

# The Grapevine

Issue 1: March 2021



St Mary and  
St John the Divine

BALHAM

Newsletter from St Mary and St John the Divine

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## Trinity St. Mary's School News (TSM)

*Marian Shaw*

The Head Teacher, Lynn Anderson, and her staff are to be congratulated on their success in keeping the school open and their unfailing care of children and parents. During this term, the only children at TSM have been 41 children of key workers and other children needing to attend school. They form three bubbles: Early Years, Key stage 1 and Key stage 2. All other children have remote learning. The school has not had one positive case of Covid-19 between Christmas and February half-term because of all the precautions that have been taken against infection, including staggered arrival and departure times. We, the school governors, have had to keep our distance but we continue to attend meetings and training sessions by Zoom or Teams.

Remember that TSM is a school with an outstanding ethos and excellent achievement – it should be top of the list for parents choosing a school. We are so glad all children are returning to school on March 8—we wish them well!

## Church-sitting



I look forward to my morning spent quietly in Church: two hours of silence and calm. I don't bring my iPad. I have my mobile 'phone but I don't use it. There is a comfortable sofa near a radiator, from where I can see the door and those who come into the church for prayer and reflection. This is my golden opportunity for reading and prayer. Opposite me stands the icon (pictured), lent by Mother Berni. The piercing eyes of Christ are searching me. The Church is open on **Monday, Wednesday and Thursday** from **10am to 12 noon** for private prayer (but no socialising!)

## Youth Church

*Tiffany*

Lockdown has been very challenging for all of us, but for me I have managed to make it into a positive. I feel like I have grown more as a person - I think I've become more understanding of myself and thankful for what I have. This time period has taught that when you take something you have for granted, the moment it's not accessible anymore you end up missing it. Soon this will all be over and we will be able to go back to some sense of normality. We just have to stay in prayers and trust in God as he is more powerful and mightier than this virus.



## Message from Father Robert Tobin

'I am delighted that members of our community have initiated *'The Grapevine'* as a way of sharing news about what is happening in and around St Mary's. As a result of the pandemic, we are invited to find new ways to stay in touch and encourage each other, and this is a wonderful way of doing so. I am sure you will share my sense of gratitude to all those who have contributed to this effort.

With blessings and prayers,  
Father Robert'

## Online Donations

If you would like to make a donation to St Mary and St John the Divine Church online, please do so by visiting the link: <https://tinyurl.com/wwwj9xnu> We appreciate your generosity in these times. Thank you

## Where is this?

This is a beautiful stained glass window that commemorates the Centenary of St Mary's School in 1959. But where is it in the Church?



## Book recommendations

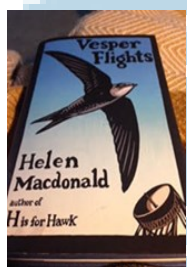
Brenda Turner

The Lent Group has started online with Stephen Cherry's book 'Thy will be done'. I like the way the book is divided up for daily reading in Lent - very manageable as well as a Lent discipline (which I need at the moment). It is a close look at The Lord's Prayer with images and discussion. The group meets on Tuesdays during Lent starting from 7.30pm - 8.30pm. Although nothing beats having discussions with real people in the flesh, it is good to see familiar faces online during lockdown.

During lockdown I have found myself drawn to books on nature and the countryside. They are like comfort food for the soul. Here are a few I have read:

**The Salt Path** by Raynor Winn. Following a couple walking the South West Coastal Path. A story of homelessness, human strength and endurance

**Vesper Flights** by Helen Macdonald who wrote *H is for Hawk*. It is a collection of essays about the human relationship to the natural world.



**The Wild Silence** by Raynor Winn is about Life beyond The Salt Path and coming to terms with returning home to a sort of normality



## The Grapevine Editorial team

Sarah McDermott  
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If you have any contributions for us at The Grapevine, please email them to Dawn Dugar at

[Dawn.Dugar@gmail.com](mailto:Dawn.Dugar@gmail.com)

We look forward to hearing from you soon!

## Oasis Garden

Marian Shaw

A small and enthusiastic group of us look after the **Oasis Garden** all year round. We have started to prune the apple trees, but we need ladders to reach the upper branches. We planted bulbs in containers during the autumn and it is exciting to see them pushing up. We struggle to discourage the squirrel who insists on digging holes close to the plants. Wire netting is one way of keeping them off the containers. We hear that they hate chilli powder, but the rain soon washes that away! Any other tips?



## Lockdown Musings

Lillian Mathieson

I know I will not be alone in this mildly difficult time in 'loving my neighbours'. Having never thought of myself as vulnerable it seems that I am! Most of the shopping is delivered to my doorstep by a lovely, smiling couple, maintaining the correct social distance. They know my strengths and weaknesses and from time to time the shopping list is edited with an occasional can of Ginger Beer as a treat. To keep me healthy, extra green vegetables sometimes creep in. We have an animated chat, which is quite an achievement at the moment, then they wander home two doors away. Another neighbour pops the occasional slice of cake through the letterbox. It is always lovely to find it among the day old copies of the Evening Standard and fast food advertisements. To end on a high note, there is the dustbin: this is lifted over the wall in time for collection (I have been known to fail in this) and then, as if by magic, it is replaced.



## From the Kitchen of St Mary's

Diane Holmes

### Billabong Bread

This recipe was first brought to Balham by Mrs Lynette Paul, the wife of Rev. John Paul who was the vicar of St Mary's between 1966 and 1986. The bread was called 'Billabong' because of their Australian roots. Billabong Bread has been made for many St Mary's celebrations.

#### 1) Bring to the boil

1 cup of water  
10z margarine  
½ teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda

#### 2) Put into a bowl

1 cup/4oz of SR flour  
1 cup/4oz of Plain flour  
1 cup/4oz of brown sugar  
1 cup/4oz of mixed fruit  
1 heaped teaspoon mixed spice  
1 Egg  
Dash of vanilla essence

#### Method

Add 1 to 2 and mix well  
Put into a lined loaf tin  
Cook 45mins- 1 hour at 150°C or Gas Mark 5  
When cold slice and add butter

## Hand Puppets

Penny Holloway

A small group of us (Agnes, Brenda, Gillian and I) are knitting child-sized hand puppets for junior church which can be used to teach very small children about Bible stories through play. The pattern is very simple and anyone who feels they would like to join us is welcome to do so. To keep track of which puppets we have I am coordinating this so please contact me at [c.holloway121@btinternet.com](mailto:c.holloway121@btinternet.com) for a copy of the pattern and suggestions of which puppet(s) to knit. So far, we have 3 kings, one or maybe 2 angels, a Pharaoh, Joseph and Mary. Jesus and Mary Magdalene are in the pipeline.

