and telephone number and I will give you a ring.

In the meantime, may the peace of the Lord be with you.

Tina



## A DIFFERENT EASTER:

It was Maundy Thursday and instead of John going off to St James to prepare for the numerous services held over the Easter week end, he was here at home with me and likely to be so for a lengthy period of time, and it was then that I think it registered that we were in for the long haul due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Eastertime is a particular favourite of mine because Spring has usually arrived, daffodils are in full bloom & the shops are full of chocolate Easter eggs but also the Easter story is told once again & it never fails to make me happy as well as sad. Sad because Christ was crucified on the cross in such a cruel way – an innocent man sent to his death, but happy because He is risen from the dead & lives with us all to this day.

But this year we didn't get our palms on Palm Sunday nor did we get to celebrate the Easter story in St James so I thought about what we would be doing over the weekend. On Easter Saturday I'd done some gardening because the weather was so lovely & then later was doing some ironing & switched on the TV to find Easter from Kings College, Cambridge, and as always the music was beautiful. This was followed by a Mary Berry cooking programme during which she made a Simnal cake and took it to the Archbishop of Canterbury when they had a 'chat' over tea & cake.

Later that day I was looking on my phone & all of a sudden I heard Stefan's mellifluous voice talking about the Easter story & it was wonderful. I haven't a clue how I found it but then that's me not being very good with technology but I thoroughly enjoyed it at the time & now can't find it again!!

Easter Sunday morning John & I watched the morning service on TV & then later tuned into Songs of Praise from Bangor cathedral and heard some beautiful Welsh voices singing. I know we could have joined the Jitsi service via video link but that's not really our thing – poor technology knowledge again – but maybe sometime in the future. Who knows, it may become a regular thing.

I put a chicken in the oven to cook for Sunday lunch with all the trimmings and later did some more weeding in the garden. As church was closed John didn't have to go back after lunch to prepare for the evening service so he had a short nap in his chair before tackling the grass cutting which is quite a big job & only managed half that afternoon leaving the rest for the next day.

We wonder of course how long the 'lockdown' will last especially for us 'elderly over 70's' and I think it will be quite a while before we're allowed out and able to rejoin our friends at St James but in the meantime we'll keep in touch via e-mail and the telephone & hope that everyone stays at home & keeps safe.

Janet & John Milton

## **CHRISTIAN AID WEEK IS NOT CANCELLED! (10th - 16th May)**

This year's Christian Aid Week will undoubtedly be a different experience, but we know that our offerings will still be as life-changing as ever for the people we aim to help. Normal events involving physical contact between people will not go ahead, so no house to house collection nor any variant of this will happen. Like most of the world Christian Aid Week is going on line! But now, more than ever, our gifts & prayers are desperately needed.

The focus for Christian Aid Week will be on fighting coronavirus. The world's poorest countries have the weakest health systems and their people will struggle to cope with any costs of healthcare and the costs of being unable to earn a living while ill or quarantined.

The Coronavirus outbreak threatens the health of our neighbours near and far. A quick response is needed to help the most vulnerable.

Coronavirus has shown that our futures are bound more tightly together than ever before. And now it is spreading across the world's poorest countries, putting people living in poverty at great risk. These people already face a lack of water, food and healthcare. Some are homeless, some are living with underlying health issues, some are in war torn areas. As the virus infection rates speed up they, like us, will feel the impact deeply. We must try and respond now. Coronavirus impacts all of us. But love and generosity can unite us all.

Together with our local partners Christian Aid is aiming to work quickly to limit the impact of the virus on some of the most vulnerable communities in the world. CA is drawing on its experience from the Ebola crisis and helping communities to prevent and delay infection by providing essential soap, water and hand washing training and ensuring urgent health messages get through to keep people safe. Our support can help CA do even more.

Christian Aid has launched a coronavirus appeal to help limit the impact on the communities with whom they work. They have also launched a campaign to call for the cancellation of debt for the poorest countries. As our prayers are as important as our gifts CA is recording a service that can be used inside our own Sunday service and they are hosting their own service which can be watched online. CA will also be offering an e-envelope as a digital way to share the Christian Aid week story with family and friends and ask for a donation.

I can't emphasise enough how important our support for Christian Aid and the people they work for is. However much or little we can give, it is all great fully received. Even £1 does vital work!

We can give directly here:

<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/CAWeek2020>

For any further information see the CA website or anyone can contact me, **Chris Platel** on **01244 332466**  
Christleton CA group organiser



### **CHRISTLETON PARISH HALL**

Closed during this crisis. Enquiries to:  
Maria Norbury: Tel: 01244 335499.  
[maria\\_norbury@btinternet.com](mailto:maria_norbury@btinternet.com)

See also the church website.  
<https://www.stjameschristleton.org.uk>

### **Churchyard Maintenance**

This regular monthly working party is not currently meeting. Individuals should observe government guidelines, but take a walk via the churchyard as part of your exercise.  
Be joyous in God's amazing creation.

More details from Mike Lightfoot  
Tel: 07787 421357



# St James' Church Calendar

## MAY - JUNE 2020:

There are no church services in the church, no church gatherings, and no Parish Hall activities for the foreseeable future until the Covid-19 crisis restrictions are relaxed. There is no calendar therefore.

**THE CHURCH and PARISH HALL are CLOSED:** The buildings are locked. Any questions regarding this to Stefan or the Churchwardens.

**MORNING PRAYER:** This takes place on-line using the 'Jitsi Meet' video conferencing application at 9am each weekday (Mon—Fri). You are all welcome to join in this short act of worship to start the day. For joining instructions please see the guide from Stefan printed in this magazine (page 5), or contact Stefan or Tina.

**SUNDAY WORSHIP:** This is also on-line using Jitsi Meet at 10am. Ask Stefan or the Churchwardens for details.

**CHURCHYARD WORKING GROUP:**

This is no longer an organised event during the crisis. Guidelines suggest that no-one can justify working in the churchyard, even on their own, since we are limited to one short period of exercise (walk, cycle, etc) per day. Talk to Mike Lightfoot for more details. (See ad in this magazine.) It is inevitable that the churchyard will become overgrown and that a massive catch-up will be needed later in the year. In the meantime perhaps an improved haven for wildlife and wild flowers, and a lovely place to include in your walk for exercise and contemplation.

All the above is subject to change!

### THE REGULAR PATTERN OF SERVICES:

Until the current crisis, the regular pattern of services was:

**Sundays:**

9.00am: Holy Communion (with choir)

10.45am: Morning Worship, and on 3rd Sunday in month it also includes communion .

Also at 10.45am the Lighthouse group for 5 to 14 year olds. In Parish Hall. Starts and ends in church.

Also various services at 4.00pm. Refer to church calendar & publicity.

**Mon—Fri:**

9am: The office of Morning Prayer said in church. All welcome.

**Wednesdays:**

Holy Communion at 10.45am on Wednesdays.

**Fridays:**

The Ark every Friday 9am to 11am in term time in the Parish Hall. Play & Praise Toddler Group. Finding out about Jesus through play, stories and songs. Grandparents and carers also welcomed. Helpers welcomed. Refreshments.

**HOWEVER**—during this Covid-19 crisis **all this is suspended**. When possible this pattern will be re-introduced, no doubt with caution, but also with overwhelming joy and relief and a fanfare of praise!

## THE HISTORY FILE:

Whilst carrying out research for the Village in WWII I have come across several villagers who served in the Royal Air Force. The most prominent member of the group is Jas Storrar who was well known in the village as a Veterinary Surgeon, a member of St James Church and a colourful member of the Community. I reprint his story below with thanks to Jamie Bowman, The Kings School Chester, and Vince Martin for the kind use of his photographs. This is James Storrar's story serving in WWII as **Wing Commander James Eric "Jas" Storrar DFC & Bar. AFC, serving with 145 Squadron Battle of Britain.**



Jas the Vet



Jas the Pilot

Former Christleton Resident and Vet, Flying Officer James 'Jas' Storrar was born in Ormskirk on June 24<sup>th</sup> 1920, and was educated at Chester City Grammar School. His family had a veterinary practice in Chester since the early 18<sup>th</sup> C, initially near the city walls at the Newgate, and more recently on Tarvin Road, Boughton. James was a teenager as war broke out and had joined the RAF on a short commission. He immediately volunteered for active service and flew many missions to protect the troops of the BEF as they were being evacuated from the beaches of Dunkirk. The war hero, who died in 1995, aged 73, recalled his experiences many times over the years and was a valued contributor to a number of books about the conflict. He told aviation historian Chaz Bowyer:

*"I knew it was a catastrophe for the Army and towards the end when they were using the small boats, the thing that struck me was the pall of smoke from the oil tanks*

*at Dunkirk," "We never flew down very low because it didn't matter who we were, we got shot at. The people on the ground, whenever they saw an airplane, thought it was a Jerry and let fly; understandably, for there were not many of us."*

Altogether, more than 3,500 sorties were flown in support of 'Operation Dynamo'. The Luftwaffe was met by 16 squadrons of the Royal Air Force, who claimed 38 kills on May 17 alone whilst losing 14 aircraft. **Jas Storrar** was with 145 Squadron, based at Tangmere in West Sussex and was flying Hurricanes, when he and his fellow pilots were called into action.

The RAF continued to take a heavy toll on the German bombers throughout the week, but soldiers being bombed and strafed while awaiting transport were for the most part unaware of the efforts of the RAF to protect them- as most of the dog fights took place far from the beaches. As a result, many British soldiers bitterly accused the airmen of doing nothing to help. *"We usually stayed between 8-10,000ft to keep out of range of light flack" "The average length of a sortie was about an hour and a half, which meant you used pretty well all your fuel, even at normal throttle opening, without bashing it about a bit"* Despite the RAF's untiring efforts, the Luftwaffe bombers seemed to have unfettered access to the skies over Dunkirk to the men on the beaches awaiting passage home. One day alone, Stukas, Heinkels and Dorniers dropped 15,000 high explosive and 30,000 incendiary bombs on Dunkirk Harbour and the approaching fleet of British ships and boats.

On the first day only 7,669 Allied soldiers were evacuated, but by the end of the eighth day, 338,226 of them had been rescued by a hastily assembled fleet of over 800 boats, which became known as "The Little ships of Dunkirk" a flotilla of hundreds of merchant marine boats, fishing boats, pleasure craft, yachts and life boats, called into action from all over Britain. Some of the men had to wade out from the beaches, waiting for hours in shoulder deep water, but the miracle of Dunkirk planned by Winston Churchill had succeeded against all the odds.

*"Once we got to Dunkirk, squadrons operated individually and continued to do so. There were no wing leaders, only squadron commanders, and they did what they liked and one would then detach sections. Once you saw something you started to act on your own."*

Miraculously surviving Dunkirk, 'Jas' continued to have an eventful war. In November 1940 his squadron sailed to Takoradi on the coast of West Africa, aboard the aircraft carrier "Furious". It then flew the "stepping

stone" route across Africa to Egypt. On one occasion bad weather forced him down in the jungle from where it took him two days and three nights to walk more than 70 miles to the Firestone rubber plantation near Monrovia in Liberia.

In 1943 he returned to Britain and aged just 22, he received command of No 65, a Spitfire Squadron flying bomber escorts and fighter sweeps over France and the Low Countries. He later commanded No 165 and 234 Squadrons and was posted to Italy to command No 239 Wing, equipped with Mustangs. Whilst in Italy he met his wife Winifrede (Freddie) who was a WAAF driver and they were married in Venice. The next year "Jas" was offered an extended commission, but opted instead to study veterinary science at Edinburgh University. He later joined the family veterinary practice in Tarvin Road.

A tribute to Jas Storrar, written when he died, highlighted his record of 15 confirmed kills as a pilot in the Battle of Britain as well as describing him as "a giant of a man. Well over 6ft tall, he was barely able to squeeze into the cockpit of his fighter," it read, "Over the years he retained something of the flamboyant style of a Battle of Britain pilot. His jackets were lined with red silk and his Jaguar XJS 12 bore the registration JAS."

In 1949 he joined No 603, a Royal Auxiliary Air Force Squadron, and resumed flying, and went on to command No 610 County of Chester Auxiliary Squadron based at Hooton on Wirral. The 610 Squadron offered former regular pilots the chance to continue flying after they had left the RAF. He was the Squadron's last CO when it was disbanded in 1947, but not, according to legend, until "Jas" had flown under Grosvenor Bridge in Chester in a Hurricane.

Wing Commander Storrar died on 29 March 1995 aged 73. His wife Winifred (Freddie) also died in 1995 on 27<sup>th</sup> November. They are buried at St James' Christleton.

*David Cummings*

**References;** Jamie [Bowman@nwn.co.uk](mailto:Bowman@nwn.co.uk) Alumni Newsletter The Kings School Chester Wikipedia; David Cummings. Photographs of Jas Storrar courtesy of Vince Martin.

## NATURE NOTES:

This month has been the strangest time for us all, and in the list of things we experience, the importance of saving lives by the wonderful NHS team, has to have been the first priority. The Government however also stresses the importance of mental health, and for those unable to go out, things immediately around them count highly.

All the things I talk about this month are seen in or around our small garden. I've really begun looking closely at the flowers that are out in bloom, and there is a quality of colour, texture and pattern even in the most ordinary of garden flowers. Seen in close up they are magnificent, and all play a part in making the garden come alive. Seeing the bees searching for the best pollinating plants is fascinating and the bright yellow mahonia seems to be the plant that's most attractive to them. My favourites at this time of year, with apologies to the daffodils, are the fritillaria. They are delicate, yet stand strong in a breeze, and have the most beautiful range of pink to purple & mauve colours. The yellow plants dominate the garden in this season with cowslips, primroses, daffodils and mahonia in full bloom, whilst it's extraordinary to see tulips, gladioli and oriental poppies out in bloom together. The first butterflies we've seen, several peacocks and small tortoiseshells are enjoying the blue flowers, the highly scented hyacinths and smaller grape hyacinths. Just recently a bright yellow brimstone flew in, together with several orange tip, common and holly blue butterflies. Several early comma butterflies have also been reported in the Parish. The warm sunny weather bodes well for the further recovery of these delightful insects this year, having had several very poor years in recent times.

I've never spent so much time watching the birds in the garden. We've had territorial battles between several male blackbirds, and three or four robins are trying to dispute nesting sites. In a ten metre hawthorn hedge we have nesting, robins, blackbirds, dunnocks and house sparrows, wren and wood pigeon. A male sparrowhawk flew though a week or so ago and took out a pigeon, from the feathers left on the lawn, but other small birds have been regular visitors.

Starlings, although very greedy on the seed feeders are extraordinarily colourful, but we have also been delighted to see families of long tailed and coal tits join the regular groups of blue and great tits, close to the

dining room window. I was extremely excited last week to see the pair of coal tits examine the empty nest box, but I'm afraid it was a flying visit.

Walking along the canal a short distance from the garden, the chaff chaffs are really back in force, as are bubbly colourful goldfinches which seem to be everywhere along the canal and village hedgerows. The first male blackcaps are singing along the canal and are appearing in village gardens, so look out for the male, a robin sized bird with a jet black cap. The female's cap is more chocolate brown, but they are usually seen about in pairs and do nest in the area. Several willow warblers have been heard, which is very encouraging, and I saw a bullfinch in the garden yesterday. These colourful finches are usually about when fruit trees are in blossom. Earlier in the week we watched goldfinches seemingly feeding, but also plucking at blossom on the tops of willow trees at the edge of the farm field, and understood then why the surface of the canal was covered in pieces of willow blossom.

The first house martin appeared above Croft Close on the 7<sup>th</sup> April, closely followed by the first swallow in Plough Lane on the 8<sup>th</sup>.

*David Cummings*



Brimstone



Orange Tip

## **PUZZLE SECTION:**

A selection of a few puzzles, most of which are accredited to Chris Maslanka:

### **Puzzle 1:**

Attila the Hen is twice as old as Talking Turkey was when Attila the Hen was as old as Talking Turkey is now. Their combined ages are 84. How old are they each now? [All ages in whole numbers, please...]

### **Puzzle 2:**

If a hen and a half lay an egg and a half in a day and a half, how many eggs will 3 hens lay in a week? What is the smallest whole number of hens you need to ensure a whole number of dozens will be produced in a week?

### **Puzzle 3:**

If a clock strikes N bongs at N o'clock where N is, of course, a whole number, then a 12-hour

clock will strike a total of 156 bongs in the course of a single 24-hour day. How many bongs will a 24-hour clock strike in the course of a 24-hour day?

### **Puzzle 4:**

What did the teddy bear say when offered more cake after babbleves, goulash, duck liver and dobos torta?

### **Puzzle 5:**

What are the missing three digits?  
1 \* 1 4 1 9 1 8 1 9 \* 9 1 9 \* 5

### **Puzzle 6:**

"Which is larger: the square root of 3 or the cube root of 5?"

Answers: Sorry, I don't officially have all the answers but I think I've worked out what they might be. Do contact me, or wait until the June magazine. (Ed.)

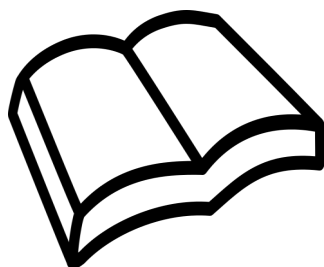


### FROM THE REGISTERS:

No Baptisms or Weddings at the current time.

Funeral: Mr Brian Christopher Lunt.  
Died: 7th April 2020, age: 75  
Burial 21st April 2020  
at St James' Church .

Cremation: Mr Ronald Rae on 30th Mar 2020  
Died on 14th March 2020, age: 98



### ISOLATION BLUES:

We are 11 days into self-isolation  
and it is really upsetting me  
to witness my wife standing  
at the living room window gazing  
aimlessly into space  
with tears running down her cheeks.  
It breaks my heart to see her like this.  
I have thought very hard about  
how I can cheer her up.  
I have even considered letting her in ..  
but rules are rules!

*Richard Keech*

### CONGRATULATIONS:

19th April: **David & Beryl Cummings**  
55th Wedding Anniversary

... and to others with special birthdays  
and anniversaries at this time. Hope you  
managed to celebrate despite the  
lock-down and social distancing.

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### Regular events & offers...

**Coffee AM** - Monday to Saturday from 9am, pop in and enjoy our fabulous coffee or loose leaf tea and some delicious sweet treats or something more substantial from our brunch menu.

**2 for 1 Burgers** Every Monday enjoy 2 for 1 Burgers, buy one of our mouth-watering burgers and get another one free of charge!

**2 for 1 Pizzas** Every Wednesday enjoy 2 for 1 Pizza, buy one of our fabulous homemade hand stretched stone baked pizzas & get another one free of charge!

**Saturday Breakfast Club** Every Saturday from 9am serving our Breakfast/Brunch menu alongside tea, coffee & cakes.

Tel: 01244 335422 Email: [info@ringobellschester.co.uk](mailto:info@ringobellschester.co.uk)  
Address: Village Rd, Christleton, CH3 7AS

## ROCK HOUSE DENTAL PRACTICE

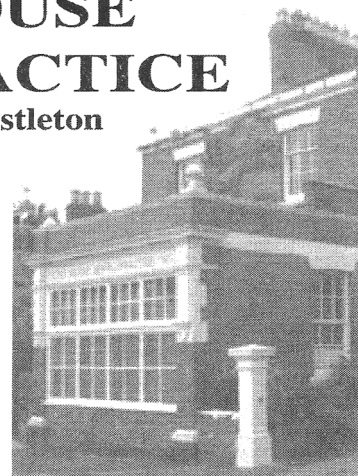
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Email: [info@willingtonhall.co.uk](mailto:info@willingtonhall.co.uk)

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**For Help and Friendly Advice  
Contact**

Jenny Adam 01244 330090





← Spotted 21st April: Several anonymous gnomes around the village with face masks. This pair in the churchyard had a sign saying: 'Gnome Help - keep helping from afar!'

We expected the grass to be growing long - but a mysterious mower has been at work!

(Thank you)



"Millions long for immortality who don't know what to do with themselves on a rainy Sunday afternoon." (*Susan Ertz*)

The Foodbank is still operating and needs your contributions now more than ever, but of course the collection point in church is closed as the church building is closed.

As usual there are still collection points available in all the big supermarkets:

Sainsbury's, Waitrose, Asda, Morrisons, Tesco

- they have collection boxes . Also the Royal Mail sorting office on Station Road has a box. Or people can take items directly to the Foodbank ...the address and directions are on their website: <https://westcheshire.foodbank.org.uk> .

And finally people can make a money donation - regular or one-off - and again details are on their website. They will be happy with anything non-perishable but UHT juice is always most welcome and preferably not dried pasta. Thank you for your help.



*Chris Alderton*