

Sunrise

A monthly magazine for the Parish of the Resurrection, Alton



April 2020
A donation
will be appreciated



The Parish of the Resurrection, Alton

Vicar: Reverend Andrew Micklefield, 88794

St Lawrence Vicarage, Church St, Alton GU34 2BW

Sunday Services

Details of Sunday services for the month can be found on the back cover. You will find that there is a variety of services intended to meet the needs of people of many different ages and backgrounds. You are welcome to worship with us.

Family Worship

The church wants to make it as easy as possible for families with children to become part of the worship life of the church. To find out more contact one of the clergy.

Marriage and Baptism Enquiries

Enquiries should be made to the Parish Office by telephone 83234 or by calling at the Parish Office or email: potr.alton@btinternet.com

Parish Centre Bookings

It is possible to book St Lawrence Parish Centre or All Saints Parish Hall for functions and other events. Bookings for all Church Buildings and Halls should be made to the Parish Office.

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Ellie Elder

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Philippa Penfold

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gordon.randall@sky.com

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Revd Rachel Sturt 07411 384496
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Anna Chaplain to Older People

Debbie Thrower 83234
Rachel Sturt 01252 710968

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Robin Kemp (SL) Tim Loy (HR)

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Tim Sturt 01252 710968

Pastoral Visiting

Peta Sutherland 84149

Parish Office: Tel. 83234

Email: potr.alton@btinternet.com

Open Monday to Friday

9.30am-12.30am

Parish Web Site:

<http://www.potr-alton.co.uk>

**This month's cover picture is
Holy Rood by Ruth Randall**

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Tony Willman 543628

Organist

Will Nisbet

Head Server

Clive Muller 86064

Captain of the Bell Tower

Matthew Watts 543886

Stewardship Secretary

Tim Sturt 01252 710968

Teddy Bears

Sarah Broadbent 85247

The Lighthouse

Fiona Micklefield 88794

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Ken Jackson

Bellringing

Matthew Watts 543886

Stewardship Secretary

Michael Reynolds 549876

Sacristan

Priscilla Inkpen 768941

St Peter's Church Beech

Secretary

Jeremy Cunningham 561059

Organist

Gloria Wills 542683

Sacristan

Annis Mendham 83501

Church of the Holy Rood

Organist & Musical Director

Andrew Hinde 84056

Bellringing

Rob Law 544865

Flowers

Ruth Randall 549567

Sacristan

Vacant

St Lawrence Organisations

Community Market

Clive Muller 86064

Traidcraft

Jo McGregor 87680

Children's Society

Carol Williams 588565

All Saints Organisations

Hard of Hearing Group

Kate Dando 83514

Children's Society

Judy Brown 82289

St Lawrence (CE) Primary School

Headteacher

Mrs. Dawn Casson 84400

Chair of Governors

Paul Susans 84400

Andrews' Endowed CE Primary School

Headteacher

Mrs Maria Lloyd 83094

Chair of Governors

Other Organisations

Busy Bees @ St Lawrence (Pre-school)

Alison 549831

Rainbows, Brownies & Guides

Catherine Morgan cathmorg@outlook.com

Organ Society

Tony Willman 543628

Girls' Brigade (at Alton Methodist)

Kym Burgess 01252 334814

Boys' Brigade (at Alton Methodist)

Pete Burgess 01252 334814

DofE

David Allan 84739

First thoughts . . .

***Something happened way back in July 1969,
the 20th of that month to be exact.***

Guessed what the event was yet?

It was the day that two people from Earth walked on the moon. The very first time that this had happened. We all heard about this exciting news with the very comprehensive coverage on our televisions and radios. But there is one particular aspect of this landing that we never heard about at the time and only came to light many years later for on the surface of the moon, 250,000 miles from the nearest Christian church a communion was held, Buzz Aldrin was an elder in the Presbyterian Church. Knowing that he would soon be doing something completely unprecedented, he felt he needed to do something really special to mark the occasion and asked his minister to help him. His minister consecrated a communion wafer and a small vial of communion wine to be taken into space with him.

A few minutes after landing, Aldrin made the following statement: "This is the LM pilot. I'd like to take this opportunity to ask every person listening in, whoever and wherever they may be, to pause for a moment and contemplate the events of the past few hours and to give thanks in his or her own way." Then ending the radio communication he read a passage from St. John's Gospel and took communion.

His words to narrate this experience were:

"In the radio blackout, I opened the little plastic packages which contained the bread and the wine. I poured the wine into the chalice our church had given me. In the one-sixth gravity of the moon, the wine slowly curled and gracefully came up the side of the cup. Then I read the Scripture, 'I am the vine, you are the branches. Whosoever abides in me will bring forth much fruit. Apart from me you can do nothing.' I ate the tiny Host and swallowed the wine. I gave thanks for the intelligence and spirit that had brought two young pilots to the Sea of Tranquility . It was interesting for me to think: the very first liquid ever poured on the moon, and the very first food eaten there, were the communion elements."

I think this is an awesome story, one which needs to be remembered. I write this article as we have suspended church services because of the Coronavirus and amidst all the worry and anxiety of what this pandemic entails for our usual and daily lives. By the time you actually read this I am sure that even more will have changed. We are living in difficult and devastating times.

Yet small ordinary things of our worship, prayers and faith will need to give us hope. What are we without hope? The followers of Jesus are given hope because He has risen above the worry and difficulties and has offered life in all

its fullness. Our hope is in His abundance. We celebrate Easter this year without the usual church services and without being physically in the Christian community. Yet that doesn't make it null and void - it is still the truth and still a reality. Jesus has risen from the dead - alleluia.

Buzz Aldrin knew he had to do something special to mark the occasion of landing on the moon. He couldn't do it with lots of other people - there was no church community - but he read Scripture, he paused, contemplated, prayed and gave thanks. So that is what we will do. And together we will proclaim: Alleluia, Christ is risen! He is risen indeed, alleluia!

With my extra special love and prayers

Andrew

Many of you will know Tony Marchant who is a regular at Holy Rood Church, Holybourne. Tony wrote this poem back in April 1991 but it seems particularly appropriate for today too.

Spring

Feeling low and sad of mood
From winter's cold dark days
I spied some fragile snowdrops
As through a misty haze
How bravely and courageously
They had struggled to survive
What better sight could greet me
My spirits to revive
Daffodils and hyacinths
The star eyed daisy too
Conveyed the same glad message
And I knew just what to do
I said a prayer of thankfulness
To the great Creator, who
Gives re-birth to all nature
And human beings too.

Bible Readings for the month of April

Taken from the Church of England lectionary – readings to use daily

Wednesday 1 st	Psalm 55	Exodus 9.1-12	Hebrews 12.3-13
Thursday 2 nd	Psalm 40	Exodus 9.13 - end	Hebrews 12.14 - end
Friday 3 rd	Psalm 22	Exodus 10	Hebrews 13.1-16
Saturday 4 th	Psalms 23	Exodus 11	Hebrews 13.17-end
Sunday 5th	Psalm Sunday		
	Psalm 118 1-2, 19 end	Matthew 21: 1-11	
Monday 6 th	Psalm 41	Lamentations 1.1–12a	Luke 22.1-23
Tuesday 7 th	Psalm 27	Lamentations 3.1–18	Luke 22 [24-38] 39-53
Wednesday 8 th	Psalm 102	Jeremiah 11.18 - 20	Luke 22.54– end
Thursday 9 th	Psalm 42	Leviticus 16.2–24	Luke 23.1–25
Friday 10 th	Psalm 69	Genesis 22.1–18	Hebrews 10.1-10
Saturday 11 th	Psalm 142	Hosea 6.1-6	John 2.18-22
Sunday 12th	Easter Praise		
	Jeremiah 31: 1-6	Acts 10: 34-43	Matthew 28: 1-10
Monday 13 th	Psalm 111	Exodus 12.1-14	1 Corinthians 15.1-11
Tuesday 14 th	Psalm 112	Exodus 12.14-36	1 Corinthians 15.12-19
Wednesday 15 th	Psalm 113	Exodus 12.37-end	1 Corinthians 15.20-28
Thursday 16 th	Psalm 114	Exodus 13.1-16	1 Corinthians 15.29-34
Friday 17 th	Psalm 115	Exodus 13.17-14.14	1 Corinthians 15.35-50
Saturday 18 st	Psalm 116	Exodus 14.15-end	1 Corinthians 15.51-end
Sunday 19th	Jesus appears to his disciples		
	Exodus 13: 10-end	Acts 2: 14a, 22-32	John 20:19-end
Monday 20 th	Psalm 19	Exodus 15.1-21	Colossians 1.1-14
Tuesday 21 st	Psalm 8	Exodus 15.22-16.10	Colossians 1.15-end
Wednesday 22 nd	Psalm 30	Exodus 16.11-end	Colossians 2.1-15
Thursday 23 rd	Psalm 5	Joshua 1.1-9	Ephesians 6.10-20
Friday 24 th	Psalm 61	Exodus 18.1-12	Colossians 3.12-4.1
Saturday 25 th	Psalm 37.23 - end	Isaiah 62.6-10	Acts 12.25-13.13
Sunday 26th	The road to Emmaus		
	Zephaniah 3: 14-end	Acts 2: 14a, 36-41	Luke 24: 13-35
Monday 27 th	Psalm 96	Exodus 19	Luke 1.1-25
Tuesday 28 th	Psalm 98	Exodus 20.1-21	Luke 1.26-38
Wednesday 29 th	Psalm 105	Exodus 24	Luke 1.39-56
Thursday 30 th	Psalm 136	Exodus 25.1-22	Luke 1.57-end

Praying in April 2020

We will move from Lent, through Holy Week to Easter. Pray that we would, as individuals and as a parish, remain focussed on the death and resurrection of Jesus and the hope He brings.

We give thanks for the recent Alpha Course. We pray for those who attended week by week and engaged with the topics and discussions. May the Alpha Course and their relationship with Jesus bring rich fruit in their lives.

Pray for the Hard of Hearing Group and for the ways in which it reaches out to a wide variety of people in our community.

The Beech Lunch Club welcomes many people month by month. Pray for the team who organise this and for those who look forward to it and enjoy the time spent there.

We have a team of people working on a reordering proposal for St Lawrence Church. Please pray for wisdom, creativity and good collaboration and consultation.

Please pray for the immediate situation of COVID-19. We are in lockdown and a time of great anxiety. Pray for those who have been bereaved, those with loved ones ill with the virus. Remember in prayer those who will be lonely and isolated. Pray for healing of the land, the world and God's people



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Father, I place into your hands
The things I cannot do,
Father, I place into your hands
The things that I've been through,
Father, I place into your hands
The way that I should go,
For I know that I can always trust you.

Father, I place into your hands
My friends and family,
Father, I place into your hands
The things that trouble me.
Father I place into your hands
The person I would be.
For I know that I can trust you.

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News and Views from St Peter's Church Beech

We don't live in Beech, although when we first came to the area our house, on the Medstead Road, all but abutted onto St Peter's Church land. However, we are regulars here, as are several who come across town to park by the village hall every Sunday. The small group of nineteen dwellings that houses our home are beginning to gain from the very worrying and trying Coronavirus time in which we live. It's a bit like Beech village wherein stress and problems are beginning to bring out the best assets normally well hidden behind our reserved British phlegm. Quite often one can go weeks without holding even a short conversation with our neighbours. Now that is changing and all for the better. The threats and worries, never mind the advice and directions from the government, the management teams that organise activities in our hobby groups as well as in many other peripheral areas, have reached a peak. Now we are seeing younger people going out of their way to offer help and assistance in a myriad of ways to those of us beyond the three score and ten years age line. It is wonderful and some who probably felt somewhat isolated and alone are now moving centre stage and their feelings, wishes and preferences are becoming a priority. I can do no worse than include part of a series of e-mails that crossed our computer screens during the past week.

As we are all aware there is a risk that Coronavirus will come to a home near us and in our small community we have a significant number of the older generation who are deemed most at risk. The official advice is constantly updating and below is the latest Government advice as of last night. Key in our thoughts is that we all need to stay safe and if any of us are affected we should pull together and assist where we can, especially if shopping and collecting items such as prescriptions are required.

Thanks to the community for advice and reassurance of awareness of the need to watch out for each other. For me one of the lone, elderly and vulnerable it's a great comfort.

As two of the elderly in this area it is reassuring that neighbours are ready to give help or advice where needed. It is quite funny really because those of us in the elderly category don't regard ourselves as such – except occasionally. In our minds eyes we are just here, we think that we are the same as we have always been but a tad (little) more experienced. However, we have to be real and thank you all anyway.

Today (15.03.20) at St Peter's all aspects of the service reiterated the comments given above. We were all invited to wash our hands before and after the service and warm water was poured over our hands that had already been liberally

dosed with liquid soap, then the surplus liquid was allowed to drop into a small bowl and we were each given a paper towel to dry off the dampness. The service continued with a sermon, given by Lynn and covered the story of Lydia who had welcomed St Paul and his companions into her home and was instrumental in helping found the first Christian Church. She too gave of herself to assist those around her who were not so well endowed. The reading from Acts had already given us the bare bones of Lydia's story. Our intercessions, put together and presented by Alana, continued in the same supportive, constructive vein. Altogether we were each being looked after and cared for throughout our service. It was lovely.

Now I shall continue with - A Further Aside

Some more sayings from the little booklet IN QUIET AND CONFIDENCE or A White Candle, purchased from Hinton Ampner Parish Church a few months ago.

Lord, teach me the art of patience while I am well and give me the use of it when I am sick. In that day either lighten my burden or strengthen my back.

I go to bed grateful and I wake up thankful.

Oh God, give me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.

Do all the good you can by all the means you can

in all the ways you can at all the times you can

to all the people you can as long as ever you can

Paddy Mendham

Alton All Saints Hard of Hearing Group



There will be NO more meetings of the Hard of Hearing Group until further notice, which means that the plans to celebrate the 21st Birthday Party have had to be put on hold until the restrictions have been lifted.

Knitters Anonymous will continue to collect donations of knitting and wool and send everything on to the various charities supported. Meanwhile why not join together in the initiative below. Take care and keep well!

Stop at Four

Why not join with a group of us, who are now housebound due to the virus restrictions, in stopping for a short while at 4pm every afternoon, to sit and think or pray for friends and relatives in a similar position.



What does Jesus do for us

The children at ***The Lighthouse*** were asked “What does Jesus do for us?” Here are their enlightening responses: (And I think they are right!!)

He takes away our sins
He loves us always
He is kind to us
He heals us
He helps us
He looks out for us
He is our shepherd
He is with us always
He forgives us
He loves us in his heart
He teaches us
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News from Holy Rood, Holybourne

Along with services, lots of events have been suspended or cancelled at the church owing to the current situation, but let's focus on some positives:

- ❖ It was great to see folk from across the whole parish come together for the first two Lent lunches; tasty soup and good conversation. Thank you to those who organised the lunches and to everyone who came along. Hopefully we'll be able to resurrect the lunches before too long...
- ❖ The men from the Holybourne Men's Shed mended the Teddies' dolls house and the children have been enjoying playing with it at the regular Wednesday morning Teddies' toddler group.
- ❖ At the beginning of March the 'Meet and Eat' ladies heard a very interesting talk to help us understand something of dementia and how we can support those living with it. We were able to send a donation of £65 to the Alzheimer's Society and are thinking of perhaps organising another similar event ... watch this space!
- ❖ Several people from Holybourne and across the parish took part in the World Day of Prayer service at Harvest Church; this year the focus was on Zimbabwe and was based on John 5:2-9 ("Rise! Take up your mat and walk")
- ❖ We enjoyed pancakes at our Tuesday coffee morning; OK, a week after Shrove Tuesday owing to illness but that didn't matter!
- ❖ At Church@4 we looked at the subject of Lent and made various pledges that we had hoped to reflect on at the Easter Church@4 (now cancelled). However, the poster with the pledges is on the wall at Holy Rood Church for all to see and we hope to be using the painted pebbles in an Easter garden.
- ❖ Arthur, our volunteer gardener, has been able to mow the grass in the Holy Rood churchyard which is looking fabulous with lots of spring flowers.
- ❖ We were able to distribute posies of flowers to women across the village and beyond on Mothering Sunday; the response has been really encouraging as a sign of God's love.
- ❖ We've set up a WhatsApp group for Christians in Holybourne which many people have joined. Many thanks to Helen Walters for organising this. If you would like to join do let us know
- ❖ Across the village many of us lit candles in our windows on Sunday 22 March as part of the National Day of Prayer and Action. We were able to advertise this on the new Holybourne Community Facebook page which resulted in a number of people taking part who wouldn't ordinarily be members of our congregation (yet!).



Resurrection Furniture



The Trustees of Resurrection Furniture have announced the first donations since opening on the High Street in 2017.

The first grant of £6,000 is to the King's Arms Youth Project to support the fitting out of the youth hub at The Tannery on Vicarage Hill. This is in addition to various items including a pool table that Resurrection Furniture has already donated in the last year.

We are delighted to be able to make a substantial donation for the first time. This is down to the hard work of all our volunteers and trustees who are making the shop such a success. One of our charitable objectives is to support youth work in the town so it is fitting that we can help the King's Arms in this way.



Instead of a picture of us giving the grant here is the King's Arms team with Lisa Hillan from our Parish in the back row.

The second donation of £5000 is to the Parish Fabric Fund. It was always the intention for Resurrection Furniture to replace the monthly furniture sales as a regular supporter of our wonderful Parish churches and it is great that we can do that for the first time.

When we get back to normal we aim to give more to a variety of charities each year.

John Hubbard (Chairman)

Notes from an Absent, yet Jubilant choir!

Greetings all self-isolating and socially-distancing chums everywhere! Grim, isn't it? I keep trying to pull out the positives from all this gloom. Better air quality, fish returning to the canals in Venice, my cupboards sorted out, my garden fit for Chelsea (ah, that's cancelled). But there is no getting away from it- their ain't no live singing anywhere and as committed choristers we find that hard. We are so disappointed we are unable to sing the services in Winchester Cathedral and as for the postponement (not cancellation, please note!) of the Bach B Minor mass... O me miserum! Who knows when we'll take our place in the choir stalls again. Let's hope it's not too long.

However, there has been a recent event which has gladdened our hearts beyond measure. On March 21st, our much loved musical director, choir master and all round top bloke married his Joyce.

I was privileged and honoured to be asked to be a witness, along with Fiona Micklefield. Folks, I can't tell you what a beautiful, intimate and perfect little ceremony it was with only five of us there, plus Fay and Tasha to take some photographs. Joyce carried a simple bouquet of spring flowers she had picked from the garden that morning and we had a glass of champagne afterwards. And that was it. Done. Married. Joyous.

I'm sure you will join all of us in the choir in wishing them both many, many years of happiness. From the first minute we met Joyce, we just knew she would make Tony happy. Joyce understands his love of choral and organ music, his need to keep conducting his choir and make up endless music packs (which take hours!) to liaise with cathedrals so that we can have the thrilling experience of singing there and to know when a trip to the pub is in order. Essentially, we are one of the luckiest choirs in the diocese; that we have him and he has a most understanding and new wife!

God bless them both. As Tony might say, "I was glad when she said unto me...I WILL!"



The Shelves are all bare

The shelves are all bare, some daft folks have been there,
They've emptied the whole blooming stock
So what on earth shall we do when we go to the loo?
It's come as a nasty shock.
Panic not my dear friend, for help is at hand
And here is just what you do.....
Buy the Times or the Telegraph, Guardian, or Mail,
(Not the Sun, for reasons so rude
I'd be cast out for being that crude)
there's always the Herald on Thursday too.

Then you just need some scissors, string, hook - or a nail,
And a strong cuppa tea, a good brew,
Find your inner Blue Peter for this, you can't fail.
Lay out the paper, don't get distracted, and cut out a good square or two.
Measure up carefully so it lines up all neatly, just so.
Then, this is the hard bit, but I know you'll stick with it
A hole in the corner for the string to go through
And carefully thread, making a loop for the hook.
Now take a good look -
Be sure you can reach from your throne,
Hang up the results of your labours, rest easy alone
You've beaten the mob,
It only cost a few bob,
No more,
AND THAT, DEAR, IS WHAT HELPED WIN THE WAR

Peta

Eco Corner

We are constantly being reminded that we have not yet explored all the ways in which to apply lessons from nature. For example, many plants contain chemicals which have beneficial effects as medication. It now looks possible that aircraft wings might benefit from exploiting shapes found in nature.

The latest idea comes from Airbus who feel there is potential in 'cranked' wings copying those on, for example, the gannet. They are proposing to test such shapes and, if promising, may build a large scale example to demonstrate their value. Having observed enormous flocks of gannets flying around St Kilda, I can only say that the result might be a very elegant aircraft, contributing to the efficiency of air transport.

It was recently announced that more fleets of electric buses are to be introduced. If you are in the same age range as me, electric buses are nothing new. In the 1940s I often used a Trolleybus to get to school. Trolleybuses relied on electricity picked up from overhead cables, although they carried large nickel-iron (NIFE) batteries to enable them to be manoeuvred short distances away from the cables. They had terrific acceleration, as I found to my cost when running to catch one as it left the bus stop. Occasionally, the trolleys became unhitched from the cables, requiring the driver to get a long pole from under the bus and use it to hitch the offending trolley back onto its wire. This was not ideal in heavy traffic and, one way and another, they were replaced by diesel buses, just as trams also left our streets in the 1950s.

On the theme of electrification of all cars, there was an interesting article in the Telegraph a few weeks back. It reported that Scottish Power estimates that if the 2050 carbon neutral goal is to be reached, something like 25 Million charging points will be needed at a cost of about 45 Billion pounds. This will require an average of 4000 points being installed every day. Power distribution and generation will also need an upgrade of about 50 Billion. Wow!

Nigel Hughes



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St Lawrence CE Primary School Celebrates Fair Trade Fortnight and World Book Day

The children at St Lawrence had a very busy time when they celebrated Fair Trade Fortnight and World Book Day in the same week!

Fair Trade Fortnight kicked off the week before with Collective Worshippings, Year 2 and Year 3 visiting Co-op to do a Treasure Hunt to see if they could find Fair Trade products and each class learning about an aspect of Fair Trade. Year 5 loved being visited by Rev Gordon Randall who did a Fair Trade quiz and told them lots of interesting facts. Year R and Year 1 were visited by Jo McGregor, (our Parish Traidcraft Rep) who was very impressed with what the children knew. Amery Hill hosted Year 4 and year 6 to do some African Drumming and Samba drumming – great fun was had by all!

Fair Trade Fortnight then culminated in a Fair Trade Festival where parents were invited into school to spend time with the children on a Fair Trade activity and to then visit the Fair Trade café which was hosted by Year 5 – the hall was packed! A big thank you to the Co-op in Alton who let the children come to visit and provided us with a very generous Fair Trade raffle prize which raised £130! Our Fair Trade Ambassadors were very pleased with the response from our Fair Trade Fortnight and are now promoting The Meaningful Chocolate Company's Fair Trade Easter Eggs supplied by Traidcraft.



On 5th March, there was great excitement as soon as the gate opened with everyone (staff included!) wearing pyjamas to school to celebrate World Book Day. Each class enjoyed doing many different activities throughout the day.

There was a “Decorate a potato” competition as a book character and an opportunity for children to give a donation for second hand books from the library. The Extreme Reading Challenge had lots of children sending in photos of them reading books in the most unexpected places!

More fun followed in the afternoon as it was all hands on deck with each class having exactly one hour to discuss, plan and decorate their classroom door – the results were amazing! Year 3 won with their door “The Christmasaurus”. The children had a mystery reader come and read stories to them (a teacher from a different class) while they enjoyed milk and biscuits. Different age groups also shared books across the school which was lovely to see. It was definitely a World Book Day to remember!



Growing vegetables needn't be expensive

Some hobbies cost a lot. Growing vegetables needn't be at all expensive, and the benefits are many.

ALFI's Westbrooke plot is a small roadside verge which a group of us have been cultivating for the last 11 years. From the beginning we have done this without spending much time or money on it.

This week we had our first working party of 2020; 5 of us spent 1½ hours preparing the raised beds for cultivation. We forked them over with some good compost and soil improver, and planted broad bean seedlings which had been raised from seed. We hoed and weeded around other areas and pruned and mulched gooseberries. The flourishing herb garden must wait another month for a spring tidy up.



Almost all the seeds for this year's planting came from ALFI's Seedy Saturday in February, when people bring spare seeds to swap, or make a small donation to take some away. We have a variety of salad crops, peas and beans, beetroot, carrots and spinach – all waiting for the soil to warm up. At the Seedling Swap in May we shall be looking out for any extra plants to squeeze into spare corners.

Our narrow strip by the path was planted last autumn with insect-friendly flowering plants almost all of which were transplanted from other gardens. A few crocus corms and daffodil bulbs were all that needed to be bought to start the season early.

We collected some well-rotted horse manure from a kind horse-owner last October, and together with the soil-improver which ATC lets us have for free, we hope the ground is well fertilised. Paths between the beds are covered with bark chippings, again collected free from a donor in Selborne – no shortage of shredded bark after the gales we have had.

And tools? Well, yes, there is an initial outlay, but my husband and I bought some tools at least 50 years ago when we first had a garden. We bought good quality, and are still using them – hoe and rake, spade and fork, and our solid metal wheel barrow are all middle-aged and well-loved. But if you are starting from scratch, at ACAN's Eco-Fair in the Public Gardens on Sunday July 12th, we hope to have second-hand tools no longer wanted by their owners, and also someone who can sharpen your tools which gives them a new lease of life. (If you have unwanted tools let ALFI know and we will collect them for this event.)

And the benefits? Working in the sunshine (I know, we were lucky!), chatting to the other volunteers, sharing our experience – none of us pretends to be 'an expert' – looking forward to seeing the beds fill up, and flowers coming out, exchanging a few words with appreciative passers-by, greeting our friendly robin... I know that I always come away from the monthly 'Westbrooke working party' feeling encouraged and energised. And if things go well, there are some lovely fresh vegetables to enjoy as a reward. If you would like to volunteer to help with any of ALFI's gardening or other activities, you will always be welcome. See www.Altonlocalfood.org.uk or come along to the Seedling Swap on Saturday May 9th in the Alton Craft Market in Cross and Pillory Lane and talk to us.

Lesley Willis

Coronavirus Musings

I don't know what other Sunrise readers think about the growing alarm and anxiety but I am of the opinion that this virus could in fact be viewed as a timely reminder of our mortality at a time when to talk about dying is simply not done. A challenge to the majority who insist that this incredible universe simply appeared and evolved instead of being deliberately and lovingly brought into being by the creator we know as God. The God of the Holy Bible.

This virus is certainly causing growing disruption and fear and is obviously being used by much of the publishing media to sell their products using alarmist and speculative headlines and comments, when what is needed are calm and sensible observations and reports. That this must be Satanic influence is so obvious.

I am reminded of St Paul's recommendation in 1 Thessalonians 5 and I quote - "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." I understand this to mean that irrespective of our circumstances God is still in charge and will bring us through it. This is a huge comfort to me and I suggest should be to all of us. Added to this is the exhortation by Jesus – not to worry. Easier said than done.

Perhaps I should finish by saying that I am not arguing that this "plague" has been sent to us by God. But I am firmly of the opinion that our God can use anything to further His purposes. Hopefully and somehow it will result in many hearts and minds being brought to know Jesus as Lord and to receive the free and priceless gift of eternal life.

William Blake

And Finally . . .



*Helen went to church three weeks running,
so she was co-opted to the P.C.C.*

The May Copy Deadline is Noon Sunday 19 April - Please no late articles

Articles can be emailed to the editor sunrise.alton@gmail.com
left in Parish Office or taken to 31 Shipley Close.

Editor	Peter Hicks	80092	
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Printing	TreloarPrint	547424	
Distribution	Sheila Donnelly	86315	(sheila@cdsd.co.uk)

Donations towards printing costs will be much appreciated -- Thank you

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