

RG31

Autumn 2020

The Parish Magazine of
Tilehurst St Catherine
& Calcot St Birinus



From the editor



Hello! Welcome to this 'Autumn' edition of RG31. As you may know, our previous edition was 'Summer' in July. We had initially planned that the summer edition would be available online only as had the April edition, which had almost been ready to distribute when lockdown came in and we were unable to distribute it.

After we had published the summer edition online we decided that it would be safe to print a limited number and post a copy to all our subscribers, so I reduced the number of pages in the magazine so that it could be posted as a 'normal' letter rather than the more expensive 'large letter'.

In the event a number of people offered to deliver the magazines and it was only necessary to post a few.

I did print a dozen extra copies and left them at St Catherine's, because I know that a number of people who hadn't subscribed used to buy a copy each month.

The last edition was full of 'Good News' stories of how people had been able to use 'lockdown' and with that now easing we have focused on the 'New Normal' for this edition.

We do not think that it will be feasible to return to our 'old' print run, with a large number of church members distributing copies of the ten issues that had been the norm for as long as I can remember.

Instead the way forward may be a reduced number of issues, say four seasonal editions delivered by a small team or posted out.

The events that we used to list in a monthly magazine will no longer be possible on a quarterly basis, so instead we will rely on our Website, Facebook page and the weekly emailed notices (to receive a copy just email and ask me).

We plan to make the next edition 'Winter 2020' with details of all our Christmas events, but just what a 'new normal' Christmas schedule will look like is not yet known.

How and where on 25th December, as a church family and indeed at home with our friends and relations, we celebrate God's great gift of his son remains to be seen!

In the meantime we have the church APCM (Annual Parochial Church Meeting) on Sunday 11th October. The reports and accounts for that meeting were all distributed back at the beginning of March in anticipation of the meeting that had been arranged for 29th March but which in the event obviously could not take place. You can now find the reports and accounts on the St Catherine's website:

www.stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk

Tony Bartlett



Rev Phil Price

Reflections on the 'Monmouth' phase of lockdown

I've been doing a bit of family history research during lockdown and both sides of my family have strong links with the town of Monmouth. Monmouth is a small town on the border between England and Wales and over the centuries there has been much debate about whether it was an English or a Welsh Town. From the 16th to the 20th century it was sometimes considered administratively a part of England and sometimes a part of Wales.

As I am writing this we are in, what I call the 'Monmouth' phase of lockdown. In some ways we are in lockdown, we still need to social distance, certain groups are advised to remain at home and sports events are taking place behind closed doors. But in other ways we are in the post lockdown world, restaurants are open, we can now see our families and people are being encouraged back to work.

It is a difficult time to navigate both as individuals and as a Church. As a Church, we exist to worship together and to serve the wider community. That is why we have reopened the café (10.30-1.30 on Thursdays & Fridays) and have resumed Sunday services in Church (10.00 am on Sundays). But we are also called to care for each other, which means looking after the safety of the people that make up our community. So, we follow national guidelines, we wear facemasks and we observe social distancing. It is a very fine balancing act.

The content of this magazine reflects this weird in-between place that we find ourselves in:

- Some of our congregation will be thinking about the 'New Normal' as they share aspects of their lives which have changed during lockdown (see Page 5 onwards).
- We'll be looking back on the success of our online offerings during lockdown on Pages 18 and 19.
- We'll be taking stock of the financial impact of lockdown on Page 15.

I don't have any great wisdom to impart regarding the complexities of easing lockdown. But I will say this; as followers of Jesus, finding ourselves caught between two places shouldn't be new territory for us. Our faith calls us to be citizens of heaven, living on Earth. As the great hymn says:

*When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
And lead me home, what joy shall fill my heart
Then I shall bow with humble adoration
And then proclaim, my God, how great Thou art.*

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

It took over 500 years of to-ing and fro-ing before we could all agree that Monmouth was in Wales. Hopefully this phase of being both in and out of lockdown will not last that long. But, no matter how long the status of lockdown remains unclear, we will always be 'in Monmouth' to an extent. We all have one foot in Heaven and one foot on

Earth. That knowledge should mean that come what may with the end of lockdown, we can be secure in Gods love and care for us.

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God. Ephesians 2:19

Phil

Use your talents

'DO NOT NEGLECT THE GIFT YOU HAVE.' 1 TIMOTHY 4:14 RSV



Luigi Tarisio was born in Italy in 1796. A collector of violins, he took great pride in scouting out rare finds, and purchasing only instruments of the finest quality. No one really knew about Tarisio's passion, however, until after he died.

It was while his estate was being appraised that some 246 valuable violins were discovered in his attic! One of the most expensive, hidden in the drawer of an old dresser, was a Stradivarius he'd purchased from someone who had also bought it solely as a collector's item.

Commenting on the matter, Dr W. Y. Fullerton, the gifted Baptist preacher, noted that in preserving the instrument Tarisio 'had robbed the world of all that music'. And others before him had done the same. In fact, by the time the greatest Stradivarius in his collection was finally played, 147 years had elapsed!

One psychologist said, 'Don't die with your music still inside you. Don't get to the end of your life and say, "What if my whole life has been wrong?"' God gave you gifts and He expects you to use them. If you wait until you can do it perfectly, you'll never do it at all.

Jesus said: 'You are the world's seasoning, to make it tolerable. If you lose your flavour, what Will happen to the world? And you yourselves will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless. You are the world's light - a city on a hill, glowing in the night for all to see' (Matthew 5:13-14 TLB).

Understand this: God will hold you accountable for discovering your talents, developing them to the fullest, and using them to glorify Him and bless others.

This thought is taken from 'The Word for Today', Daily Bible reading notes produced quarterly by UCB (United Christian Broadcasters Ltd) PO Box 255, Stoke on Trent, ST4 8YY. If you would like to receive these free (although UCB do welcome donations) notes or those aimed at Secondary School age, call UCB on 01782 911 000

Mothers' Union Prayer Chain - Prayer in Emergencies

A call to one of the following numbers will start a chain of prayer straight away

Hilary Smee ☎ 0118 941 2895

Evelyn Bartlett ☎ 0118 967 8659

Jo Day ☎ 0118 942 1481

Lorraine Roberts ☎ 0118 942 6189

Shirley Horsnell 📞 07872 315 506

Lockdown revelations

We asked a few folks to tell us about their 'New Normal', what has been positive and what has been negative. Changes permanent or temporary and challenges.

Anna Jukes



What new normal has been a positive change?

I get to spend more time with the girls (and more sleep!), they used to be asleep when I left early in the morning to catch the train to work in the City.

I don't miss the commute or the mad dash back to pick them up on time before having to log in after I'd put them to bed.

What new normal has been a negative change?

I do also miss going to the office, chatting to work colleagues in person rather than via zoom (zoom also knackers the phone battery!)

Our team was always bringing in homemade cakes and one team-mate

used to bring in his latest experiment for bao-bun fillings.

Working at home means I'm much more sedentary, no 30 minutes walking on the commute or walking round the office, everything is much closer to hand at home!

Also the gym was at the office 😞

What do you think has changed permanently?

Everyone being together in the office everyday won't happen again for a very long time.

What do you think has changed temporarily?

I've been able to work from home for 5.5 months straight which won't continue indefinitely, we're being encouraged to travel to the office, so soon I expect to work a different mix of days at home and in the office, instead of my old one day working at home, perhaps a pattern of one week at home one at the office.

What is the greatest challenge you are facing now?

The biggest challenge is to determine when is the right time to start commuting and the likely exposure to more people in a single journey than I've probably encountered in the last 5.5 months working from home!

Do people even social distance on the tube?! I have to weigh up the risk to my immediate family for their health being in vulnerable groups and also as they help with childcare during my working week.

More Lockdown revelations

Daisy Harrison



I liked home schooling because I could do the work at my own pace and didn't have to wait for anyone. Also, if you don't understand something you can watch YouTube videos of how to do it.

Being able to have lunch as a family was nice and we could eat all our favourite meals (such as Quesadilla) rather than school dinners where there isn't always something I like.

I missed all my friends and did my best to meet up with them socially distanced during the summer holidays.

When going back to school I was quite worried because we had been given minimal explanations as to what was going to happen, but I walked with my friends and when we got there it was all very organised.

Each year group is in a bubble and they also have their own building or part of a building. This means that all my lessons are in the science classrooms and music classrooms. I don't mind them being close together, but the music classes have no windows and get really hot which is annoying.

Every year group also has its own route to PE and the canteen, as well as different places for them to go at break and lunch times. My school time is now from 9:30-3:40 meaning that I can do a flute warm-up on zoom before I start school on Mondays and Fridays and have more of a lie in than I could before on the other days.

I still had my music lessons on zoom during quarantine and I did one band rehearsal for each band I am in and will now have lessons face to face and band rehearsals mainly on zoom but once every few weeks, face to face.

(Continued on page 7)



A socially distanced rehearsal

Lockdown revelations (continued)

(Continued from page 6)

I had my first band rehearsal face to face yesterday and it was strange because we were all sitting two metres apart and had to have our temperatures taken before we could play anything. It was nice to play with people in real life, though.

Overall lockdown was quite strange, and I am glad things are a bit more normal now.

Joseph Harrison



I found home schooling a bit boring because I ran out of work at about 10 O'clock in the morning. This did mean that I got to learn guitar from YouTube, and I got to practise my French horn more and I was having lessons through zoom.

I went back to school just over a week ago. We now have certain places in school where our year can go.

Nearly all my lessons are in the same few rooms.

If we didn't have lockdown, I probably wouldn't have learnt guitar but an annoying thing about lockdown was that I had to spend a lot of time with my sister.

Stephen Taylor-Clague



What new normal has been a positive change?

Employers can now see that their staff can be trusted to work effectively from home. Or at least the vast majority. This is really encouraging for me as my last job ended when my new boss demanded that I be in the office 5 days a week. I suspect that was more of an excuse to get rid of me. Around 75% of my office colleagues have since left...virtually all voluntarily.

What new normal has been a negative change?

For many people working from home, this has been really challenging, particularly for their mental health. Spending some time in the work environment can be transformative.

(Continued on page 8)

Lockdown revelations (continued)

(Continued from page 7)

What do you think has changed permanently?

A mix of working at home and in the office.

What do you think has changed temporarily?

Staycations! (Although we always holiday in the UK).

What is the greatest challenge you are facing now?

I currently work part time but need to be fully employed. So my challenge is to find more paid work. Maybe my greatest challenge is having the faith that He has a perfect plan to meet our needs.

Heck. Where is the humour?? Maybe these...

Those two photos - my corporate look and one taken a few weeks ago with five months of unchecked hair growth. Had to cut it for an interview but I do miss it. Bless you.

Roy Walklate



What new normal has been a positive change?

I cannot think of anything positive to new normal.

What new normal has been a negative change?

Limited face to face contact with friends and family.

What do you think has changed permanently?

More likely to carry on with more online shopping.

What do you think has changed temporarily?

This is hard to answer not knowing how long this situation will carry on for I pray we get a vaccine soon.

What is the greatest challenge you are facing now?

My greatest challenge is to try and keep clear of the virus for my own and other peoples sake.

Mike Heather



What new normal has been a positive change

Time with my wife. until lockdown there was hardly a day or week that something wasn't happening on, either during the day or at night. now the calendar is pristine

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

What new normal has been a negative change

Two things church as we know it, despite online, no male voice choir rehearsals or concerts, plus face masks. As someone who wears hearing aids many's the time when I have removed my mask only to find it has knocked one or both aids from my ears.

What do you think has changed permanently

A realisation how fragile life is and that we should enjoy every day as if it is our last.

What do you think has changed temporarily

Good manners

What is the greatest challenge you are facing now?

Not being able to get to see my brother because he has been told to self isolate even into the foreseeable future.

Katrina Yates



How has lockdown impacted on me?

My immediate response to this question is to say that it has provided me with opportunity and time.

I have never had a time in my life when I haven't HAD to be somewhere at a

particular time. Work has been full-on, full time. Working in education has always meant prescriptive timetables and very squashed weekends. Now, I quite like structure and have very few issues with school timetables and holidays, but this Lockdown has opened up opportunities in ways impossible to imagine beforehand.

I was furloughed (who knew what that word really meant before February 2020?) back in March which was then extended to the end of August. Initially, it was a shock, turning to excitement and enthusiasm...with a bit of boredom and lack of direction creeping in now and then.

But this is where Time has been different. Richard and I were able to spend some time "discovering" our garden...Since we moved into our home we simply haven't had the time to do much more than mow the lawn. But during lockdown, the ivy has been pulled up by the ton and replaced with a few colourful plants. Such a difference!

We have also enjoyed a tomato harvest...8 tomatoes and counting; we are usually away when they need watering and feeding and have never been successful before.

We have been on some (socially distanced) walks and have been able to take our time and have noticed what we were passing – the flowers, the peace, the lack of aeroplane traffic, the dog walkers...

I have also used the time to communicate more with friends and family. I often write letters – but I have also found that postcards are just as well

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

received; it has been an effective way of letting people know that they are important, being thought of and are perhaps not as isolated as they have thought themselves to be.

My diary/journal has also captured the flavour of these unusual conditions, too and again, has given me time to think; this is not always a comfortable thing for me to do – but at least the opportunity has been there!

Of course, the spice cupboard has never been so tidy and the tins of vegetables etc look neat – rather than just shoved on to the shelves. I have (almost) finished a rag doll I started about 3 years ago, I have re-painted a bedroom, upcycled a towel rack, completed jigsaws, read LOADS and have sorted out random books and clothes.

We are now waiting for the charity shops to be able to accept the donations. I also found an excellent, free on-line resource full of courses that were most enjoyable. Richard (my husband) and I used his lunch hour to complete one on the Life and times of Richard III.

This was a time of plague, death and famine, shortage of workforce, a public uprising and a few battles, too. I did struggle with there being so many Henrys and Richards though!

I also learnt about art in Venice, the golden age of art in the Netherlands and so many fascinating aspects to the Brighton Pavilion.

www.futurelearn.com was one of those sites and I would certainly recommend it.

Some of the challenges of these conditions include not being able to visit or hold my aunt's hand since she was moved into a care home back in March. Neither have we been able to see Richard's mum until very recently.

Loneliness has presented itself as a key challenge as days alone feel longer than when one is able to interact with people; time certainly presents itself differently to them and others in the same situation. Furthermore, we have not been able to share fully in the excitement of our son Joseph and his wife Alice who are having a baby – due in December.

Not every day has been filled with positivity but friends have been there and coffee, cake, concerns and celebrations have been shared – in a more relaxed way than if I/we had to rush off to 'Do Stuff'.

But the key point in all of this for me is that I am thankful for this God-given time, along with the opportunities it has provided; the opportunities to look at my 'doing' with fresh eyes and to notice what God is doing...and to join in with that.

Litter Virus

A face mask is a helpful thing –

It traps those nasty germs!

An extra message I must bring

In these poetic terms:

When you've finished with your mask

A bin is simply found

So drop it in – an easy task!

Don't leave it on the ground!

By Nigel Beeton

AGM 9th September

Moirá welcomed 15 members to our AGM held in church. It was very different with masks and social distancing, but good to see friends there and we prayed for all our members particularly those in difficult circumstances.

Last year's minutes were read and signed and the committee thanked for their dedication through the year. Two members are standing down – Shirley Horsnell and Maureen Norman, so the remaining members are Moira Bristow, Stephanie Walklate (Sec.), Hilary Smee (Treasurer), Rita Barrett, Maureen Ward, Anita Holbeche and Jean Almond. At the end of the meeting each committee member was presented with flowers in appreciation of their service.

Before the lockdown 3 new members were enrolled – Rev. Gill Rowell, Carol Charles and Ella Canning, and 2 members were lost including Val Brunson who passed away after a long struggle with ill health, so current membership stands at 46.

Up until March we enjoyed normal activities of Special Services - Anniversary and Memorial, and Jane's popular Christmas Flower Demonstration, all with visitors joining us.

After our traditional Readings and Carols evening we beat the January blues with a Beetle Drive. Then we were amused by the experiences of a Church Army wife and were moved by the work and need for Reading Family Aid. Just before lockdown we heard all about Rev. Gill's Pilgrimage to Ethiopia.

Since then the committee, socially distanced, decided to suspend gatherings until everyone was comfortable with restrictions being relaxed.

We are grateful to Hilary for looking after our finances and that she was able to send £50 from funds in response to the MU Covid Emergency Appeal. She reminded us that the toiletry bags made and assembled by members are sent to the Duchess of Kent Hospice, as well as the Royal Berkshire Hospital. Some members have also made and sent comfort bands for the round the ears facemasks.

MU members take part in all aspects of church life looking forward to normality while prayerfully coping with the present.

Sheila Bryant

Although we have been unable to meet during lockdown, be assured of our prayers and please get in contact if we can be of support in anyway.

It was good to see some of you at our AGM and it was hoped that we would be able to resume our evening meetings, but unfortunately the new guidelines do not make this possible. As soon as we have details of when we can meet together again, we will be in touch.

Hilary Smee

A Prayer of encouragement

We know that you our God keep faith with us; taking on our burdens, giving us strength to overcome our weaknesses and prepared always to welcome us with open arms. We ask you to help us to listen for your voice and have the faith to follow the path you have chosen for each of us. Amen

Taken from the Mothers Union newsletter.

Dear Tilehurst Christian Aid Group

We just wanted to say a huge 'thank you' for taking part in Christian Aid Week 2020. It was certainly a Christian Aid Week like no other!

We are so proud of how you put on your creative thinking hats, stepped up to the challenge and fundraised so innovatively during the coronavirus pandemic. We had quizzes with Rowan Williams, vicars shaving their heads, virtual concerts, supporters walking marathons and a sponsored silence to name just a few!

The current total for CAW2020 and the Coronavirus Appeal combined, currently stands at an amazing £4.3 million! This figure has completely smashed our targets and expectations and this is down to you, our faithful supporters.

Our partners who are working in vulnerable communities are already benefitting from your generous donations and are responding to the

vital need of hygiene stations, sanitation kits and isolation hospital beds as they continue to fight the Coronavirus.

Thank you for your continued support, Christian Aid couldn't continue to deliver vital work across the globe without you. Blessings, Thank you again,

Tim Jessop, Central Supporter
Engagement Coordinator



Thank you to everyone at Tilehurst Christian Aid group for taking part in Christian Aid Week 2020. We raised an incredible £2,019.00! Donations like ours have helped women and girls living in displacement camps access essential dignity kits.

Northern Shan, Myanmar

The Wilderness Experience



Many of us will have experienced 'The Wilderness'. Our lives with God suddenly plummet from the elation of the mountain top to the despair of the deepest ravine.

A 'wilderness experience' is usually thought of as a tough, unpleasant time in which we endure discomfort and trials. The pleasant things of life are

unable to be enjoyed, they may disappear altogether and we feel devoid of encouragement. It can involve any type of hardship. Having a 'wilderness experience' can be a time of extreme testing.

We may struggle simply to survive from day to day. Burdens will weigh heavy and we long for some relief. We have to be patient and try to find God's peace amongst the pain. Our faith will be tested. The up side is that God will meet us in the wilderness where He can help us if we ask Him.

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

There are several biblical examples of people enduring a “wilderness experience”. including the people of Israel, Elijah, Paul and Job. Jesus too of course was sent out into the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil.

This year 2020, a viral pandemic is sweeping the world. Covid 19. A perfect storm to aggravate and decimate our civilisation as we know it. Along with all manner of groups and institutions the churches are also witnessing the wilderness.

At St Catherine's we were nearing the mountain top. The lonely and isolated were enjoying our hospitality via Cafe Siena, Friday Friends and Tuesday get Together, new shoots, had just started growing. We felt encouraged and had future plans. Overnight though, with no hospitality possible there could be no community.

Everything came to an abrupt halt. We could not meet. Everyone kept their distance. Shutdown. We all hurtled down to the bottom of the valley. The isolated totally isolated. My personal wilderness experience is showing me what it is like to walk in those shoes.

People have been replaced by screens as a means of keeping in contact but nothing can replace human interaction. Then... slowly we saw a glimmer of respite, picked ourselves off the valley floor and started climbing again by meeting cautiously...

Currently, as writing however, despite this hesitant, positive move, it appears we are once again descending with further restrictions on our freedom. We don't know how long this wilderness will go on for but we do know that God does and is in control.

This Covid 'perfect storm' may well be a wake up call to get our lives and world in order. I hope and pray we can do that and once again reach the mountain top.
It's much lighter up there.

2 Corinthians 4:7-10

“We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body”

Lorraine Roberts

Understanding the Bible

As we acknowledge Bible Sunday on 25th October, it's a good opportunity to ask the question: why should I read the Bible?

The Bible is the world's best-selling book of all time. However, it isn't one book, but a library of 66 books, composed by some 44 writers over a period of 1500 years in a range of literature including history, poetry,

prophecy, letters and apocalyptic (end times). Despite having a number of different writers, the Bible claims one author: God himself!

This is the basis of the unity of its message and authoritative claim to be the primary way by which God speaks to us: 'All Scripture is God-breathed and is

(Continued on page 14)

Operation Christmas Child 2020

Due to COVID 19 the PCC have decided that this year St Catherine's church will not be taking part in Operation Christmas Child. However, it is still possible to pack a shoebox online. If you have online access it is an easy thing to do. There are four simple stages as follows:-

1. Go to SHOEBOXONLINE.ORG.UK
2. Choose whether you want the shoe box to be for a girl or a boy, and in which age range (2-4, 5-9 or 10-14)
3. Add toys to your shoe box
4. Personalise your box, add a photo and pay

The cost for each online shoe box is £20, and this includes the £5 for help with transport

All shoe boxes will include the following basic hygiene and school supply items that are luxuries for many children in need: Colouring book, notepad, pencil case, stationery set, colouring pencils, face cloth, soap, toothbrush and hairbrush.

- You get to choose 2 large toys like a skipping rope, ball, soft toy
- Then 2 small toys such as a toy car, a slinky, musical instrument
- Then 3 accessories such as hat, gloves, sun glasses, calculator
- If you like you can also send a message and a photo in the box

I have already packed my shoeboxes and I didn't have to leave my house. Have a go and see for yourself.

Joanne Freeman

(Continued from page 13)


useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work' (2 Timothy 3:16).

The Bible is inspired ('the word of God in the words of men') and presents itself as a manual for life, equipping us to live for God in every aspect of our lives.


We also have the promise of the Holy Spirit to guide us in applying the words to our lives: 'the Spirit will guide you into all truth' (John 16:13).

However, the Bible could also be described as a love letter from God, as He uses it to deepen our relationship with him. Christians follow a person not a book, and the Scriptures are intended to help us to know Jesus better.

Canon Paul Hardingham



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Financial surprises in 2020

The beginning of 2020 started off as normal. With the Christmas and New Year holidays over the various church and community groups returned to their normal meetings in church and the hall. The church's regular income continued at the same rate as of the end of 2019.

Outstanding invoices were chased and then paid, the mission giving for the final half of 2019 were paid out and the final invoices for the hall kitchen refurbishment were settled. Life returned to its normal pattern despite the fact that we were becoming aware of Covid 19.

Then on Tuesday, 17th March 2020 things changed, events at church were cancelled, events held in the hall were cancelled. With no services in church, the church's income was reduced to parish giving scheme and standing orders – approximately £3,500 a month.

With nothing happening in the hall, the only rent was for the first quarter – our hall hirers were very good and this income was paid during April, which was much appreciate; so many thanks to all of them.

Even when the church and centre are not being used there are still monthly and quarterly expenses to be paid such as the Parish Share, insurance, annual contracts, wages and the various utilities – approximately £6,000 a month and a further £600 a quarter.

When I did the figures at the end of March there was already a loss for the year of over £3,000 and I was predicting that by the end of the year all the bills

would get paid but there would be no money left in the bank.

In April Gill shared the church's financial problems with the church community – the response was very humbling.

Some people gave one-off extra payments, others increased their current monthly donations, joined the parish giving scheme, started standing orders, or sent me cheques to cover the money that they would have placed in the plate if there had been services in church.

Plus, church wardens added a 'Just Giving' button to the church's website:

<https://justgiving.com/pcctilehurst>

The monthly income is now nearer to £5,000. Preschool and Afterschool club are able to use the hall, so there is now some income from hall hire.

We are able to use the Government's Job Retentions Scheme to help us fund the wages of our two paid staff and we have found ways to reduce some of our expenses which has helped to reduce our spending levels.

At the end of August, due to people's generosity throughout the year, the loss had only increased to £3,500 which is very good news; however, there will still be a larger deficit at the end of the year.

Thank you so much to everyone who has contributed to the church funds this year in these challenging and strange times.

Joanne Freeman, Treasurer.



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Tilehurst Triangle WI



Tilehurst Triangle WI was just taking tiny steps to meeting in person again before the rules all changed again! With Café Siena open, a small group met for Cuppa and a Chat, sitting outside enjoying a face to face distance chat and some refreshments in the autumn sunshine. The walking group also enjoyed their first walk, staying local with a walk from Pangbourne and committee met in person, instead of Zoom, in a garden.

Members continue to share what they have been doing in the brilliant newsletter that our joint president, Di Felton, produces. In addition to WI news and members contributions, we have a new section on 'Getting to Know You' in which different members write a short autobiography. Our members certainly have interesting and varied backgrounds.



Denman (W.I.) College

Sadly one casualty of the current pandemic is Denman College, the WI's own college at Marcham near Witney which is now closed forever. We enjoyed a visit there last year and had another planned. A listed building in beautiful grounds it is costly to maintain and was only just financially viable but with the pandemic and no income from the many courses, it will not reopen.

However, on a brighter note, Denman are now running excellent Denman at Home online courses which are open to anyone. You do not need to be a WI member or even a lady to watch!

There are courses on a huge variety of subjects. I recently did a course on Photography Tips and Techniques and others have enjoyed talks on The Suffragettes and The Thames from Vauxhall to Westminster.

The cost is just £5 for an hour's talk and we recommend that you try one. The courses can be found at:

<https://www.denman.org.uk>

Keep safe and well.

Ros Somerville, Tilehurst Triangle WI



Looks like the sexton went to Spain after all, and is still in quarantine.

Corona virus hit parade

Since 23rd March we have collectively spent 132,700 minutes (just over 92 days) watching videos on the St Catherine's Facebook page (Facebook helpfully adds up all of the time that anyone anywhere in the world has spent watching our videos). With well over 150 videos on our Facebook page and website we've certainly produced a lot of content for people to enjoy at home – but what have been the most popular? Here are our top 5 lockdown videos based on the number of people who viewed them.

At Number 5 we have the first of our entries from Holy Week:

#5 - Easter Sunday Dawn Chorus spiritual communion (12th April)

Gill started Easter Sunday with a service of Spiritual communion live from the vicarage garden. 26 people were up in time to view it live and it has had a total of 453 views so far.



We produced a number of special videos for Holy week, but this was a particularly special service.

Number 4 takes us all the way back to March:

#4 - Morning Prayer 23rd March

Gill led us through Morning Prayer and a reflection for the Church of England 'Live lent' resource. We had 26 'live' viewers and a total of 461 'views'.

The daily Morning Prayer videos have created a 'virtual community' with a number of people watching and interacting every day (during the week).



Number 3 is our most recent entry in the Hit Parade:

#3 - Messy Church (1st August)

Stuart and Val led us through a Messy Church service that included music, prayer and stories. This time the craft was edible. 17 people watched the video live, and it has had 466 views.

We have produced a monthly Messy Church video throughout lockdown offering something specifically for families.

At Number 2 is another family themed service:

#2 - Good Friday Family Service (10th April)

Stuart, Val and Tony brought us Stories, crafts and songs as we marked Good Friday with activities for the whole family. 30 people watched the video as it went out and a total of 471 people 'viewed' it.

This is the second of the three Holy Week videos that feature in the Hit parade showing how valuable online video was for celebrating Easter during a global pandemic.

This means that our lockdown hit Parade number one video is:

#1 - Psalm Sunday Live Streamed Sunday service (5th April)

Gill led us through the service with Tony leading our musical worship and Phil preaching. 42 people watched the service 'live' and a total of 570 people have now viewed the video.



We are 7 day a week Christians, but Sunday is a special day that we particularly set aside for worship, which is why it is fitting that our most watched video on Facebook is a

main Sunday service. This shows that although we dispersed and locked down, we were still the same community that met together regularly on a Sunday before 23rd March.

N.B: Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the statistics quoted in this article however Facebook offers a very wide range of metrics with subtle differences which are constantly changing, making it difficult to verify all statistics.

Phil Price



We sponsor a child

I was delighted to receive this letter from Ashini today. She calls us her "Beloved Catherine". It is amazing to think that the money we sent for her birthday could buy all those things and she is clearly pleased with them. If you would like know more about how to join with us in sponsoring Ashini, please contact me. Hilary Smee



How have you been? What's is new from your end? I'm doing well.. From the monetary gift you sent me I received, a bed sheet, underwear, 4 t-shirts, 2 skirts, 1 frock, soap, 1 bottle of cologne, 1 cream, a wrist watch, hair clips, bangles. Thank you very much for all that. How is the situation with regard to COVID 19, in your country? In my country, virus is still there. Our schools are not opened yet. We are staying indoors and being careful of the virus. I'm so happy that I have got a good friend like you. I'm waiting to know more about you and your country. I will be sitting for grade 5 scholarship exam this year. Please do convey my loving regards to your family. I will be waiting for another letter from you. God bless you. Your beloved Nimshi

Tuesday get Together (TgT), we came...and we went

It was just a year ago in September 2019 that we started TgT because we wanted to provide a space for our local neighbours to come and meet and chat. Then as we all know a pandemic landed on the world and sadly we had to suddenly close our church in March.

Many of us have spent the last five months feeling lonely and isolated, so when the lockdown slowly eased we were excited at the opportunity to welcome our friends back again.

The church was rearranged and all Covid precautions adhered to. On 1st September, we the TgT team donned our masks and somewhat nervously awaited our friends. On arrival they gave their contact details and had temperatures taken.

A strange experience for us, masked with steamed up glasses, zapping foreheads, wearing gloves and anti baccing everything in sight.

Even though seats were spaced apart it was clear to us just how much people had missed each other.



Much to our dismay we only did this again once, as new government guidance restricted social groups to six. Once again we had to stop meeting in Café Siena.

(Continued on page 21)

Thank you, Dr Luke!

'Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, bless the bed that I lie on' - my grandma taught me that one. At least it meant I never forgot the names of the writers of the four Gospels. Luke, the writer of the third of them, has his feast day on the 18th October.

He was, we learn from the letters of St Paul, a 'physician' - an educated man and probably the only one of the writers of the New Testament who was not a Jew. In modern terms, he was Turkish. Paul took him as one of his missionary team on a long journey around the Middle East, and they clearly became close friends. Under house arrest later in his life Paul could write, 'only Luke is with me'.

However, it is his Gospel which has established him as a major figure in the history of the Christian Church. Mark's Gospel may have more drama, Matthew's more prophetic background and John's a more profound sense of the mystery of the divine, but Luke offers us a Jesus who is utterly and believably real. This man turned no one away, reserved his harshest words for hypocrites and religious grandees, cared for the marginalised, the poor, the persecuted, the handicapped and the

sinful. His Gospel is full of people we can recognise - indeed, in whom we can often recognise ourselves.

He was also a masterly storyteller. Try, for instance, the story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). Read it (this time) not as a sacred text but as a brilliant piece of story-telling: subtle repetitions ('your son, this brother of yours'), believable characters, drama and profound emotion. There is the older brother, so cynical about his sibling's alleged reformation, the 'prodigal' himself, so hesitant about throwing himself on his father's mercy after the folly of his earlier behaviour, and there is the father, of course, abandoning the dignity of his role in the family and actually running to welcome his wretched son's return.

There are more women in Luke's Gospel than in any of the others, but also more poor people, more lepers, more 'sinners' and tax-collectors, more 'outsiders' who are shown to be 'inside' the love of Christ. This, for many of us, is the great Gospel of inclusion and compassion. Here is a Jesus for the whole world and for every one of us. Thank you, Dr Luke!

By David Winter

(Continued from page 20)

So to our friends Ann, Maureen, Shirley, Barbara, Janet, Doreen, Ruth, Bob, Tony, Cath, Mary, Andrea, Derek and all who didn't make it back during those two weeks, we look forward to re opening for the third time, sometime in the not too distant future.

At this time the café is still open on Thursdays and Fridays for some good food and convivial company.

Until we can meet again may God keep us safe.

Lorraine, Viv, Sheila and Chris - TgT

From the 'Parish Pump'

Report: The toll of lockdown on low-income families

Coronavirus has left low-income families struggling with a significant deterioration in living standards and high stress levels. So warns a new report from Child Poverty Action Group and the Church of England.

The report, *Poverty in the pandemic: The impact of Coronavirus on low-income families and children*, is based on a survey of families with children who are eligible for free school meals.

It found around 8 in 10 respondents reported being in a worse financial position than before the pandemic, and half were much worse off because their income had fallen while costs have risen.

Nearly 9 in 10 respondents reported spending substantially more than before on food, electricity, and other essentials – usually because they have been at home much more. Many families also said that the cost of food had gone up significantly during the early part of lockdown.

The Bishop of Durham, Paul Butler, who speaks for the Church of England on matters relating to children and families, said: "In these unprecedented times, we all need to ask ourselves urgently how we can help our neighbour. It is also imperative that the Government does all that it can to protect families and children."

Alison Garnham, Chief Executive of Child Poverty Action Group, said: "Low-income parents have been living under a cloud of anxiety in lockdown - trying to

find money for family basics as their costs have been rising. That's taken a very heavy toll."

Churches enjoy Zooming

Most churches who used digital channels during lockdown, in order to keep in touch with their congregations, found that their favourite platform was Zoom.

A recent survey by Ecclesiastical found that Zoom was used by 78 per cent; Skype by 12 per cent, and other platforms, including WhatsApp, by 8 per cent.

Nearly one third of churches who used digital channels have also reported an increased attendance at their virtual services.

That has led to some 38 per cent of churches saying that they would continue to use digital channels, even now that churches are physically open again.

31st October:- All Hallows Eve or Holy Evening

Modern Halloween celebrations have their roots with the Celtic peoples of pre-Christian times.

In those long-ago days, on the last night of October, the Celts celebrated the Festival of Samhain, or 'Summer's End'. The priests, or Druids, performed ceremonies to thank and honour the sun. For there was a very dark side to all this: Samhain also signalled the onset of winter, a time when it was feared that unfriendly ghosts, nature-spirits, and

(Continued on page 23)

(Continued from page 22)

witches roamed the earth, creating mischief. So the Druid priests lit great bonfires and performed magic rites to ward off or appease these dark supernatural powers.

Then the Romans arrived, and brought their Harvest Festival which honoured the Goddess Pomona with gifts of apples and nuts. The two festivals slowly merged.

When Christianity arrived still later, it began to replace the Roman and Druid religions. 1st November - All Saints' Day - was dedicated to all Christian Martyrs and Saints who had died. It was called 'All Hallows' Day'. The evening before

became an evening of prayer and preparation and was called 'All Hallows' Eve', The Holy Evening, later shortened to 'Halloween'.

For many centuries, however, fear of the supernatural remained strong. Today, Christians have learned to turn to prayer instead of charms to overcome the powers of darkness. And the deeper, true meaning of All Hallows' Eve, should not be forgotten.

As Christians, we all draw closer to Christ when we remember and give thanks for our loved ones and for others who have gone before us through the gates of death.

THE FOODBANK

WAYS YOU CAN HELP IN 2020



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NEEDED



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COLLECTING

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THEY DO A
GREAT JOB AT
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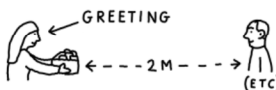


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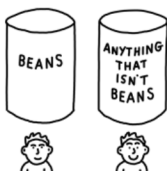
MIGHT
HAVE
TO BE
ONLINE
NOW



GREETING

VOLUNTEER
(REALLY IMPORTANT AS
MANY VOLUNTEERS OVER 65
AND NOW SELF-ISOLATING)

WHY IS THE
NEED FOR
FOODBANKS
INCREASING?



[BUT
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LOCALLY]



HAPPY
BIRTHDAY!

ASK PEOPLE FOR
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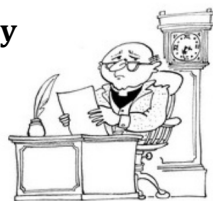


ASK AWKWARD
QUESTIONS

CartoonChurch.com

Beware what lurks in the church vestry

The Rectory,
St James the Least



My dear Nephew Darren

I am unsurprised that the cleaning lady took exception to you dismantling your motorbike in the church vestry. Clergy vestries are the final repositories of rotting hymn books, ancient cassocks with a certain aroma, buckets with holes in, which are kept “just in case” and dead animals in various states of decomposition; but they are no place for bike chains, disc brakes and inner tubes.

I will concede that vestries seem to attract all those objects no one quite knows what to do with, but which parishioners can’t bear to throw away. Flower arrangers creep into my vestry, looking for space for boxes of twine. Decorators arrive with cribs and Easter gardens they are hoping to store. And even the choirmaster occasionally sidles in, trying to slip some anthems past me. I repel them all with vigour, and a firm broom.

One thing I can’t keep out of the vestry are the portraits of all my predecessors, who stare down at me reproachfully. The most recent, in colour, stare smugly, knowing that I am still being compared to them, and falling short. Earlier incumbents, in black and white, look mildly reproachful, reminding me that they all held doctorates from Oxford. The hand-drawn portraits from pre-1870 are the worst – they all look as if they drank vinegar for breakfast and argued Pelagianism over lunch, just for fun. I am already rehearsing my own look of pained forgiveness for my leaving photo that will stare down on my own successor, and perpetually irritate him

It also seems to be a tradition that retiring clergy donate their robes for their successors, probably because it spares them a walk to the dustbin. So, a five-foot, 18 stone incumbent will leave a cassock for his six-foot, ten stone successor. There will also be a spare 1960s nylon surplice hanging on the back of the vestry door, to remind you that should you ever forget your own, then this is the horror you will be obliged to wear throughout Evensong.

Notices on the walls will tell you that marriage fees in the 1920s were seven shillings and sixpence, that Communion wine can be obtained from a shop that closed down a generation ago and there will be a copy of the prayer of thanksgiving to be used on the Relief of Mafeking.

My only advice is to remove your bike before it gets bundled up with the Scouts’ tents – and lost forever in the churchwarden’s shed.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

St Catherine's Gardening Club



What a strange summer this has been! One day the skies are dark and it pours all day, and the next is gloriously sunny but with fiercely strong winds. Some plants did well really early on, and then suffered in the prolonged drought, followed by strong winds and rain. But plants are designed to survive the vagaries of the weather, thanks be to God.

It seems to have been a good year overall for roses, and our roses in the church garden have been beautiful, and are now flowering for the second time.

Since we have returned after "lock down", we have been able to finish painting the metal shed. Our thanks go to Shirley, Richard Childs and Chris for making it look so much better.

We plan to plant a climbing rose close to the shed and some mesh and fan shaped trellis have been fixed to the shed to provide support.



Hazel's "pretty corner" behind Gill Howgego's bench has flourished under her tender care. The narrow strip along the fence side of the top car park is a work in progress as we clear it ready to lay a membrane underneath all the pieces of slabs and do some planting in between.

Hazel is now keeping the kerbs free of weeds with her special burner, much easier than grubbing them out, which takes ages and is hard work. Sheila Firth has continued to maintain a lovely

(Continued on page 26)

Your home is where you feel the most comfortable and the happiest. It's the place you know the best. Why would you move away from the place you love if you are faced with needing some extra care and support when you age? If you want to stay living comfortably at home, we can help you make that choice an informed one.



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(Continued from page 25)

variety of flowers in the buttress bed next to the top car park. Jo has finally cleared the buttress bed facing the lower car park and spread some soil improver and planted *Erigeron* at the front. We hope this pretty perennial will provide a cheery show and avoid the need for new bedding plants every year.

Once again, our incredibly kind neighbour, Darren, came to our aid. This time he cut all the hedges for us, while we cleared all the clippings away. Using his professional equipment, he did the whole perimeter and internal hedges on both sides, and even some of other shrubs around the garden! It did take quite a few of us to clear all the clippings and store them temporarily in a pile in the corner under the oak tree.

We have been filling our green bin every two weeks to gradually reduce the pile, but it will take a few more weeks before it is clear. Lorraine very kindly offered us the use of her green bin recently as she had plenty of space in it. Any similar offers would be much appreciated!

Shirley has started to refresh the “cross” buttress bed, so it will be good to see how it develops. Both Hazel and Shirley have worked very hard to weed the bed along under the hall windows, and continued with our plan to move the *Nerines* from the “cross” buttress bed to there. They should look beautiful up against the wall at the end of the hall.

The tree in the corner at the far end of the hall had responded vigorously to our pruning last year, and was threatening once again to spread over the roofs of the hall and our neighbour’s garage. Today we managed to restore it once more to a manageable height. Our decision last year to keep it to a height

which we could reach without the use of a ladder has proved to make the work this year a lot easier.

Almost every Saturday morning, Paddy can be heard mowing the lawns and keeping them looking good. We are so thankful for his faithful service.

Today the grass was covered with acorns and small twigs blown down by the gales. We are always discovering little oak tree saplings all over the place. Anyone want an oak tree?

Now a request: we could really do with some kind of soul giving our outside seating a bit of attention. The new wooden garden seats really need to be re-stained, as do all the benches. Do let us know if you feel you could help, maybe just agree to do one chair. The table also badly needs oiling. Any offers of help would be extremely welcome.

The blackberry season started a little early this year, and even after Darren’s hedge cutting there are still a few blackberries to be picked; a little reward for our labours!

As autumn approaches, we hope to be able to gradually bring all areas of the garden into good shape. Maybe we will need to prepare for next year’s Tilehurst Garden Festival! In these uncertain times we can only hope it may be possible.

Being “confined to barracks” for many of us has allowed us more time to spend loving and caring for our gardens. I think God created us all with a deep need to get back to the soil, enjoying the infinite beauty of all the living plants and creatures he has made. I find working in the garden relaxes, restores me and brings me joy. How about you?

Jo Day

(Continued on page 27)

Sitting uncomfortably?

Lockdown made me wonder: "WHY does 'evil' exist?" (Oh dear, again!) Could "evil" ever be used as training weights? Once, I envied chaps with easy childhoods - less "evil"! But spoiled lads were NOT very lucky in the end.

At work (remember?) we said: "Logic may use words. Words can be wobbly!" Have humans got "God-shaped holes" inside them? Yes, a truly helpful idea; but don't mention size or ask who could fit ... Many words we use, struggling to express big ideas, are like this - be very careful!

Sitting UNCOMFORTABLY? Is discomfort evil? Big exercise is good - but now scientists are discovering the surprising benefits of SMALLISH movements during relaxation, like when you're sitting at your computer.

Some primitive folk rested as often as we do, but with fewer bad health effects. They squatted or kneeled. NOT COMFY! This caused some movement. (Nice chairs were fairly recent - for commoners!)

Research suggests that smallish movements while relaxing can be AMAZINGLY good. Complicated! Google for ScienceDaily, plus "standing desks are so passé" (with quotes) for a sample.

"Why must I pray for things when God MUST KNOW I want them?" Once I tempted our little boy to start using Meccano. He said: "Daddee, Daddee!

Gimme the scoo-dwiver!" Later, he asked: "Daddy, YOU KNEW I'D WANT IT! Why did I have to ASK?"

Tools are a mixed blessing. They can be trouble, until wisdom and purpose begin.

Once Junior got interested, he grew focussed, careful, UNHURT - and he's craftier now than I'll ever be. I get tons of fuzzy pictures and ideas. Are some "mysteries" totally evil? "OH, PLEASE, PLEASE, give me lots of understanding ... WHEN I'M READY FOR IT!"

Today I suppose I must just do my best, and wear my facemask at times.

Phil French

Amazing Café Siena Statistics

Statisticians joke about how tricky their subject is. Several writers recently reported that a majority of people believe that their IQ is above average. Make your decisions cautiously, get others to help - but don't panic: optimism can be very helpful at times.

However, some writers suggest it's "obvious" that no majority could ever ALL be above average, in ANY survey! IQ's are rather complex, so I'm going to count legs instead. The other day, as one does, I carefully counted the legs of each person I met in the Cafe Siena.

EACH AND EVERY ONE was above the UK average!

Phil French

(Continued from page 26)

"There can be no other occupation like gardening in which, if you were to creep up behind someone at their work, you would find them smiling."

Mirabel Osler

Taking stock of our online services

During lockdown we relied heavily on the internet to help us 'be Church' at a time when we could not meet together physically. Whilst, the easing of lockdown means that meeting together becomes a possibility for some of us, these statistics from our time of being a 'locked down Church' show us the enormous potential of the internet to help us 'be Church' in an increasingly online world.

We know that digital services can never be a completely satisfactory replacement for physical services, however the way that people have engaged with our online services shows that the internet is a powerful tool at our disposal and should continue to be part of our plans (complimenting physical church) going forwards.

Phil Price

ST CATHERINE'S TILEHURST

ONLINE ACTIVITY DURING LOCKDOWN



TIME SPENT WITH US

Since lock down began we have collectively watched over **132,700** minutes of videos on the St Catherine's Facebook page. That's **2,311 hours, 92 days or 13 weeks**

CLICK, CLICK CLICKING ON HEAVENS DOOR

Collectively we have clicked on content on the St Catherine's Facebook page **1,330 times** during lock down





MAKING CONNECTIONS

Since lock down began **61 new people** have 'liked' our Facebook page taking us up to **182** followers. 138 of our followers are in 'Reading' or 'Tilehurst', but we do have 2 in Bosnia & Herzegovina, 1 in the Philippines and 3 in Newbury.

LARGER CONGREGATIONS

Our August Messy Church video was watched by **466 different people** which is **over 4 times** as many people as we would expect to see in Church across all of our services on any given Sunday before lock down.

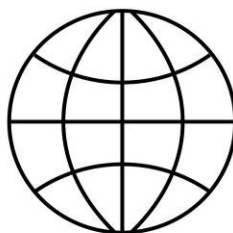


BEING SEEN BY PEOPLE

During lock down Our content appeared on people's Facebook feeds **14,852 times**. Not everyone who saw us on their feed chose to watch our videos, but each appearance represents an opportunity for someone to find out more about us and what we stand for.

NOT ONLY FACEBOOK

In 2020 **2,554 people** have made **13,052 visits** to our website (the majority during lock down). This includes 109 from China, 7 from South Korea and 5 from Malta. But the majority of our views (12,572) came from the United Kingdom.



TO JOIN IN ONLINE:

Go to
www.facebook.com/St.Catherines.Tilehurst
or
<https://stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk/>

Escaping Lockdown with a good film part 2



There's something special about sitting down with friends and family and some Popcorn to watch a film. Unfortunately, Coronavirus forced cinemas to close and meant that St Catherine's has had to put on hold our plans for regular film screenings in our Hall.

Not wanting to let the virus ruin all our fun we started an online film club, encouraging people to watch a film and spend some time thinking about its key themes. We try to choose films that are easy to access, so tend to select films that are available on the BBC iPlayer.

June's film was *Philomena* and it was really easy for people to join in with us. All people needed to do was:

- Watch *Philomena*.
- E-mail us with their thoughts on the film.
- Tune into the St Catherine's Facebook page and watch Gill and Phil discuss the film in light of the thoughts that people had sent in.

We had an amazing response (both in terms of video views and people e-mailing in) which led to a really interesting and wide-ranging discussion. We discussed a many different topics including 'faith', 'judgement' and 'parental love'.

See opposite for some viewer comments and below for a short synopsis for the film. However, the best way get a feel for the film club is to watch the film (widely available on DVD) and then head over to Facebook:-

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=722725315168779>
to see Gill and Phil discussing the film.

Our online Film Club is a monthly activity so do keep checking our Facebook page for an announcement about the September Film Club. (Next RG31 will include a review of August's Film Club which was the *Railway Children*).

Philomena (taken from IMDB)

When former journalist Martin Sixsmith (Steve Coogan) is dismissed from the Labour Party in disgrace, he is at a loss as to what do. That changes when a young Irish woman approaches him about a story of her mother, *Philomena* Lee (Dame Judi Dench), who had her son taken away when she was a teenage inmate of a Catholic convent. Martin arranges a magazine

(Continued on page 31)



(Continued from page 30)

assignment about her search for him that eventually leads to America. Along the way, Martin and Philomena discover as much about each other as about her son's fate. Furthermore, both find their basic beliefs challenged.



The real Philomena thought she was portrayed as too simple, but of course she appreciated this was done for dramatic effect. She had twelve years' schooling with the nuns before she was kicked out and, by the standards of the time in Eire was a well-educated woman – **Richard**



The relationship between the 2 main characters really deepens as the story progresses and there is a real relationship/connection between the 2 despite their differences which says a lot, I think, about our own relationships with others. We can disagree but be kind and stay close to what we believe! - **Sonia**



It isn't a comedy, quite the opposite, the story of Philomena is sadly, the story of so many women in different countries, even different levels of education, but with a common denominator: The active participation of a group of people who believe that they own the truth, who used God to teach morality, who accused women of being sinners. - **Ella**



It was just horrible that this unforgiving attitude still prevailed when Anthony and Philomena were trying to find each other so many years later and so sad that they were prevented from meeting each other- **Jean**

Read Phil's final thought overleaf

Escaping Lockdown with a good film part 2

A Final Thought

Philomena is a very dark film, but in amongst that darkness there is light (we see the love of a mother, we enjoy humour and there is a courageous expression of forgiveness).

The Bible tells us that there is darkness in this world but that Jesus is the light that shines in the darkness (John 1:5).

Phil Price



St Catherine's Hall

During the summer a group of church members and families completely cleared the hall, decorated it and then got everything back in place ready for the start of term.

We currently have many of our existing and several new hirers using it. They're pleased with how clean and spacious it is.

Thank you to everyone (too many names to fit in here!) for all their hard work.



Facebook What does Follow, Like, Comment & Share mean?



So, you've managed to sign up for Facebook, and you've added a few friends. When you look at stuff, there are options below it to 'Like', 'Comment' or 'Share'. What's that all about? And how did that stuff get their in the first place?

When you look at Facebook, whether on your phone, tablet or PC, you normally see your 'Feed'. Your feed is stuff that Facebook thinks you'd like to see.

(Continued on page 33)

(Continued from page 32)

Most of that stuff comes from friends you've already added. This is because you 'Follow' them. When people you follow create a 'Post', you will probably see what they've typed, or the photo they've added, in your feed.

You can follow either a person, or an organisation. When you do so, you'll see what they put on Facebook. If you join a group, you are effectively 'Following' that as well.

Against each post is a 'Like' button. If you click that, not only does it mean that you are acknowledging to your friend that you like their post (other emotions are available), it also means a couple of other things as well.

Firstly, it means you are more likely to see other likes or comments made against that original post.

Secondly, liking a post increases the chance that other people will see that same post. Your friends might be told that you've liked it - and they'll get to see the original post.

Also, when Facebook is deciding what to show other people on their feed, how much the post has been liked will play a roll.

The same goes if you comment against a post - your friends might see or be shown your comment, and it increases the chances of Facebooking showing that post to people.

However if you really want friends to see something you like, the best way is to 'Share' it. You can share in a number of different ways, but the most usual is to share it to your news feed, using the 'Share Now' option.

This means you create a post yourself, which people who follow you - your friends - will now see. You'll have the option to add a few words of your own as you share it. If you share something to a group, it will potentially appear in the feed of all the members of that group.

We hope that you will follow the Parish page. We're called "Parish of Tilehurst St Catherine & Calcot St Birinus". We know that's a mouthful, but when you find us, you'll know who it is ! When you 'Follow' us, you'll get to see all the information, photos and videos we post.

If you 'Like' one of our posts, it increases the chance of other people seeing it. If you 'Share' it, it greatly increases the chance of other people seeing it, especially your friends.

Ultimately, Facebook has control. It will show you and your friends what it thinks you want to see. That might mean you miss a few things, or things are shown out of order, but it's very hard to tell Facebook exactly what to do - it has a mind of it's own! Nevertheless, with a bit of Liking, Commenting & Sharing you can influence it, and make things you like be seen by your friends.

Stuart Poore

An observation out of the Coronavirus crisis...

Those who have found God in digital church may want to keep God there rather than discover transforming participation in the Body of Christ.... We need to find creative new ways of combining physical gathering with the virtual.

Canon Mark Collinson, Principal of the School of Mission Winchester Diocese.

A . B .

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The Thurleys, Three Mile Cross, c. 1918

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Contributions may be sent to magazine@stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk

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Socially distanced Café

Photo Stuart Poore

The Anglican Parish of Tilehurst St Catherine & Calcot St Birinus

ST CATHERINE OF SIENA

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www.stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk

www.facebook.com/st.catherines.tilehurst



Churches continue to be alive and active, but our buildings had to close and look very different now they have begun to re-open.

Our online content pictured below continues.

Morning Prayer

With Gill, Phil,
Stuart or Tony
Monday - Friday
10.00 am

To follow and participate
in this online service down-
load

'At Home Morning Prayer'
from our website



Sunday Service - Sunday 10.00 am

Each week you'll see and hear
different people leading, preaching,
reading and leading prayers.

Our singers and musicians add
a variety of hymns and songs.

To watch the live-streams of these services on Facebook go to
www.facebook.com/st.catherines.tilehurst/ (you do not need an account to view - if
asked to login or join, you can click 'Not Now').

Once shown on Facebook, all our videos can be found again on our Web Site
www.stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk